



# Learning Support Institute

## Why Learning Support Institute?

The ability to meet the needs of students with learning challenges is a cultivated skill. Parents, classroom teachers, and school leaders recognize the need for skilled learning support teachers (tutors). The goal of Learning Support Institute (LSI) is to develop dedicated, trained, long-term learning support teachers. These teachers will provide quality instruction with compassion to students with learning differences so they can reach their full potential.

### LEARNING SUPPORT INSTITUTE IS:

- A two-year off-campus course of development for learning support teachers operating under the umbrella of Faith Builders Resource Group.
- An opportunity for learning support teachers to develop knowledge and skills while actively serving in a local school.
- A course that includes eight in-person events spread over the two years, providing significant opportunity for networking among learning support teachers.
- Weekly tasks and assignments designed to develop a learning support teacher's knowledge, skill, and habits in the field.

## What is the LSI experience like?

Participants in Learning Support Institute develop by engaging in two interrelated components:

### 1. PRESENCE COMPONENT – INSTRUCTION, COACHING, AND COLLABORATING

- **Two Seminars:** All participants gather in early August for a four-day seminar to participate in sessions, discussions, workshops, and interactions with instructors, mentors, and other participants.
- **Six Weekend Meetings:** All participants gather the second weekend of October, January, and April, for sessions, discussion groups, and feedback on the knowledge they are gaining and the skills they are employing in their work as a learning support teacher.
- **Monthly mentor meeting:** Each month in which there is no seminar or weekend meeting, participants will have an hour virtual meeting with their mentor.

### 2. TASK COMPONENT – FIVE HOURS PER WEEK

- **Assignments:** Participants are expected to develop knowledge, skills, habits, and strategies for managing an effective resource room. Weekly work will include reading, journaling, and completing tasks that correlate with the current topic of study.

- **Projects:** Participants will have the opportunity to immediately put into practice what they learn in their own learning support rooms and then reflect on their effectiveness. This may include screening students, documenting student progress, employing teaching techniques or utilizing management techniques during a regular school day. Participants will have opportunities to reflect on these experiences when gathered with their mentoring groups at the in-person meetings.

**LYNELL NISSLEY: MENTOR/INSTRUCTOR, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

- Lynell is a Faith Builders TAP graduate and teaches at Faith Builders summer term. She has her Master’s degree in School Psychology from Eastern University and has served many schools as a consultant and evaluator.

**DENISE WEAVER: MENTOR/INSTRUCTOR**

- Denise is a Faith Builders graduate and is currently working on her Master’s degree in Special Education at Lancaster Bible College with plans to graduate in December 2024. Denise has 9+ years of experience as a classroom teacher and tutor.

**BETTINA YODER: MENTOR/INSTRUCTOR**

- Bettina is a Faith Builders TAP graduate and has a Master’s degree in clinical counseling with a concentration in trauma studies. During her 13 years in education, she taught at Shalom Mennonite School and Meadows of Hope. Currently she works as a therapist at The Peacemaker Center.

**NORITA SHROCK: MENTOR/INSTRUCTOR**

- Norita has a B.S. in Developmental Psychology with a minor in Special Education and is currently working on a Master’s degree in School Psychology. She has 6 years of experience as a teacher in the learning support program at Legacy Christian School.

**LAURA MUSSER: LOGISTICS/ COMMUNICATIONS**

- Laura is the wife of Lyle (board chairman) and mother of six children. She enjoys organizing events so that others can benefit. She serves as a link between the administrator and LSI participants.

**LSI BOARD**

- LSI operates under the direction of Faith Builders Resource Group with a three-person board of directors who maintain alignment with Faith Builders mission, vision, and values, and the LSI policies and statement of faith. The current board members are Lyle Musser, Anthony Hurst, and Glenn Burkholder.

