

# The **L**EARNING CENTER of Ellis County



Individualized, Mastery-Based Instruction  
Work at your own pace  
Online or in our Lab

*A High School Diploma:  
The Foundation for Life*

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USD 489

Hays

EOE

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## THE LEARNING CENTER OF ELLIS COUNTY

**“A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA:  
THE FOUNDATION FOR LIFE”**

**USD 489 EOE**



**Important Contact Information**  
**for**  
**THE LEARNING CENTER OF ELLIS COUNTY**

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**Edgenuity Website:**

<http://learn.edgenuity.com/student>

**Introduction**

***“A High School Diploma-The Foundation for Life”***

The Learning Center of Ellis County offers alternative and virtual opportunities to assist anyone who needs a high school diploma. It is our goal to accommodate a diverse group of people who otherwise would be unable to complete their high school education. Students may take classes in our lab in Hays, Kansas. Virtually, classes may be delivered anywhere using our online capabilities.

The Learning Center provides a free public education to Kansas students enrolled only at The Learning Center. In order for USD 489 to offer our services free of charge, attendance is important. **To keep our school free, it is critical that all students attend when required.**

By attending regularly, students create funding for our school district and allow The Learning Center to operate as a free public school.

In order for our students of any age to have the best experience possible as they work toward their diplomas, some rules and regulations are necessary. This handbook is designed to provide information and answer questions about procedures and requirements. The staff attempts to cover most items in this handbook during initial enrollment, but we encourage students to read the entire contents.

Students should not hesitate to ask staff members about any policy they do not fully understand and should keep this booklet handy for future reference.

## Services

The Learning Center provides services to meet the diverse needs of our students.

Services include:

- Drop out recovery
- Credit retrieval
- Adult English Language Learners instruction
- Credit advancement
- Transfer during the school day
- Adult basic education for adults who have graduated
- Free babysitting provided during evening hours

Students may check out laptop computers for a modest fee.

The Learning Center does NOT provide GED tutoring or testing.

## Enrollment

**Enrollment is EASY!!!** Online enrollment is available, with only a few forms required to enroll. The staff requires a face-to-face enrollment for new enrollees so students are oriented to how The Learning Center operates. It also provides students the opportunity to ask questions.

Students are **never too old to complete their high school diploma program!** Regardless of age, anyone whose class has already graduated and who has not earned a diploma may attend The Learning Center.

With our **open enrollment** policy, new students may enroll at any time of the year.

**Current students must enroll for each new school year, beginning July 1 through mid-September.**

Any student whose class has just graduated and who needs more than one-half credit to complete will be considered a full-time student at the Learning Center when the Summer Session ends and the Fall Semester begins. These students will be classified as such on the Fall Roster for that year and will not be charged for classes. If a student wishes to take classes before the Fall Term begins, he will be charged summer school fees as any other student taking classes for credit retrieval.

Students must watch Orientation Videos before starting classes in Edgenuity. Students checking out a laptop must watch a video over the care of and features of the laptop, as well as agree to the completion of a minimum of 30 activities weekly.

## Other Information

All visitors must check in with an instructor upon arrival.

The Learning Center does not provide a cafeteria. Students are welcome to use the lounge for lunch **IF they clean and put away any equipment they use.** Lunchtime in the lounge is limited to 30 minutes. Students may bring food and drink to the computer stations; however, computer stations must be cleaned when finished.

With permission, students may take lunch away from The Learning Center.

The Learning Center office is off-limits to all students.

Students may not use the copy machine.

No direct health services are provided at The Learning Center.

Students must provide their own transportation to and from The Learning Center.

Free babysitting is provided in the evenings from 4:00-8:00 PM Monday through Thursday. Students may bring their young children to school at no additional cost to them. Students may not bring others' children.

**The Learning Center serves a diverse group of students. We strive to provide a comfortable, inviting environment and provide opportunities to remove barriers that otherwise might prevent students from attending.**

## Dress

**The Learning Center provides a casual environment, so students should dress comfortably;**

### **HOWEVER.....**

Clothing should be appropriate. If the staff finds a student's attire to be distracting, the student will be asked not to wear it again.

