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## **NILD Discovery Program Policy Handbook and Parent/Student Handbook**



**Foundation Academy NILD Discovery Program Policy Handbook  
and  
Parent/Student Handbook**

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## **Foundation Academy NILD Discovery Program Handbook**

Welcome to the Foundation Academy Discovery Program of Educational Therapy through the National Institute for Learning Development.

A time in the Discovery Program may be one that changes the life of a child. We expect great things during the student's time in the Discovery Program.

The material in this booklet is for your information. Please take time to read it thoroughly. It will help you be acquainted with all that is available through the Discovery Program for a student. It will also help you find out who is responsible for what areas in the student's life.

The National Institute for Learning Development (NILD) continues to research techniques that retrain and change the deficits diagnosed when a child is referred to this program and goes through the required assessments for diagnosis. The Discovery Program is a growing educational therapy designed and updated by the NILD.

Therapists are certified or working toward certification through NILD as educational therapists. They are also continuing their education and updating their skills through NILD Regional Conferences, workshops, advanced training through NILD, CAFT (Central Association of Florida Therapists) meetings, and continued courses at local colleges. Our desire is to excel in educational therapy so that we can offer the help your child needs to move from being a dependent learner to becoming an independent learner.

We are here to serve you. However, without your participation, our hard work will not produce the results we desire. Our pledge to you is genuine and is motivated by our love of children that struggle.

### ***Giving Hope to Children That Struggle to Learn***

#### **Your NILD Educational Therapists/SGI Teachers (2011-2012):**

Shannon Albertson (Discovery/ILC - Teacher)

Debbie Gunter (TEACH)

Christy Higgs (SGI – Teacher)

Anna Martin (TEACH/Discovery)

Laura Miller (SGI - Teacher)

Lisa Mester (Discovery)

Suzy Richards (Discovery)

Jennifer Siracusano (TEACH/Discovery/SGI - Teacher)

Don Stanley (Discovery)

Carole Vickers (Discovery)

Ruth Ann Farmer (Program Director) (TEACH/Discovery)

## **NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT**

### **HOW DID THIS PROGRAM BEGIN?**

Exceptional students have dignity, worth and purpose whether they are below average, average, or genius. These students can become anything they desire to be and reach their potential to fulfill life's purpose for them.

This conviction led Norfolk Christian Schools in 1973 to found a program for children with learning disabilities. The Norfolk Institute for Learning Disabilities was organized in 1982 because concerned leaders believed that this very productive program should be shared with other schools as widely as possible.

In 1989, the Norfolk Institute for Learning Disabilities was incorporated under the name of the National Institute for Learning Disabilities (NILD). This move was made to further the vision of those who feel that every school and community in the United States and those countries which have mission schools could be a part of this unique program.

In 2001, Vision 2010 was announced by the leadership of NILD. In this vision, the educational therapy that had been exclusively in Christian schools is to be opened up into the public arena as well. The name formally changed in February 2007 to the National Institute for Learning Development.

Now, at the turn of the century, there are over 1500 therapists with over 1200 in the United States representing almost all 50 states and over 300 serving in 40 other countries. There are Regional Conferences and summer courses offering three levels of training. There is also, currently, an inner city project going on in Norfolk, Virginia in the public schools. It is a pilot project with results that could be far-reaching. There has also been a longitudinal study done showing the power of the NILD techniques. This program founded about 30 years ago has a broad reach and is still growing.

### **WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR THIS PROGRAM?**

Potential students for this program are those experiencing obvious frustration in areas related to school performance such as poor spelling, difficulty with handwriting, difficulty expressing thoughts in writing, difficulty with reading or math, difficulty with directionality or laterality, and many others.

### **WHO WORKS WITH THESE STUDENTS?**

The students are aided by educational therapists who receive intensive, on-going training by the National Institute for Learning Development in Norfolk, Virginia. Each therapist is either NILD certified or working toward that certification.

### **WHAT CONSTITUTES AN EDUCATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAM?**

The Discovery Program, developed by NILD, centers on strengthening areas of weakness in perception and thinking processes. Compensation techniques are avoided. Instead,

intensive individual therapy is given approximately three hours a week to each student with techniques especially designed to improve performance through the integration of perception and cognition.

Parents are extensively involved in the process at home and work closely with the therapist. The number of years in which a student is enrolled varies according to the severity of the deficit, motivation of the student, and involvement by the parent. The ultimate objective is the development of self-reliance and logical thinking in both academic and living situations.

#### **HOW IS THERAPY AND CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION INTEGRATED?**

Periodic communication between classroom teacher and the therapist allows for the sharing of insights and practical suggestions leading to an improved educational program for each student. Annually a 504 Plan for classroom modifications is made for each student. The therapist, as well as the teacher reviews this plan, at least semi-annually, with the goal of removing all modifications as the student moves to independence in the classroom.

#### **HOW IS THE STUDENT'S FAMILY INVOLVED?**

The parents of each student in educational therapy are required to come to orientation meetings, parent meetings, attend the six initial therapy sessions for special training in order to carry on the therapy at home. Parents are asked to observe one therapy session monthly if possible. They are also to supervise homework and do Rhythmic Writing with their child.

#### **WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM?**

A student is dismissed from the program when he/she becomes independent and successful in the regular classroom with no modifications. A minimum of two years to an average of three to five years is usually necessary to achieve this kind of success.

#### **HOW IS THE PROGRAM FINANCED?**

Every effort is made to keep costs within reach of our families. This program cannot become a liability on the regular school operational budget or the community program budget. Tuition must cover the therapist's salary, instructional materials and administrative expenses. This tuition is in addition to the regular school tuition in the school setting. Families are contracted on a yearly basis.

## **NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT (NILD) PROGRAM OF EDUCATIONAL THERAPY**

How does NILD educational therapy differ from other LD programs for students with learning disabilities?

