

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Medford, Massachusetts

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK
2011-2012

Administrative Office:
Early Childhood/Afterschool
489 Winthrop Street
Medford, MA 02155
781-393-2102
Fax: 781-393-2123

Program Sites:
Brooks School: 781-760-1430
Columbus School: 781-866-1596
McGlynn School: 781-866-1063
Roberts School: 781-866-9288

If an Interpreter to translate this information is necessary,
please call ELL office at 781-393-2348.

1.Casa necessite de um Interpreter para traduzir esta informacao, favor contactar o escritorio de ELL no numero: 781-393-2348

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO THE MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM!

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program is a tuition supported program under the auspices of the Medford Public Schools and Medford School Committee policies. The full text of school district policies can be found in your child's school specific student Handbook.

The program is administered and staffed by a team of dedicated educators. The Director, Site Coordinators, Site Coordinators/Teachers, Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers work together to provide quality programming for elementary school-aged children and their families at the Brooks, Columbus, McGlynn and Roberts Elementary Schools.

The afterschool curriculum offers diverse, age-appropriate educational and recreational activities based on children's interests. The program aims to enhance development in the areas of self-confidence, independence, academics and friendships.

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The Medford Public Schools is a caring educational partnership of school, family and community designed to ensure that all students are afforded a safe and healthy learning environment in which they develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to reach their full academic and personal potential. This partnership is dedicated to providing all students with a 21st century education that will enable them to be life-long learners and contributors to a diverse and rapidly changing world.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the afterschool program is to provide quality afterschool activities for Medford Public Schools children in grades kindergarten through Grade 5 at the Brooks, Columbus, McGlynn and Roberts Elementary Schools. The program strives to contribute to the social-emotional, physical and intellectual growth of children in a safe, supportive learning environment.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Medford Public Schools insures against discrimination in education programs and employment on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation and disability.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the program at any time. If a parent/guardian's schedule permits, he/she is invited to participate in afterschool activities.

While there is no set schedule for conferences, a parent/guardian may request one at anytime. Pick-up time provides a convenient opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to exchange information. Parents are encouraged to share relevant concerns with the Site Coordinator/Teacher and/or Director.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT, continued

Social events are another opportunity to get together. Open Houses, Plays, Science Fairs and Talent Shows bring together staff, parents/guardians and children.

Each spring parents receive an end-of-the-year survey that informs future programming.

Note: Fundraising activities must receive approval from the Superintendent of Schools.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

The afterschool programs at the Brooks, Columbus, McGlynn and Roberts Schools are programs of the Medford Public Schools. The Early Childhood/Afterschool Director reports to the Superintendent of Schools. Experienced Site Coordinators, Site Coordinators/Teachers, Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers staff the afterschools. Additionally, community service students, middle school, high school and college students and parents may assist with homework and other program components.

The average adult to child ratio is 1:13. Teachers' credentials vary with a mix of college degrees, experience with school-age children and activity specialization. The program follows the regulations set forth in the Department of Early Education and Care Licensure standards for school-age child care programs.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND SERVICES

PROGRAM DESIGN:

The program operates from the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m. There are three days per school year that the afterschool program begins at 12 noon. These days are the day before Thanksgiving, the day before the December recess and the last day of school.

DAILY ROUTINE:

There are age-appropriate activities throughout the afterschool day with a balance of social-emotional, physical and intellectual growth opportunities.

The daily routine consists of activities inclusive of a group time, playground and/or gym depending on the weather, snack, project time, and homework assistance (grades 1-5). The end of the day offers structured and unstructured opportunities and, weather permitting, outside activities.

SNACKS

The Medford Public Schools provides a nutritious snack every day. The snack consists of a pure juice or water and a choice of crackers, cereals, fruit, or vegetables.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS

An individual file is maintained on each child enrolled. All records are confidential.