No gang related clothing may be worn at any time.

Students may wear appropriate hats/caps.

Students may not wear anything with slogans promoting illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco.

Clothing that defames or is derogatory to a group of people is not allowed. Our dress, as well as our behaviors, must be respectful to everyone at all times.

## Telephone Use

Students may bring personal cell phones to The Learning Center. **The telephones at the Learning Center are for business use.** We limit student use of phones for this reason. Students who must use our phones are asked to follow the guidelines listed below.

Students should not use The Learning Center telephones without permission. No call is to exceed one minute.

Students should provide their own cell phones for personal calls; calls should be made outside in the hallway to avoid bothering other students. Excessive use is disruptive to the student's learning and may be restricted.

Personal messages for students will only be taken in cases of emergency from family members.

## Communication

The Learning Center uses various modes to communicate with students. Newsletters are sent to students about special events, closings, and other important information every other month..

Students are required to inform The Learning Center staff when a change is made for addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Students receive e-mail blasts when information needs to be given on short notice.

Edgenuity also has a built-in feature that allows student and staff two-way communication.

## Hours of Operation

The Learning Center lab is open 56 hours a week year round. Normally the lab is open from 8-8 Monday through Thursday and 8-4 on Friday. We provide free babysitting from 4-8 PM Monday through Thursday. Virtual courses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via Edgenuity, our online curriculum provider.

## Fees

**The Learning Center is free to anyone enrolled as a full-time student.**

**Students enrolled full-time at another school who take classes for credit retrieval will be charged a fee.** The administration of USD 489 sets this fee which is subject to change.

Fees are due upon enrollment. Students enrolling for summer school classes must pay fees before classes begin.

An administrator from all schools must approve courses taken at The Learning Center for credit retrieval to guarantee credits earned will be accepted by the local school.

**Any class taken for credit retrieval must be completed during the semester or session it is started or additional fees will be assessed to extend the course into the next semester or session.**

## Graduation

**GRADUATION is the GOAL!!!** Students graduate at any time when all coursework is completed.

The Learning Center enrolls each student through Hays High School. Students must meet all graduation requirements before a diploma is issued.

Upon completion of all coursework, students receive a high school diploma from Hays High School. Two diplomas are available. Students who have attended Hays High School and whose class has not graduated must complete a 25-credit diploma.

Any student at least 18 years old, who qualifies for SB 23, or who has withdrawn from school may complete a 21-credit diploma.

Hays High School maintains transcript information for enrolled students.

**The Learning Center conducts graduation ceremonies for students who have earned their diplomas. Students are encouraged to invite family and friends to celebrate with them.**

## Attendance

Good attendance and progress are the keys to success at The Learning Center! The Learning Center is a competency-based program; therefore, it is much more important how much students complete than the amount of time they spend working. That said, we still are required to report attendance in hours/minutes to schools, court officials and auditors.

**Students attending The Learning Center are required to enroll and attend two six-hour days in August and September in accordance with the Kansas State Department of Education's requirements.**

At The Learning Center, **every student makes an individual plan of attendance.**

**It is important for students to follow the attendance plan they make.**

If a student cannot attend when scheduled, it is the parent or student's responsibility to notify the staff as soon as possible.

Virtual students are also expected to follow their attendance plans.

Virtual students' attendance is calculated weekly since they can work anywhere at any time.

Students may attend at times other than those scheduled; they are always welcome if computer space is available. Virtual students may work online 24/7.

Recognition is given to students attending the Learning Center (and/or accessing coursework at home) a total of 80 hours or more a month.

**Students under the age of 18 who have not withdrawn from school must follow the attendance plan designed by the student, the student's parent(s), and The Learning Center staff. (K.S.A. 72-1111)**

The Learning Center sets **twenty hours per week as the minimum required attendance for underage students. These students must also complete a minimum of 30 activities each week combined from all classes.**

**Whether a student attends The Learning Center lab or works virtually, mandatory attendance is required for any student under the age of 18 who has not officially withdrawn from school.**

Students may lose the privilege to attend The Learning Center if they do not follow the attendance plan made by their parents/guardians.