The NILD program:

1. Emphasizes the stimulation of perceptual and cognitive deficits. This involves visual and auditory perception and teaching strategies for cumulative learning.
2. Is non-tutorial. Educational therapy helps the student think in terms of cause to effect and apply principles to specific situations. This helps the student become an active, independent learner.
3. Is integrative. The total brain is involved in educational therapy. For example, Rhythmic Writing is a specific technique to develop a hemispheric specialization for language. The technique also strengthens eye-hand coordination, directionality, spatial perception, handwriting, mental calculation, memory, sequencing ability, auditory figure-ground perception, a sense of rhythm, flexibility and thinking skills.
4. Is individualized and intense. Because the sessions are one-on-one, continuous diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses takes place. Each session focuses on the student's specific deficits. Encouragement is given for effort and progress.
5. Emphasizes parental involvement. The educational therapist joins with the parents and teachers in a cooperative effort to help the student use his full mental potential.
6. Is all-age inclusive. Generally educational therapy begins no earlier than first grade, but adults can also benefit from the program.

The goal of the NILD program is for the student to be independent and successful in the regular classroom and in life. Usually a minimum of three to as many as five years of educational therapy is needed to sufficiently stimulate the deficit areas.

## HOW DOES NILD EDUCATIONAL THERAPY® HELP THE STUDENT?

Primarily we deal with perceptual factors such as:

1. **Visual Discrimination** – the ability to perceive the differences between forms and symbols.
2. **Auditory Discrimination** – the ability to perceive the differences between sounds and the sequences of sounds.
3. **Visual Closure** – the ability to recognize the whole when only parts are presented.
4. **Auditory Closure** – the ability to identify auditory stimuli when part of it is missing.
5. **Blending** – the ability to blend isolated sounds or syllables into words.
6. **Visual Figure-Ground** – the discrimination of an object from its background. The ability to focus on one thing (figure) allowing all else to drop into the background (ground).
7. **Visual Memory** – the ability to recall what has been seen.
8. **Auditory Memory** – the ability to retain or recall auditory experiences.
9. **Visual Sequencing** – the ability to position or recall visual stimuli in a serial order.
10. **Auditory Sequencing** – the ability to hold (a) a pattern of sounds within a word, (b) a series of words within a sentence and (c) a series of ideas, commands, or sentences.
11. **Auditory Association and Comprehension** – the ability to relate spoken words and concepts to each other in a meaningful way.
12. **Processing** – the ability to process quickly what you have heard and/or seen in order to respond appropriately. The ability to determine direction. (Process: to move the incoming stimuli to the specific part of the brain, which handles that particular job.)
13. **Attention** – the ability to focus, either visually or auditorily. The ability to attend to details, commands, coordination of time and place, and past and present. The ability to organize themselves, their possessions, and their time. The ability to switch gears or to be flexible.

These are only some of the difficulties we work on as we work with the student. Techniques to strengthen deficit areas were developed by the National Institute for Learning Development in Norfolk, Virginia. At the NILD offices, they continue to improve and update these techniques as research continues.

## EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR EACH TECHNIQUE

<u>TECHNIQUE</u>	<u>ANNUAL GOALS/OBJECTIVES</u>
Above Level Reading	to apply decoding skills (Blue Book patterns, spelling rules, syllabication) above student's reading level to develop structural analysis skills
Adjacent Forms	to improve reasoning and spatial judgment to improve understanding of directional terminology to develop precise language to develop the skill of estimation to develop visual transfer
Analogies	to develop problem-solving strategies and flexible thinking to develop precision in expressive language to develop comprehension skills through associative thinking and reasoning to develop vocabulary skills
Auditory Memory Training Exercises	to develop visual imagery to increase auditory attention to improve short-term auditory sequential memory to develop strategic thinking
Blue Book	to improve decoding skills (reading) to improve encoding skills (spelling) to improve long-term visual sequential memory to promote phonemic awareness to improve long-term auditory sequential memory to improve ability to apply spelling generalizations
Blue Book Dictation Exercises	to strengthen auditory processing to provide reinforcement and application of the Blue Book to develop long-term visual memory
Body Image	to improve visual perception of position of space to improve visual perception of part-to-whole to improve perception of mirror directions to reinforce laterality to improve directionality

Buzzer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to strengthen visual imagery</li> <li>to improve auditory sequential skills</li> <li>to improve auditory short-term memory</li> <li>to improve vocabulary skills</li> <li>to improve word analysis skills</li> </ul>
Design Tiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve ability to visualize a whole from the parts</li> <li>to develop skills of analysis and synthesis</li> <li>to develop problem-solving strategies and verbalization</li> </ul>
Dictation And Copy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve near-point copying</li> <li>to develop proofreading skills</li> <li>to develop long-term visual memory</li> <li>to improve auditory memory</li> <li>to develop understanding of paragraph structure</li> <li>to improve reading comprehension and language processing</li> <li>to encourage application and transfer of spelling rules</li> </ul>
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve visual perception of size and shape</li> <li>to improve visual-motor coordination</li> <li>to improve visual figure-ground perception</li> <li>to improve visual recall skills</li> <li>to improve expressive language and vocabulary</li> </ul>
Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve ability to identify patterns that exist in language</li> <li>to develop understanding of parts of speech and their function within a sentence</li> <li>to develop logical reasoning and flexibility in thinking</li> <li>to improve flexibility in written language</li> </ul>
Let's Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve decoding skills (reading)</li> <li>to improve visual discrimination and sequence</li> <li>to recognize phonological patterns in words</li> <li>to promote phonemic and phonological awareness</li> <li>to improve reading inflection, rate and rhythm</li> <li>to develop vocabulary</li> </ul>
Listen My Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to increase auditory attention</li> <li>to improve short-term auditory sequential memory</li> <li>to improve language processing</li> </ul>