Divorced or Separated Families: In order to take the best possible care of your child please inform us as to the custody arrangements are; which parent to contact first for general

CHILDREN'S RECORDS, Continued

questions and in an emergency; whether duplicate program information should be sent to both parents; who is responsible for payments, who will or will not be authorized to pick up the child and which parent will pick up the child on which days. In cases of joint legal custody both parents must approve and sign the Enrollment Contract.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports will be completed on each child at least once a year, usually mid-year. Parents will be offered the opportunity to discuss the report.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

NOTE: NEW REGISTRATION PROCEDURES WILL BE IN PLACE FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

Applications for enrollment and re-enrollment are available in the spring of the preceding school year. New families must pay a \$30 non-refundable registration fee of for each child and a \$50 non-refundable deposit per child that is a credit toward September's tuition. If there are no available spaces in the program, the family will be put on a wait list.

Returning families, provided that there has not been a break in participation, are waived the \$30 registration fee but must pay a \$50 non-refundable deposit per child that is a credit toward September's tuition. Any re-enrollment of continuing children must be submitted by the last day in June to avoid a new registration fee.

By mid-August, the balance of the September tuition is due along with a new Enrollment Contract. If the September tuition and enrollment contract are not received by the stated deadline, the Medford Public Schools is no longer under obligation to reserve space for your child and registration is withdrawn. Should slots remain open after the deadline, parents/guardians may still enroll children, but an additional registration fee will be charged.

Priority is given to returning families with an application received prior to the end of the school year. Remaining slots are filled on a first come, first served basis. Enrollment will remain open throughout the school year on a space availability basis.

A new Enrollment Contract must be renewed annually. It includes emergency information that must be signed and submitted prior to a child's first day in the program.

TUITION

Tuition payments are divided into 10 monthly payments. Tuition payments are due on the first day of each month. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of the month, the child cannot continue unless there is a signed payment plan or voucher agreement. June payment must be paid by June 1 in order for your child to continue in the program in June. Payments may be mailed to the Medford Public Schools, Afterschool Office, 489 Winthrop Street, Medford, MA 02155. If it is more convenient, tuition checks or money orders may be handed to the Site Coordinator/Teacher in a sealed envelope. Be sure to include the child's first and last name on the check/money order. Cash payments can be

TUITION, Continued

made ONLY at the Afterschool Office. Receipts will be provided if requested. Sibling discounts are available.

All students must be enrolled for a **minimum** of two days per week. Obligation to pay the full monthly fee is required. No portion of such fees can be refunded due to absence. As stated previously, a **two-week** notice is required should you decide to decrease days or remove your child from the program.

There is limited financial assistance is available to qualified families on a first come, first served basis. For information about payment plans/tuition assistance, contact the Afterschool Office secretary at 781-393-2102.

If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, we will notify you immediately. In order for your child to remain in the program, you will be required to bring a **BANK CHECK OR MONEY ORDER** for the amount owed, (including a \$30 bank fee). All future payments will be required to be made by Bank Check or Money Order only.

STUDENT SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule changes are subject to availability. Requests for schedule changes **must** be made in writing (e-mail is acceptable as a means of correspondence to the afterschool office).

Reduction in Days: A two-week written notice to the Afterschool Office is required.

Withdrawal: A two-week notice is required prior to withdrawing from the program. Such notice must be made in writing and submitted to the Afterschool Office. Future participation is contingent on availability of space.

Additional Days: If you would like to send your child to the afterschool program on day(s) that he/she is not scheduled to attend, you may do so if enrollment permits. Requests for extra days must be made in writing to the Afterschool Office. Please give as much notice as possible when requesting extra day(s). An invoice will be sent to the family.

For the safety of your child please inform your child's classroom teacher in writing of the new arrangement for his/her additional day(s).

Program Re-entry: If you choose to take your child out of the program and return before the end of the school year, you must pay a new \$30.00 registration fee.

Absences/Vacations: The program does not credit families for absences due to illness, vacations, etc. If a family needs to be away from school and afterschool for more than two weeks, the director will determine on a case-to-case basis the possibility of a fee adjustment and the holding of a slot for returning child(ren).

If a student does not attend school, he/she will not be permitted to the afterschool program. If a student attends school, but has been dismissed early from school or at school dismissal, he/she will not be permitted to attend the program. Students may not leave and return during the actual time of the program.

If your child is part of the voucher program then the attendance guidelines are as follows:

- Three consecutive unexplained absences are reported to the appropriate agency.