The first week a student fails to meet attendance requirements, parents will be notified by phone call.

The second week a student fails to meet attendance requirements, parents will receive an e-mail.

The third week a student fails to meet attendance requirements, a formal letter will be mailed to parents.

For students exhibiting behaviors consistent with someone under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the following procedures will be followed.

Students will be asked to immediately call their parents (if under the age of 18) or someone else for a ride. They must leave The Learning Center lab as soon as their ride arrives.

For the first offense, all students will be reported to the School Resource Officer.

Violations that occur a second time will result in suspension from The Learning Center lab until students have received intervention in accordance with USD 489 school board policy. Students may continue to work at home during suspension.

**The police will be called if an imminently dangerous situation exists or if parents cannot be reached to take underage students home.**

Students attending The Learning Center should attend with intentions to work. This is not a "hang out" or a place to socialize with friends.

If students are not working, the following will apply:

A verbal warning will be given. Then the student will be asked to leave for the remainder of the day.

Parents will be called if students are under 18 years of age.

Students who consistently have problems working will be dismissed from the Learning Center lab but may continue to work online elsewhere.

**Disciplinary action will be documented by The Learning Center staff. This ensures consistency in dealing with those who persist in disruptive behavior while at the Learning Center.**

## Use of Computers/Technology

Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy Agreement or rules set by The Learning Center will result in:

**First Offense:** Verbal Warning

**Second Offense:** Asked to immediately leave the facility; parents contacted, and a one day suspension.

**Third Offense:** Suspension from attending the LC lab for one week

(Subsequent violations will result in the student forfeiting the right to use the Learning Center lab permanently.

Students will be allowed to work elsewhere.)

## Conduct Expectations/Consequences

**Our Number One Rule is RESPECT!!!** It is a primary responsibility of The Learning Center staff to provide a safe learning environment for all students. We take this charge very seriously and will report students to authorities if overt signs of tobacco, alcohol or drug use are noted. Under Kansas State Statute 72-53- 107, smoking is prohibited at the Rockwell Administration Building and on its grounds.

The Learning Center is an alternative educational setting with people of all ages and nationalities attending. The assumption is that our students are adult enough to handle a great deal of freedom and make many choices for themselves. Sometimes a few students need more structure. For those, the following regulations are in place to maintain an orderly work environment for everyone.

Harassment or bullying of any kind is not tolerated at The Learning Center. Reports of such behaviors are taken very seriously. Offenders will be dismissed from attending The Learning Center lab, although they may access their classes online.

Smoking is prohibited at the Rockwell Administration Building and its grounds where The Learning Center is located. It is unlawful for students under the age of 18 to smoke. For students smoking on the premises, the following procedures will be followed.

Students 18 years of age or older will receive a warning.

Students under the age of 18 will be reported to the School Resource Officer and parents will be called.

If a student fails to meet attendance requirements a fourth week, the student will be dismissed from The Learning Center for the duration of the semester or session and:

**The County Attorney of the county where an alternative or a virtual student lives will be notified when that student fails to attend according to his plan.**

**The local school district will also be notified that an underage student resides in its district who is not attending school.**

**It is important that we record and report accurate attendance to parents and Hays High School**

Parents/guardians will receive daily, weekly, or monthly attendance for all students under the age of 18.

Hays High School receives monthly attendance for every student (regardless of age) enrolled at The Learning Center.

Students attending The Learning Center lab must clock in and out each day they attend the lab.

Students must clock out when they take breaks and/or leave for the day.

**Parents will be notified** when underage students leave The Learning Center lab without the permission of their parents. If parents cannot be reached, **the School Resource Officer will be contacted.**

Every student who attends The Learning Center lab should come with the expectation of working. Failure to show progress may result in suspension from attending the lab, although the student may continue to work online elsewhere.