Map Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve long-term visual memory</li> <li>to improve directionality (N,S,E,W)</li> </ul>
Math Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve formation and retention of visual image</li> <li>to improve auditory attention and listening skills</li> <li>to internalize basic math facts</li> <li>to develop mathematical vocabulary and concepts</li> <li>to develop problem solving ability</li> <li>to improve mathematical reasoning and logical thinking</li> <li>to improve comprehension and application of mathematical language</li> <li>to improve the ability to articulate the steps of a problem-solving process</li> <li>to improve language processing</li> </ul>
Memory Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to enhance visual short-term and sequential memory</li> <li>to develop memorization and study strategies</li> <li>to expand vocabulary</li> <li>to reinforce integration of Blue Book patterns</li> </ul>
Moveable Alphabet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve visual discrimination and sequencing</li> <li>to improve phonemic awareness (recognition of individual sounds)</li> <li>to improve phonological awareness (recognition of sound patterns)</li> <li>to improve phonics (sound/symbol association)</li> <li>to develop syllabication and structural analysis skills</li> <li>to increase ability to apply spelling generalizations</li> </ul>
Oral Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop comprehension skills</li> <li>to provide vocabulary development</li> <li>to give practice using decoding skills</li> <li>to encourage reading for both information and pleasure</li> </ul>
Proverbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to develop an understanding of figurative language</li> <li>to develop abstract and inferential thinking</li> <li>to develop the ability to apply general principles to life situations</li> <li>to develop comprehension and vocabulary skills</li> </ul>
Pythagoras	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve long term visual memory</li> </ul>

Puzzles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve spatial orientation</li> <li>to improve problem-solving skills</li> <li>to improve knowledge of geometric forms (names and characteristics)</li> </ul>
Reading and Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to increase auditory attention</li> <li>to stimulate language processing</li> <li>to improve short-term auditory memory</li> <li>to improve inferential thinking</li> </ul>
Rhythmic Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve visual-motor integration</li> <li>to develop the ability to do intermodal tasks</li> <li>to develop sensory integration</li> <li>to improve directionality</li> <li>to develop attention</li> <li>to develop working memory</li> </ul>
Square Puzzles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve visual memory</li> <li>to improve spatial orientation</li> <li>to improve problem-solving skills</li> <li>to improve expressive language skills</li> <li>to develop planning strategies and inhibit impulsivity</li> </ul>
Tangrams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to strengthen visual-spatial skills</li> <li>to develop analysis and synthesis skills</li> <li>to improve intentionality in planning</li> <li>to increase understanding of geometry and proportions</li> </ul>
Thimbles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to improve finger gnosis (knowledge of fingers)</li> <li>to improve perception of individual fingers through the use of tactile stimuli</li> <li>to improve laterality</li> </ul>

## THE DISCOVERY TESTING BATTERY

### A. FORMAL TESTS

1. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition or
2. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability (IQ)
3. Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement
4. Bender Visual Motor Gesalt Test or
5. Beery Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration
6. Wide Range Achievement Test (optional)
7. Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (optional)
8. Ekwall Reading Inventory or Roe/Burns Reading Inventory
9. Goodnough-Harris Drawing Test (Draw-a-Person)

### B. INFORMAL TESTS

1. *Draw-A-Clock*
2. *Alphabet*
3. *Numbers*
4. *Days*
5. *Months*
6. *Dictation and Copy*
7. *Writing Sample*

\*Student should have an initial vision and hearing screening

## **DISCOVERY PROGRAM OF NILD EDUCATIONAL THERAPY®**

### **I. General Policies**

#### **A. Admissions**

1. A student wishing to be in NILD Educational Therapy® must be approved by the program coordinator for enrollment in the program.
2. All students must have current full battery of testing not to exceed 2 years old. Each student must have an IQ test within 3 years of the Discovery Program enrollment.
3. If further testing is needed, the Discovery Director or designee will administer this testing according to the guidelines set by the NILD (National Institute for Learning Development). Charges for this testing will depend on the tests administered.
4. Students admitted into NILD Educational Therapy® are those who meet the criterion established by NILD. They must meet the definition for an individual with learning disabilities. They are not mentally or emotionally handicapped (EMH).
5. (Both) parents must meet with the director to receive an evaluation of the test results and recommendations.
6. Parents of the admitting student must agree to the program as outlined in the signed contract and manual and agree to support the school and the program by consistent follow-through with Rhythmic Writing and other homework as assigned by the educational therapist. Students enrolled in Foundation Academy must enroll at FA for NILD Educational Therapy® intervention. Outsourcing of services is not optional. Only students receiving services at Foundation Academy qualify for modifications.
7. A middle, high school student will be admitted only with the student's personal consent and/or signed contract.

#### **B. Steps for Referrals**

1. Referrals may come from a school, administration, parents, teachers or other interested individual's. In each case, the student will be evaluated independently by the program coordinator or designee in order to complete and comply with admission policies.
2. If the student is referred by the classroom teacher, the following steps will be followed:

- a. Checklist completed by the teacher
- b. Director or designee makes an observation in the classroom if schedule permits
- c. Class work from the student is given to the program coordinator
- d. Teacher, principal, director, parent conference
- e. Director contacts parents regarding referral

### **C. Evaluation Process**

1. Once a student has been referred to Discovery Program and all the checklists have been received with the parent contacted, the following procedures are established for evaluating the student:
  - a. Application for testing completed by parents
  - b. Diagnostic testing permission signed by parents
  - c. Application, testing permission and testing fee submitted (testing fees set by Foundation Academy and/or Dr. Nancy Akins)
  - d. Director or designee completes the testing
2. Upon completion of testing, a conference is set up to report the testing results. This conference should include the parents and the director or designee.
3. A written report will be given to the parents with a copy placed in the Discovery file. If the report needs to be forwarded to another school, the parents will sign a release.
4. The testing evaluation will be shared with the teacher or teachers of the student with the permission of the parents. Parents may wish to meet with teacher(s) to go over the testing.
5. The testing evaluation for secondary students may be shared with the student in an effort to help him/her understand his/her deficits and strengths.