STUDENT SCHEDULE CHANGES, Continued

- Eleven or more explained absences in a 30 day period are reported to the appropriate agency.

You must call us if your child will be absent for any reason. Please call the program's cell phone no later than 2:00 p.m. (1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays) and tell us why your child will be absent. Each program's cell phone has 24-hour voice mail. Parents will be contacted if a child does not report to the afterschool program and no message has been received. Although we check a school's daily absent list, for safety reasons, a parent must contact the program when a child(ren) will be absent.

YEARLY SCHEDULE

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program operates according to regular Medford Public Schools schedule. The program is closed for holidays and school vacation weeks. Programming begins at the end of the scheduled school day and continues until 6:00 p.m. The Afterschool Program does not operate if the schools are closed.

PICK-UP POLICY

Children may be picked up any time prior to 6:00 p.m., but they must be picked up **NO LATER** than 6:00 p.m. Parents/guardians who are unable to pick up their child(ren) on time, on a regular basis, may lose the services of the program. Children will be released only to those persons listed on a family's enrollment contract.

When picking up your child, **YOU MUST SIGN OUT** and include the time. Photo IDs are required at the beginning of the year until we know the individual(s). Please refrain from cell phone use to ensure better communication at this time of day. **When you arrive, there is an assumption that you are then responsible for your child.** If you have not picked up your child and we have not heard from you by 6:15 p.m., your emergency contact(s) will be called. In any case, a late fee will be assessed and you will receive an invoice -a late fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes after 6:00 p.m. The invoice must be paid for within seven days.

If we have not heard from you or your emergency contact(s) by 6:30 p.m., we will contact the Police Department and have your child transported to the local station. **Continual tardiness may result in termination from the program.**

Parents/guardians must notify staff in writing when person(s) other than a parent/guardian is picking up a child and the name is not listed on the family's registration form. Additional names can be added at any time during the school year. The individual must show a photo ID before the child will be released.

Emergency Situations: In emergency situations a telephone call from a parent can request a new pick up person. If a child has been picked up by individual through telephone authorization, the parent must verify the telephone call/pick up person in writing the next school day. The individual must show a photo ID before the child will be released.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Should the afterschool program be required to close early in the event of extreme weather conditions, every effort will be made to notify parents/guardians in order to make alternate arrangements. In such cases, parents are asked to pick up children as promptly as possible in order to ensure the safety of all families and staff. If we cannot reach parents or emergency contacts, children will be transported to a nearby emergency site. Information will be posted at the afterschool's entrance(s) and a message will be left on the family's cell/home/work telephones. **(Please be sure to keep your telephone numbers (home, work, cell) and emergency contacts other than the parent(s)/guardian(s) up-to-date in case we have to contact you.)**

If circumstances require an immediate evacuation from the building (fire, toxic fumes, etc.), the children will be evacuated and transported to an alternative site. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone to pick-up children at the alternate site.

In an event of power failure or loss of heat or water, the program will close and parents will be notified to pick-up their children.

TRANSPORTATION

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program does not become involved with routine transportation. The parent/guardian is responsible for a child's transportation home or to any extracurricular activities outside the school building that the child may attend. Staff is not permitted to transport children or family members. A relative/friend must be at least 16 years of age to pick up an afterschool child. Note: A child nine your of age or older may walk home if parent authorization and consent is on file.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are not a regular part of the afterschool program. If a field trip is planned, parents will be notified in advance and will receive a permission form, inclusive of field trip details, to complete.

BABYSITTING POLICY

It is the policy of the Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program that staff may not babysit for children enrolled in the afterschool program.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be followed when determining whether your child is well enough to participate in the afterschool program. Keep your child home if he/she has:

FEVER- Children may not attend with a temperature over 98.6°F. Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school/afterschool. **Children should be kept home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever** without the use of **Motrin, Advil, Tylenol or a store brand.**

HEALTH GUIDELINES, Continued

RASH- Any rash of unknown cause, or a rash that is blistered or has discharge. Children need to be rash-free or bring a physician's certificate stating they are not contagious. (Please make sure there is a note for the afterschool program as well as for the school day nurse.)

PINK EYE- Conjunctivitis needs to be seen and treated by the physician. Signs of pink eye include red, itchy eyes often accompanied by a yellow discharge.

