

# LIFEWISE ACADEMY



## FINDING THE RIGHT LOCATION

### Guiding Principles

- ◆ **Excellence**
  - ◇ Excellence should be the highest goal in every aspect of your LifeWise program, but especially for your location. No matter which option the Leadership Board chooses to pursue, it is vital not to cut corners or do the bare minimum. Let excellence be the standard even at the earliest stages of program development.
- ◆ **Why?**
  - ◇ *To represent the King of the Universe well.* As His ambassadors, it's vital to make sure that everything we do, say, produce and publish presents Him well to those who are watching.
  - ◇ *To represent LifeWise well.* The community is watching, but most community members will never be inside a LifeWise classroom. They will “hear” that LifeWise is a Christian, Bible-based program, but they will only “see” it from the outside.
  - ◇ *To put your money where your mouth is.* Committing to the LifeWise vision is more than just words. Excellence requires spending the money to produce a quality program.
    - This does not imply extravagance; it is wise to look for opportunities to get the most out of your money. Don't hesitate to put the necessary funds toward providing the best possible experience for the kids and the community you are trying to reach.
    - Tangible needs are often the easiest to meet. Donors like to see their money translated into things they can see or touch, such as buildings, buses or other physical needs. Don't be surprised if these needs are some of the easiest needs to meet.
  - ◇ *To become a destination.* New local programs often draw interest from other communities who want to come, see and experience it for themselves. Your program may quickly become a showcase, so let every part of it be marked with excellence.
- ◆ **Visibility**
  - ◇ A local LifeWise program weaves itself into the fabric of its community, becoming a hub for its students, schools and local churches. Make your facility visible and on display as much as you can with signage, a vehicle wrap, etc.

### Facility Options

There are a variety of options for housing a successful LifeWise program, each with pros and cons that must be considered.

*\*Please note that LifeWise does not purchase real estate for local LifeWise programs. Instead, LifeWise recommends real estate be owned by a local entity. The Support Center can provide you with resources for creating a separate 501(c)3 for the sole purpose of property ownership if desired.*

- ◆ **New Build**
  - ◇ Some local programs may opt to design and build a building specifically for their program

- Pros: a building that exactly fits your program’s needs and expectations; full freedom for creating on-brand design and visual excellence; a clear statement to the community of the program’s commitment and presence
  - Cons: expensive; may be difficult to find an accessible lot with space to build
- ◆ **Renovated Space**
- ◇ This option involves remodeling an already existing building to meet your local LifeWise program needs
    - Pros: a potentially lower cost than a new build; allows you to consider multiple or highly accessible locations where building would not be an option; still permits flexibility for creating excellent and on-brand classrooms; volunteers from local churches or the CIL can be involved in the renovation process
    - Cons: updates, design and actual renovation is still costly; may have to trade off some branding or ideal options for classroom set-up
- ◆ **Modular Classroom**
- ◇ This is a pre-made building that can be purchased and placed on an approved (and ideally convenient) location
    - Pros: a simple space that can be furnished and decorated for your specific needs; can be a temporary space while other options are considered or finished; requires less space; the entire building can be moved or sold when no longer needed
    - Cons: Costs vary based on size; very little say in style or design; not permanent
- ◆ **Pop-up Classroom**
- ◇ This option allows for the creation of classroom space inside an available building, such as a church or community building, that can be assembled and torn down as needed
    - Pros: a variety of options in nearby buildings are often available; weekday classes allow for easy scheduling around weekend or evening activities; costs or rental agreements can be inexpensive; may include furnishings (tables, chairs, etc.); may facilitate relationships with local groups or churches
    - Cons: every classroom must be constructed and torn down regularly; program is at the mercy of an outside group’s rules or expectations; can make it harder to maintain church neutrality, can minimize visibility and give the impression of lack of permanence

*Note: Whichever facility you decide on, a lease agreement is required. It is also a good idea to acquire a P.O. box (especially if your classroom is inside a church).*

Once you decide on a facility, submit the [Site Form](#) so the Support Center can have the details.

## Transportation

- ◆ **Walking**
- ◇ This is certainly a great option and, in some ways, the preferred one. It’s easy to manage a location that is close enough for students to walk to it. However, there’s no reason to limit your possible locations to only those that would allow this option.
  - ◇ Note: A distance of 1,000 feet is the maximum walking distance recommended.
- ◆ **Busing**
- ◇ Busing is a great option, one that will likely be the reality for most LifeWise programs in the future. It is not prohibitively expensive. It is also not complicated; the students already

know how it works. Additionally, a shuttle option can increase program visibility and allows the Leadership Team to expand its list of potential locations.

## LifeWise Facility in a Church

For many programs, the most obvious option for the LifeWise location is in a church. This arrangement can be mutually beneficial, but can also present some unique challenges:

### ◆ Neutrality

- ◆ One potential challenge is keeping the LifeWise program distinct from the host church. It is important to purposely and continually work toward broad support among the local churches and the community as a whole. Our desire is to see students get connected to a local church without being seen as actively endorsing a particular local church.
- ◆ We recommend considering ways to demonstrate that LifeWise is a distinct and broadly based program. For example, use a separate entrance with LifeWise signage to distinguish the local LifeWise program from the host church.

### ◆ Doctrine

- ◆ Holding a LifeWise program in a church will make a natural connection in the eyes of students and the community. Therefore, it is imperative that the host church adhere to the fundamental beliefs of LifeWise Academy. If holding LifeWise Academy in a church, please ensure that the church leadership is in agreement with the What We Believe section of our Statement Of Faith. If the leadership is not in agreement with this section of our Statement Of Faith, you should seek an alternative location in which to hold LifeWise Academy.
- ◆ Additionally, we highly recommend sharing our Philosophy Of Ministry and Team Member Conduct documents found in the LifeWise Policy Manual with the host church leadership. If the leadership is not in agreement with the contents of either of these documents, you should seriously consider seeking an alternate location in which to hold LifeWise Academy.