### **D. Enrollment**

1. Evaluation of the student, testing results, parental response, and the recommendation will help make the decision for enrollment into NILD Educational Therapy®. If the parents request enrollment, the cost of the program is explained by the director and a contract is completed and signed by the parents.

Registration Fee \_\_\_\_\_  
Curriculum Fee \_\_\_\_\_

**Foundation Academy  
NILD Discovery Program  
NILD Discovery/TEACH/SGI Contract  
Parental Agreement**

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Discovery  
\_\_\_\_\_ ET-2  
\_\_\_\_\_ TEACH (K5 -1<sup>st</sup> Grade Only)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. As the parents or legal guardians of \_\_\_\_\_ we agree to enrollment in individual educational therapy (Discovery) or TEACH and agree to keep our son/daughter in the program from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. We agree to the prescribed program and understand that this program is adapted for his/her specific needs.
2. At the beginning of our child's NILD Discovery program; **we will attend six consecutive sessions** to become acquainted with the methods to help him/her. **TEACH parents will attend 3 initial sessions.** Following these initial sessions, **both Discovery and TEACH parents will attend one session per month and at least one parent in-service conducted by the Discovery personnel.**
3. To enhance the success of the program, we understand that we **MUST purchase a chalkboard and supervise Rhythmic Writing at home** on those nights that our child does not have a session. We understand that additional homework for NILD Discovery students will be involved and **MUST** be completed prior to each session.
4. Foundation Academy is offering this NILD program at a cost of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. **For payment options, please consult the finance office** and inquire regarding financial aid.
5. Tuition is charged **in addition** to the school's regular tuition, and payments are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.
6. Charges are based on yearly rates and are not charged per individual session (except summer). Discovery sessions are 80 minutes per session and TEACH sessions are 40 minutes per session. Days out for conferences, holidays, etc., have been figured into the overall schedule. Student absences from sessions are not subject to make up unless time permits.
7. We realize that any questions regarding NILD Educational Therapy should be directed to the Program Coordinator and/or Educational Therapist. Further, questions pertaining to the classroom and our child's progress should be directed to the classroom teacher(s).
8. We understand that the Discovery Program is not an absolute cure for a child's learning problems. We are aware that we may not see an immediate change in academic achievement. The effectiveness of the program is closely linked to **PARENTS, STUDENT, AND TEACHER COOPERATION.**
9. We realize that the NILD Discovery Program is a long-term program (three years or more) and that the TEACH Program is a two year program with the potential of TEACH students needing to move into NILD Discovery at the second grade placement. Students withdrawn from NILD Discovery/TEACH without a recommendation from the School Administrator and the Discovery Program Coordinator may result in dismissal from Foundation Academy.
10. Admission to and/or participation in the NILD Discovery Program does not guarantee the granting of a College Preparatory or a General Diploma upon graduation from Foundation Academy. A College Preparatory Diploma, General Diploma, Special Diploma, or an Attendance Diploma may be granted dependent upon the course of work completed and the guidelines mandated by the State of Florida.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Rev 6/2011

We, the parents, have read the above contract and understand that our child \_\_\_\_\_, will be required to remain in the NILD Discovery and/or TEACH Program, and **MUST** fulfill all of the above requirements to remain a student at Foundation Academy. To summarize, we will:

1. Attend 6 initial sessions (NILD Discovery); attend 3 initial sessions (TEACH).
2. Attend one session per month thereafter.
3. Monitor Rhythmic Writing.
4. Attend one parent in-service.
5. Initial that homework is completed on the assignment sheet (NILD Discovery).

We understand that the school's intention in this program is to provide intervention for our child and we agree not to hold the school or the therapist responsible for any less-than-optimal performance on our child's part. Unacceptable behavior during the sessions will be dealt with individually according to Foundation Academy's discipline policy. Students with uncooperative and/or belligerent attitudes may be dismissed from Discovery/SGI/TEACH.

We understand that services will be needed until such time as testing (including WISC IV for Discovery), teacher(s) survey, and classroom grades demonstrate that my child is able to function as an active, independent learner in the regular classroom. In addition, statements from the Program Coordinator, Principal/Student Advisor, and teacher(s) will concur with a formal dismissal from the Discovery/TEACH Program. Because NILD contracts are signed during Early Bird registration for the following school year and students have not yet been assessed for dismissal, this contract will become null and void for students who are formally dismissed from the program after annual assessments are complete. By signing this form, we acknowledge that we have read this contract, we understand the information given and agree to the terms as stated in this agreement.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director/Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Elementary Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For general information, you may contact the National Institute for Learning Development at [www.nild.net](http://www.nild.net).

### SGI (Small Group Instruction) Addendum

SGI Registration Fee \_\_\_\_\_  
SGI Curriculum Fee \_\_\_\_\_

1. The purpose of **SGI** is to offer a smaller classroom setting while addressing student deficits with placement in the regular NILD Discovery Program.
2. Foundation Academy is offering this classroom option at a cost of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. **For payment options, please consult the finance office.**
3. Tuition is charged in addition to the school's regular tuition, and payments are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. (Refer to fees schedule for rates).
4. **SGI** is a yearly commitment with annual evaluations conducted by the NILD Discovery staff.

By signing this form, we acknowledge that we have read this contract and that we understand the information given and agree to the terms as stated in this agreement.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **II. Program Implementation**

### **A. Provision for Therapy**

1. The student is now ready to enter NILD Educational Therapy®.
2. The student is assigned to a therapist. The therapist completes the following before the first therapy session:
  - a. A classroom schedule is checked for the best possible therapy time and is agreed upon by the student, the teacher and the therapist if possible. At times, because of student load, therapy time will be assigned based solely on available space.
  - b. The therapist completes the Therapy Student Update (504 Plan) of classroom modifications. She/he then reviews the plan with the teacher and parent.
  - c. The therapist sets up the student's file with appropriate paperwork. She/he uses Progress I, II and III charts for recording techniques and the student's progress.
3. The therapist starts therapy using the following steps:
  - a. Explains the program to the student.
  - b. Explains homework and homework record sheet.
  - c. Works with the student for best arrival and dismissal time.
  - d. Issues necessary books.
  - e. Begins an anecdotal record of behavior.
4. Progress reports are sent home each grading period or more often as deemed appropriate by the Director.