VOMITING or DIARRHEA- If your child has either vomiting or diarrhea in the evening or before school, he/she should remain home the next day.

COUGH- Students who are unable to sleep due to cough, or students who have a productive cough.

NASAL DISCHARGE- Any discharge that is not clear (yellow, greenish).

HEALTH INFORMATION

The afterschool program follows the Wellness Policy of the Medford Public Schools. It is imperative that parents/guardians notify the school and afterschool of all injuries or extended illnesses affecting their children's ability to attend school and the afterschool program. All children attending the program are expected to be well enough to participate in regular activities and outdoor play.

The Enrollment Contract provides space to report any child's allergies, dietary restrictions or chronic health problems so that an individual plan may be developed, if needed.

Due to allergies of many of the children, food from home is not permitted to celebrate a child's birthday.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

There is afterschool staff trained in First Aid and CPR. In the event of a minor accident, a teacher will administer first aid and notify the family at pick up time.

If a child becomes ill while attending the program, a parent/guardian or emergency contact will be asked to pick up the child within the hour. The program will provide a quiet area away from other children until he/she is picked up. It is the policy of the program to call a parent/guardian and request that a child is taken home if the child has a temperature or any contagious illness or condition.

In the event of a medical emergency, a child will be transported by ambulance to Lawrence Memorial Hospital for medical treatment. Staff will notify the parent/guardian of the emergency and agree on a course of action. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will notify an emergency contact person on file. Staff will stay with the child until an authorized adult arrives to take over.

An accident report will be filled out and given to the Director.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

1. No medication, prescription or nonprescription, may be administered to a child without written parent/guardian consent
2. For prescription medication, health care practitioner authorization is required. Medication (prescription and non-prescription) must be in the original container with the original label containing the name of the child.
3. Any medication without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a written physician or pharmacist's order.
4. The Site Coordinator/Teacher maintains a medication log that includes name of the child, the time and date of administration, method of administration, name of medication, dosage of each administration, and who administered the medication.
5. When possible, all unused, discontinued or outdated prescription medications will be returned to the parent and documented in the child's record.
6. Children must have their own medication, as required, for the afterschool program. The program operates separate from the school day with respect to availability of medications. This includes epipens and inhalers, if needed.
7. Sunscreens and insect repellents are considered topical medications. Therefore, written authorization is required to apply these products. These products should be in a plastic zip-lock bag and marked with the child's name in permanent ink.

DRESS CODE

It is the expectation of the Medford Public Schools that students come to school appropriately dressed. This includes clothes that are appropriate for safety, the time of year, and weather conditions. (Girls are **strongly encouraged** to wear shorts or leggings under skirts and dresses.) On cold days all students should come to school with a coat/jacket, hat, and gloves/mittens. Boots should be worn/available in a backpack when there is snow on the ground. Clothing deemed inappropriate by the staff -offensive language or artwork, unsafe shoes, revealing tops, etc. - will be restricted.

Sneakers and rubber-soled shoes are the safest type of footwear for children and are **required** for afterschool activities.

HOMEWORK POLICY

There is a homework period each day (Monday through Thursday) for all students in grades one through five.

We request that each family sign a Homework Contract. The parent, child and Site Coordinator/Teacher sign this contract. This signed contract commits the child to work on/complete homework in afterschool or releases a child from homework responsibility while at the program. Please note that we cannot **ensure** that a child completes his/her homework.

Additionally, we do not provide one-to-one tutoring. We do not force children to do their homework, grade homework assignments or discipline children if their homework is not completed to the expectations of another adult, e.g., parent, classroom teacher.

HOMWORK POLICY, Continued

We will, however, provide:

- Communication, when requested, with families and teachers about a child's assignments;
- Guidance when a child needs assistance as in the case when a student is "stuck" on a problem;
- Help so that a child stays focused on the homework assignment and remains on task;
- Encouragement and support to develop good work habits.

We request that parents/guardians review their child's homework each night so that we can all be part of a team to foster school success.