**Schedule**

Year 1	<p><b>SEMINAR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 5 – 8, 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>WEEKEND MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 11 – 12, 2024</li> <li>• January 10 – 11, 2025</li> <li>• April 11 – 12, 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>MENTORING MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September, November, December, February, March, May</li> </ul>
Year 2	<p><b>SEMINAR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 4 – 7, 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>WEEKEND MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 10 – 11, 2025</li> <li>• January 9 – 10, 2026</li> <li>• April 10 – 11, 2026</li> </ul> <p><b>MENTORING MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September, November, December, February, March, May</li> </ul> <p><b>GRADUATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2026</li> </ul>

Seminars take place at **Bongiorno Conference Center** in Carlisle, PA. Weekend meetings take place at **The Welcoming Place** in Akron, PA. Mentoring meetings take place as a **virtual meeting** using Microsoft Teams.

**Who is the LSI Faculty?**

**BECKY BOLLINGER: ADMINISTRATOR**

- Becky is a Faith Builders TAP graduate. She has a B.S. in Special Education and 9+ years of classroom experience at Shalom Mennonite School. Becky teaches the class called Teaching Diverse Learners at Faith Builders summer term.

**What is the LSI Curriculum?**

Learning Support Institute focuses on developing the skills and habits essential to effective service as a learning support teacher. The core of Learning Support Institute is the experienced staff serving as mentors in addition to textbook study. Participants will engage with resources that the LSI staff have found helpful in their own experiences, and at the same time have access to feedback from mentors and peers as they apply those resources in their learning support rooms.

# Learning Support Institute Model and Curriculum

Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love for God and His People: Empathy, Patience</li> <li>• Respect: Professionalism, Communication</li> <li>• Humility: In and Under Authority</li> <li>• Creativity: Ingenuity, Flexibility</li> </ul>
Habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Documentation</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Reflection</li> </ul>
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Learning Process</li> <li>• Brain Development</li> <li>• Dyslexia (Reading)</li> <li>• Dyscalculia (Math)</li> <li>• Dysgraphia (Writing)</li> <li>• Reading Comprehension</li> <li>• English Language Learners</li> <li>• ADHD</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Autism</li> <li>• Trauma &amp; Attachment</li> <li>• Intellectual Disabilities</li> <li>• Physical Disabilities</li> </ul>
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching an Effective Lesson</li> <li>• Teaching Reading</li> <li>• Assessment &amp; Progress Monitoring</li> <li>• Goal-Writing &amp; Data Interpretation</li> <li>• Writing Learning Support Plans</li> <li>• Observation Skills</li> <li>• Behavior Analysis</li> <li>• Problem-Solving Skills</li> <li>• Research &amp; Resource Analysis</li> </ul>

## Does LSI fit me?

Participants are asked to meet the following requirements to participate in LSI:

- Commitment to serve as a learning support teacher for the duration of the program
- Commitment to attend all seminars and weekend meetings
- Commitment to 5 hours of study and projects per week
- Support from school administrator and board
- Technology – computer and internet access to complete assignments

Skilled learning support teachers are a rare find in our Anabaptist schools. LSI hopes to address this problem and will prefer participants with a long-term commitment over participants with only short-term commitments to this role. Please consider the time and presence commitment that LSI requires. We believe that these commitments will lead to a focused investment in the field of special education.

## What is the cost?

- Tuition for the two-year program is \$2,500 per participant per year (\$5,000 total). This price includes all books, lodging and meals at seminars and weekend meetings. Participants are encouraged to ask their local school to support them in this cost.
  - \$1000 due at August Seminar
  - \$500 due at each weekend meeting: October, January, April
- Tuition is approximately half of the actual cost of the program. The balance will be covered by donations. Contact LSI to learn about our current needs and ways to give.

## How do I apply?

Applications will be available at the beginning of 2024. If you would like to be notified as soon as the application link is open, please email [LSIcommunications@fbep.org](mailto:LSIcommunications@fbep.org).

To apply:

- Complete the online application at the Faith Builders website.
- Call or email Laura Musser for more information or to obtain a paper application:
  - Phone 814-580-9723
  - [LSIcommunications@fbep.org](mailto:LSIcommunications@fbep.org)

### Learning Support Institute Core Values

- Honor – Honor Scripture’s instructions that parents teach their children and recognize when this teaching is delegated by parents within a church and school community.
- Support – Support Anabaptist schools and the communities that they serve.
- Growth – Grow the knowledge and skills of participants to effectively impact their students.
- Service – Promote the work of learning support teachers as a valuable service to the school and church community.
- Uniqueness – Value and accept children for who God created them to be.