### **B. Parent Involvement**

1. Parent involvement begins the first day of therapy. The purpose is to train parents to work more effectively with their child and to compliment the work done in therapy and the classroom.
2. Parents are required and encouraged to do the following:
  - a. Attend parent training in order to understand the methodology for the NILD Educational Therapy®.

- b. Observe, as soon as possible after entrance into the program, six sessions of the student's individual educational therapy.
- c. Do Rhythmic Writing with the student on at least four of the days of the week student does not have therapy.
- d. Supervise other assigned therapy homework but let the student do his own homework. The parent can give minimal assistance.
- e. Observe therapy on a monthly basis throughout the school year, if possible.
- f. Attend parent meetings when scheduled.
- g. Both parents should attend the annual reporting session.

### **C. Student Responsibility**

- 1. The student will meet with the assigned therapist for two therapy sessions per week for approximately 80 minutes per session (58-60 yearly sessions/ET2 is for 40 minutes per session/TEACH 3-40 minute weekly sessions).
- 2. The student must report to therapy sessions on time. Elementary students might receive some help from the teacher and therapist in the beginning of the year, but should quickly adjust to the schedule and get to therapy by themselves.
- 3. Tardiness to therapy will be reported to parents and no adjustments made to the contract nor will this time be made up.
- 4. The student will complete assigned therapy homework. Failure to do homework will necessitate a call to parents and could jeopardize the student's place in therapy.
- 5. The student is responsible for bringing all required materials to each session. Failure to bring books or assignments will be reported to the parents and his position in therapy could be jeopardized.

### **D. Absenteeism**

- 1. Therapy sessions missed by students will not be made up without prior notice of the absence; excessive student absences will not be made up.
- 2. Therapist's absences will be made up dependent upon time available and scheduling.

## **E. Calendar Changes**

1. Therapy will not begin until the second week of school.
2. When half days are scheduled, elementary and secondary therapy will be rescheduled, as time is available or follow a modified schedule.
3. Schedules may be changed each semester due to the number of Mondays and Fridays that students are out of school. Students who have had therapy on Mondays and Fridays the first semester may be changed to other days during the second semester.
4. Students who may be dismissed from therapy at the end of the first semester will be tested the second week of December. All other therapy students will be tested in the spring.

## **F. Annual Testing**

1. A battery of tests shall be administered in the late winter (mid-February/early March) with a written evaluation of testing results and progress in therapy to be given to the parents in March/April.
2. Two copies of the written report will be distributed as follows:
  - a. Parents
  - b. Therapy Cumulative file
3. At the time of the annual report to the parents, parents will be given the recommendation and contract (contract signed at early bird registration to hold student's place for the following year) for therapy for the following year.

## **G. Dismissal**

1. At the end of every contracted period, parents are at liberty to withdraw the student.
2. To determine eligibility for dismissal, program criteria will be as follows:
  - a. A post-testing battery will be administered to determine eligibility for dismissal, results demonstrating grade level or above performance.
  - b. An evaluation of the student by representative(s) from the regular educational placement (principal and/or classroom teacher) will be conducted.

- c. These evaluations determine if the student is able to function independently in the regular mainstream, including homework (determined by teacher(s)/therapist/ parents).

## **H. Withdrawals**

1. Reasons for withdrawals:
  - a. Failure of the student to cooperate while in therapy.
  - b. Failure of secondary student to comply with their signed contract.
  - c. Failure of parents to comply with contractual agreement.
  - d. Student dismissed from the school for misconduct.
2. If the Director removes a student from the program for any reason, the tuition may be prorated.
3. Current month's tuition is nonrefundable (any other tuition reimbursement is at the discretion of the school administration).
4. When a student leaves one school, a report of the testing and therapy program will be sent to his new school upon request by the program coordinator of the NILD program (along with the school transcript). Copies of current Progress Charts I and III may also be forwarded.
5. When a family is considering removing a child from the program, both parents should meet with the program coordinator and school administrator – if school enrollment is contingent upon participation in educational therapy.
6. If a student is withdrawn by his parents before completion of the program and wishes to reenter, he/she will be placed at the bottom of the current waiting list.

**POLICY FOR DISMISSAL  
FROM  
NILD Educational Therapy®**

1. Upon completion of NILD Educational Therapy® annual testing, the educational therapist and director will confer concerning the student's progress in therapy.
2. If it is decided that this student could be a candidate for dismissal, the educational therapist will review the student's classroom progress with his teacher.
3. If the process of dismissal continues, the student will then participate in exit testing (Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test and the WISC IV or WJ COG).
4. Upon completion of the exit testing that deems the student eligible for dismissal, the educational therapist will recommend the student's dismissal from NILD Educational Therapy®
5. The parents, teacher(s), and educational therapist will meet to discuss the dismissal and follow-up procedures for the classroom for the following school year.
6. The teacher(s) and therapist will confer quarterly during the school year to discuss the student's classroom status. Report information will be available for the parents.
7. If the student falls below grade level expectations in two or more consecutive quarterly reviews, it may be recommended that the student re-enroll in educational therapy. The therapist and Director will confer and make a recommendation to the parents.