BEHAVIOR

CHILD BEHAVIOR POLICY:

It is the policy of the Medford Public Schools to provide an environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying (similar policies exist and define sexual harassment and hazing). Bullying is not tolerated at any of the afterschool programs. (NOTE: See next section.)

The afterschool program provides guidance and support to children as they manage their emotions. The staff set clear and consistent limits and expectations. When possible, children may help establish group rules. Children are given reminders and redirection in order to support positive behavior. Program staff use many techniques of *Second Step*, a program used in Grades PreK-8 to promote social skills learning in the key areas of empathy, impulse control and problem solving, and anger management.

At this time the afterschool protocol is as follows:

1. When a child's behavior is problematic, the Site Coordinator will inform the Director and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) to gain insight to the cause and suggestions to resolve the problem. The school day teacher may also be asked for suggestions.
2. If the problematic behavior persists, a parent/guardian conference will be scheduled to develop a Behavioral Contract with child, parent/guardian and afterschool staff participation.
3. If the Behavioral Contract is not met, the child will be withdrawn from the program.

There are instances where a child may not be ready for the program or the program is not appropriate for a child's growth and development. We reserve the right to withdraw a child from the afterschool program with a two-week advance notice to families. We will meet with the family and put the concerns in writing, if requested. Suggestions for other programs will be made, as appropriate. If a child is asked to withdraw, tuition charges will cease and a refund will be granted.

Immediate suspension from the afterschool program will occur when a child's behavior poses an extreme threat to self and/or others. Parents/guardians are expected to pick up the child immediately upon notification of suspension. Emergency contacts may also be notified. After a meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s), program staff and the Director will decide whether the child may return to the program or be withdrawn. If the child returns to the program, a Behavioral Contract will be developed.

It is our responsibility to provide a safe and pleasant environment for all the afterschool participants.

BEHAVIOR, Continued

PARENT/GUARDIAN BEHAVIOR POLICY:

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Programs expects that all adults in contact with the staff, program families, administrators and children act respectfully and appropriately at all times. Behavior that is abusive, disruptive or uncooperative will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior such as these will be grounds for review by the Director. This behavior includes parents arriving on the premises under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

In the event of inappropriate conduct, the following procedures will be instituted:

- The individuals involved will be asked to attend a meeting in a timely manner to address the concerns.
- Documentation of the event and meeting will be placed on file.
- When warranted, consideration for suspension, termination or decline to re-enroll the family in the program will be determined by the Director.
- Families will be informed, in writing, of the decision made by the Director.

If we feel that your child's safety is being compromised in any way, we will help seek alternative transportation. We reserve the right to call the appropriate authorities, if necessary.

BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING POLICY

The Medford Public schools have a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The summary of the policy can be found in your child's school specific Student Handbook. The full copy of the plan is posted on the school district's website. A written copy of the Medford Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be provided to parents upon request.

It is the responsibility of every student, parent/guardian and employee of the school district to recognize acts of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation. Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation in the afterschool program should report it immediately to an afterschool teacher or Site Coordinator.

RESEARCH and EXPERIMENTATION

The program will not conduct research or experimentation involving children, without written informed consent of the parent/guardian for each occurrence. The Superintendent of Schools must approve activities of this nature.

Note: Research and experimentation does not refer to anonymous program evaluation or data collection.

VOLUNTEERS/INTERNS

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program welcomes volunteers and interns. Volunteers, e.g., community service students, middle school students, high school students, are always supervised by program staff. CORI checks are required, as appropriate. All volunteers and interns are encouraged to participate in training opportunities.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

As a rule, all personal property should remain at home, with the exception of those items needed for homework completion. This includes toys and all electronic materials. Bicycles, scooters, roller blades, roller skates, skateboards, etc. are not allowed in the afterschool program. **Beepers, cell phones, and electronic games are not permitted.** If your child needs something for security, please let us know.

Please check with your program's Site Coordinator or Afterschool Office if you have any questions.

WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR CHILD WILL ENJOY THE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM!

Parent Handbook Receipt

I have received and read my copy of the Medford Public Schools Afterschool Handbook and understand the rules, policies and procedures. I will contact the Site Coordinator or Afterschool Office if I have any questions or concerns.

Child's Name(s): _____

School: _____

Parent/Guardian signature

Date