## Courses

The Learning Center offers nearly 80 half-credit courses. These include all classes necessary to meet the Kansas State Department of Education's graduation requirements. Courses are designed to take the average student approximately 60 hours to complete.

Many group activities are planned throughout the year to give students the opportunity to earn extra credit and make progress in courses.

## Grades/Grading Policies

The Learning Center is a competency-based program. Students work independently on the courses they need. In order to show mastery of content, students must complete all assignments at a minimum of 80% mastery.

**Students are recognized each month for the classes they have completed.**

Assessments, quizzes, and tests must be completed at our minimum standard of **80% mastery or higher!!!**

**All** assignments for a course must be satisfactorily completed before credit will be issued, even if the overall grade would equal 80% or better without doing an assignment.

Students are required to do their own work. Students **may not provide** individual tutors. Our trained staff will be happy to provide support and answer questions students may have.

The virtual program used at the Learning Center is **Edgenuity**. This program can be accessed anywhere via the Internet.

**Notes must be taken** for every class taken in the lab or virtually. Notes must be handed in when a final exam is completed. Notes will be counted as part of the final grade.

**A cumulative or final exam is required for each virtual class and must be taken at the Learning Center or proctored by a licensed Kansas teacher. Virtual students must call to make arrangements to take final exams.**

The Learning Center staff must approve books/films for book reports or literature classes in advance.

**Plagiarism: Under the law, plagiarism is stealing!** When students plagiarize, they are using the work of someone else without giving credit to the author. We want our students to learn how to document sources correctly when they use the work of another and how to paraphrase when no documentation is intended. So, if students plagiarize, the following consequences will take place:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense**-Students must correct their work with the help of an instructor; students can receive full credit for the assignment when it is corrected.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense**-Students must again correct their work with the help of an instructor; only 50% of the assignment grade will be awarded when the assignment is corrected.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense and Subsequent Offenses**-Students must correct their work with the assistance of an instructor; **NO** credit will be earned. (Students cannot receive final credit for any course unless all work has been completed. If students do not correct plagiarized work, they will **NOT** receive a final grade for that course.)

Grades are reported to Hays High School as soon as each half-credit course is completed.

Transcripts with all final grades will be maintained at Hays High School.

## Use of Computers/Technology

**The Learning Center depends on computers for the delivery of courses.** For this reason, it is important that computers in the lab be used in a reasonable and prudent manner. The Learning Center offers tech support to students who have problems with their computers or programs. Our goal is to keep every student moving along in their classes so they may graduate as soon as possible.

Every student signs an Acceptable Use Agreement each year. Following the guidelines listed below will help ensure that everyone is using a computer for school work.

25 students are able to work in Edgenuity at any given time.

Students must sign off the program when not engaged in activities.

Students who remain online while not working will be taken offline by a staff person.

Repeatedly failing to sign off will result in removal from the program, since this behavior prevents other students from accessing the program.

The Learning Center has laptop computers for check out.

A rental fee is collected when a laptop is checked out.

Laptop users must watch a video on the use and care of their laptops.

**Thirty activities a week must be completed with a minimum of 80% mastery by every student who checks out a laptop.**

Laptops must be returned if students fail to meet this weekly requirement.

Virtual students may work 24/7---anytime at any place.

**Students must return laptops and adapters in good condition.**

**Any damage to or problems with computers and/or adapters must be reported immediately to The Learning Center staff.**

Students may listen to music while working in The Learning Center lab **only** if they bring their own music devices. Much of our curriculum, however, is presented using auditory component. Students must listen to lesson lectures and other auditory information presented as part of their lessons.

**Students may NEVER download music from the Internet. Downloading music from the Internet will lead to suspension/dismissal.**

The Internet may only be used to complete course requirements.

Other uses of the Internet may result in dismissal from the Learning Center.

Student logs are checked and LanSchool is used to monitor student activity on the Internet when working in The Learning Center lab. No personal e-mail or chatting is allowed.