## **DISMISSAL PROCEDURE CHECKLIST**

The following procedure should be followed when considering a student for dismissal from NILD Educational Therapy®:

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

- Schedule conference with Director
- Schedule conference with classroom teacher to discuss recommendations
- Make parent contact
- Complete the Dismissal Form in light of the conference with teacher(s)/parent
- Obtain date of last WISC or WJ COG
- Record time in therapy
- Arrange for testing:
  - Request that a WISC or WJ COG be scheduled if not administered w/in past 3 years
  - Complete annual testing
- Process annual testing
- Prepare annual test report
- Submit testing report to student's file, program coordinator, and principal (if necessary)
- Request scheduling of parent conference
- Process Records
  - File Progress Chart I and Anecdotal Record
  - Place all annual testing material in student file
  - Place copies of Dismissal Forms in student file
- Provide family with copies of annual report and post therapy recommendations

## **FOUNDATION ACADEMY**

### **DISCOVERY**

#### **CRITERIA FOR DISMISSAL**

The minimum amount of time required for most students to complete a program of educational therapy is three years. Depending on the number of deficits and/or the severity of the deficits, some students may need four or five years.

A student is ready for formal dismissal from educational therapy when he/she has become:

- 1) Independent
  - finishes homework with few reminders and minimal assistance from parents
  - completes class assignments with minimal assistance from teacher
  
- 2) Successful
  - brings needed books/supplies to each class
  - turns in homework on time
  - participates in classroom discussion
  - applies spelling rules, proofreading and specific study skills to classroom assignments
  - receives no modifications for assignments
  - receives grades corresponding to his ability

Continued cooperation and communication between classroom teacher, educational therapist and parents will contribute to the student's success through the remaining school years.

Parents, please remember that a student isn't formally dismissed from the Discovery Program under the NILD guidelines until they have had a post WISC – IV. Please see that this is done ASAP in order to consider the possibility for dismissal.

**FOUNDATION ACADEMY**  
**DISMISSAL / WITHDRAWAL**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ will be dismissed / withdrawn from individual  
NILD Educational therapy® on \_\_\_\_\_, having completed \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Post Therapy Recommendation / Reason for Parent Withdrawal

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Father

\_\_\_\_\_  
Therapist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator

## **NILD EDUCATIONAL THERAPY® WITHDRAWAL CRITERIA FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

Any NILD Educational Therapy® student will be subject to withdrawal from the program under the following conditions:

1. **Does not do Rhythmic Writing consistently at home.** After one month of inconsistent R.W., parent will be notified of possible withdrawal. If no action has been taken to rectify the situation after another month, student may be subject to withdrawal. Therapist should be notified if there are circumstances that cause the R.W. to not be completed according to the contract.
2. **Does not complete homework consistently,** that student is subject to withdrawal.
3. **Lack of parental involvement.** If a parent does not complete the mandatory 6 initial visits and/or does not observe their child in therapy at least once a month, the student is subject to withdrawal. If there are circumstances preventing the completion of either of these situations, the therapist must be contacted.
4. **If student consistently exhibits a negative attitude in therapy, is non-compliant in therapy, shows a lack of effort, or parents are unsupportive of the program,** the student is subject to withdrawal.
5. **If student does not consistently bring all books and necessary supplies to therapy,** he/she will be subject to withdrawal.
6. **If therapy tuition is not paid,** student will be withdrawn.
7. Any student that is withdrawn for any of the before-mentioned reasons will have the opportunity to be reinstated the following school year. This is dependant upon both the ability to comply with the responsibilities of therapy and the availability of space in the program.
8. **REMEMBER:** A student in NILD Educational Therapy® can only progress by the effort and motivation shown by the student and his/her parent/guardian.

## **Implementation of Withdrawal Policy From NILD Educational Therapy®**

1. The written withdrawal policy will be given and fully explained to parents and students upon entrance into NILD Educational Therapy®.
2. At the beginning of the school year, the director will give the written policy to the parents and clearly explain. The therapist will make certain, then, that each of her students and parents understand the policy.
3. To monitor, each therapist will complete a monthly checklist to determine the progress of the student. If she/he determines that a child or parent is deficient in an area(s), the first step will be to notify the parents, and document that notification on the checklist. Any other contact with the parent regarding that issue should be documented on that checklist.
4. If no progress is made by the next monthly check, the therapist will confer with the Discovery Director to determine the next course of action.

### **I. Classroom Liaison**

1. At the beginning of each new school year and when a student is entering for the first time, teachers of that student should receive a “Therapy Student Update” (504 Plan) which outlines (a) difficulties student might encounter, (b) classroom modifications, (c) strengths, and (d) suggestions for the teacher which will help the student.
2. Classroom teachers should not require the student to make up class work missed due to therapy when beginning in the program.
3. Homework should be amended for students in therapy when beginning the program.
4. Grading modifications should be in effect so that a student in therapy does not receive a D or F on his report card but rather C\* (\*grade adjusted for modified curriculum) keeping in mind that one criteria for dismissal from therapy is that no further modifications need to be made in class for the student. Students MUST give maximum effort to qualify for grading adjustments.
5. Students should not be penalized for spelling errors which are LD in nature (e.g., handwriting difficulties, reversals, sequencing).
6. Classroom teachers should observe therapy once a year for students in their class who are in therapy (a substitute will need to be provided).

7. Therapists should be invited to all parent/teacher conferences involving their students in therapy.
8. Therapy schedules should be considered before teachers plan field trips or special activities.
9. All new teachers should be given in-service training on NILD Educational Therapy®.
10. Refresher in-service every two to three years is needed for subjects such as the following:
  - a. Ways for teachers to identify students with learning disabilities in the classroom.
  - b. The population which the NILD program is designed to serve.
  - c. A review of modifications for assignments, grading, test writing.
  - d. Answering questions which have arisen regarding NILD policies and procedures.

**FOUNDATION ACADEMY  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING DEVELOPMENT  
GRADING POLICY for Discovery/TEACH Students**

Students who enter the NILD Discovery Program have a variety of strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, suggested classroom accommodations and modifications will vary depending on each student's specific educational needs. If a student has an average to above mental ability as determined by the WISC-IV, it is expected that the student will eventually function on grade level. However, while the student is in the process of educational therapy, some adjustments/modifications to classroom and homework will be necessary in most cases. Such accommodations/modifications include reduced amounts of written work, oral testing, shortened assignments, etc. Therapists will spend time providing teachers with information at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of each grading period to assist with the needed classroom intervention and evaluation strategies/measures to assess student learning. The NILD staff is available to serve the teachers in the process of classroom modifications. Please feel free to request any assistance we may be able to provide.

The goal of these adjustments and modifications should be to allow the student to make average grades ("C"), **if and only if** the student gives noted effort. The adjusted grade should not artificially inflate a student's grade to an unrealistic level ("A"). The progress reports, report cards and cumulative records will need to reflect that the student may not be functioning on grade level at the time of the assessment. **If the grade has been adjusted, then the progress report and report card should have an asterisk with an explanation of an adjusted grade for modified work. The report card/progress report will state both the actual and the adjusted grade. In the notes section of the report card, the actual grade will be listed.**

In some subjects (classes), the students may prefer to do all of the assignments without any modifications to make the grade "on their own". In this case, the student should receive the "regular" grade. If they are capable of making a "C" or above, they should receive that grade and it should not be noted with an asterisk.

Students who are "not working" (turning in homework, not performing at all in the classroom, etc.), **DO NOT** receive an adjusted grade. If a Discovery student is making a "D" or "F", please communicate with the Guidance Counselor and/or Elementary Principal and the NILD Director before putting grades on the report card (**this is not an option**). If and only "if" we all agree that the student is not performing, then that student will receive the grade according to the effort they have or have not put forth.

Students are **NOT** allowed to use Discovery as an excuse for neglecting to fulfill their responsibility. Should a student be in their Discovery session during a review/test, etc., please inform the educational therapist so that both the teacher and therapist can collectively find a time for a student to complete the assignment. Students may need a variety of testing measures to assess the information they are learning, written, oral, etc. If a student has studied and still fails a test, please attempt to re-administer the test with a

different approach. e.g., ask the questions orally. Or if the student has difficulty with oral presentations, attempt a written approach, etc. **The goal is to measure what they know, not the method in how they can express it.**

As students become more capable of regular assignments, accommodations/modifications are gradually discontinued. This is a joint decision made with the teacher, Discovery educational therapist and administrative staff. Modifications are not discontinued without a collaborative consultation with all of us.

## **LATE WORK ACCOMMODATIONS**

NILD students will be given consideration for adjustments in time for completion of assignments based on individual learning needs. Typically, NILD students are granted “double” the amount of time on specific assignments as stated under late work policy in the Foundation Academy Student Handbook.

### **MS/HS Late Work Policy**

Assignments that are not turned in for any reason other than an excused absence are subject to the following policy:

#### **MS Students:**

- Students will receive a temporary zero for the assignment. Half credit will be given when the assignment is turned in before the unit/chapter test. \*Qualifies for adjusted “C” on overall grade.
- A permanent zero will be given if the assignment is turned in after the unit/chapter test.
- The grade will be entered on RenWeb as a zero until the assignment is turned in.

#### **HS Students:**

- Assignments are to be turned in on the due date.
- Assignments will be received two days late at the beginning of the class period for ½ credit. \*Qualifies for adjusted “C” on overall grade.
- No credit will be received for work turned in beyond this time.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**MS/HS:** NILD students will follow the Foundation Academy Individual Classroom Discipline Plan and Levels of Discipline Intervention and Consequences as stated in the Student Handbook. The Middle/High School Principals will follow a six level plan of intervention to help students and their families comply with our Biblically-based discipline philosophy. The NILD Program Coordinator will join the referral process at Level 2.

**Elementary:** Each classroom teacher has a class management system that includes basic rules, positive reinforcements, and unacceptable behavior consequences. Involvement of the NILD Program Coordinator will be based upon individual student need and/or with referral from the classroom teacher and/or principal.

Revised June 2011

## **IMPORTANT SUGGESTIONS FOR NILD Educational Therapy® HOMEWORK**

Students in NILD Educational Therapy® are expected to perform homework while they are in the program. The two activities, which are done daily or on days when the student is not in therapy, are **Rhythmic Writing** and the *Blue Book*. In addition to these two will be short assignments, which will be noted on the Homework sheet. Usually the homework assigned has been accomplished during the student's session.

Generally, with the student's deficits in mind, homework will be given in the five core techniques of the NILD program. Those techniques are Rhythmic Writing, *Blue Book*, Buzzer word, Math, and Dictation and Copy using the book *Getting the Main Idea*. There may also be other homework assigned, noted in the special instruction area in the Homework booklet.

It is **IMPERATIVE** that a parent monitors **ALL** homework sessions since many different types of directions are given. However, **parents should not correct the work.**

Another **MUST** in strengthening the student's ability to successfully carry through his homework assignments will be for the parent to come and observe as many therapy sessions as possible. The suggested number of observations is once monthly (after the initial six sessions for training in Rhythmic Writing). This will give the parent an idea of what the therapist is trying to accomplish. It will also instruct the parent on ways to better help the student during his homework time.

These suggestions will be helpful as the student's parents, teachers, and therapist all work together to strengthen the perceptual areas of learning for these special students.

## **HELPS CONCERNING HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

(All homework is to be done in pencil)

### **Blue Book:**

The Blue Book assignment is a daily assignment. New pages will be assigned to be learned each week. Please see directions noted by the therapist in the student's homework booklet and follow them explicitly. Some suggestions for learning new pages are (memory work should be out of the Blue Book, not the Blue Book Workbook. Visualization of the page is important):

Copy the page on the blackboard, saying the appropriate response.

Recite the page from memory.

Write the page from memory on the blackboard.

Make flash cards to help memorize the page.

### **Rhythmic Writing**

Each student is required to complete one page of Rhythmic Writing daily. There are six pages of Rhythmic Writing. The student may have one day of rest each week. Rhythmic Writing need only take from 10 to 15 minutes each day. A parent needs to be present to monitor the student's pencil (chalk) grip, stance, and verbal responses.

### **Math**

The student will be assigned a page out of Bellwork or other math assignment each night. The problems, along with the page number, are recorded by the student in his composition book. He then works the math problems showing ALL of his work. Occasionally the student will be given extra work to do in areas where he needs strengthened. Those are also completed in his composition book.

### **Buzzer Word**

The student is given a buzzer word in his therapy session. At that time, the word is discussed fully and the Blue Book analysis is completed on the blackboard. The student has divided the word into syllables in his Blue Book Workbook and written the word in his composition book. For homework, he is to do the following:

Sentence – write a sentence using the word

Part of speech – record what part of speech the word was used in the sentence

Analysis – analyze the sounds in the word using Blue Book keywords

Meaning – write a definition of the word – no dictionary is to be used

Synonym – write a synonym (a different word that means the same) for the word

### **Dictation and Copy**

In therapy, the therapist will dictate part of the paragraph that the student records in his composition book. For homework, he corrects the second sentence, proofreading from the text. He then copies the rest of the paragraph, remembering to skip lines. After writing the entire paragraph, he picks the main idea from the choices in the book, recording the letter of the idea chosen. At times the therapist may assign a different way for recording the main idea. Parents monitor but never correct even when they see an error. The therapist has been trained to lead the student in finding his mistakes and making his own correction.

## HOMWORK SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

1. Set aside specific work periods so the student will know that “**now**” he/she performs these tasks.
2. Start with short work periods – 15 to 20 minutes in length. Increase the time as the student’s interest and aptitude increases, and as you gain confidence in your ability as a teacher and control the situation.
3. Learn how to be a teacher, objective and impersonal, during the work periods, then go back to being a mother or father the rest of the day.
4. Be firm but gentle. Speak slowly, firmly and clearly, but **never with anger or impatience.**
5. Use a quiet, firm voice. Develop confidence in yourself and the student and let your voice carry this confidence to the student, especially when working with the student during the study periods or when you have assigned him a task during the day.
6. Insist that he/she follow through on each task to its completion and perform it in exactly the manner you prescribe. **Don’t allow the child to terminate a task unless it is completed.**
7. Do not let the child gain control of the situation.
  - a. Remember that you are to structure all tasks and give all of the instructions.
  - b. The student may use many methods to avoid a given task. He may try to make minor changes, verbalize, resist, act foolish, giggle or even develop aches and pains. Stop these overtures, or, if this is impossible, ignore them and work right through them. **Remain task oriented.**
  - c. If the child throws a tantrum, you may need to permit him/her to go ahead and “express their frustration,” but that he/she will still have to perform the given task when he/she has finished.
8. Make commands/instructions short, simple, and related to the task.
9. Wait after a command is given to allow the child time to “think it through.” Remember, these children must collect the facts, close the door (so to speak), and correlate the facts before they can perform.
10. Repeat a command only after time for correlation has been given.

11. If you feel the child is ready to perform but seems unable to pull the action out, add “let’s begin!”
12. If necessary, add tactual stimuli.
  - a. Place the student bodily into the task.
  - b. Steady his hand.
13. Do not give the student a choice unless you intend to abide by his choice.
  - a. Do not say, “Come now, shall we do this?” or “Let’s try this.” Rather say, “Now is the time to do this!”
  - b. If you give him a choice between two tasks, make sure the plus value of your task is higher.
  - c. Do not use threats or promises. These presuppose actions or events that will take place at a later date. This student has very little, if any, understanding of time concepts.

## **WHAT IS SEARCH & TEACH?**

Based on extensive interdisciplinary research on the diagnosis and treatment of learning disorders, Dr. Rosa Hagin shares how SEARCH & TEACH©, developed by Archie A. Silver, M.D. (child psychiatrist), Rosa A. Hagin, Ph.D. (psychologist), and the staff of the Learning Disorders Unit at New York University School of Medicine, is a two-fold approach offering educators an effective tool for catching learning disabilities and treating them at the beginning of a child's academic career. It is now being implemented in diverse school settings throughout the US.

SEARCH & TEACH© is an early intervention program developed to meet the educational needs of young learners before they experience the frustration of learning failure. This differs from NILD Educational Therapy®, which was designed to help students who have documented learning disabilities, and in many cases have already experienced frustration and failure in the regular classroom. The program is based on extensive interdisciplinary research on the diagnosis and treatment of learning disorders at the Learning Disorders Unit at New York University Medical Center.

SEARCH is a 20-minute individual test designed to identify 5 and 6-year-olds who are vulnerable to learning difficulty, and to provide profiles of individual strengths and weaknesses in the readiness skills necessary for reading success.

TEACH is a program of 55 learning activities called 'tasks,' carefully developed and tested in a four-year investigation of pre-reading skills to address the needs revealed by SEARCH.

## **SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION (SGI) CLASSROOM**

SGI provides a classroom for students transitioning from elementary to middle school. It provides greater organizational structure, classroom management strategies and assists students to gain confidence and competence.

The design of the **SGI** classroom provides instruction in core subjects in a classroom with a smaller class size (12 students maximum). The **SGI** classroom is not only an essential need for the educational learning environment of the students, but it is also a crucial tool for the future growth and development of each child's educational goals and pursuits. The **SGI** classroom option is offered to any student in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade who learns best in a smaller setting with greater individualized instruction.

## Parent/Student Commitment Form

To be signed and returned to your child's NILD Discovery/TEACH Therapist by

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

I have read and understand the guidelines and policies outlined in the pages of the NILD Discovery Program Policy and Parent/Student Handbook.

I agree to follow the policies and practices written in the Parent/Student Handbook and I acknowledge that failure to comply with the policies and guidelines mentioned in this book can result in being asked to withdraw from NILD Educational Therapy and/or TEACH Program and/or Foundation Academy.

With my signature, I hereby agree to lend my support to the teachers, administration and staff of Foundation Academy and to abide by the codes of conduct as outlined here in this handbook. Students are not permitted to attend class without this form being signed and returned to the NILD Program Director.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
(for students K-5 and above)