

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Medford, Massachusetts

AFTERSCHOOL PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-2017

Administrative Office:

Early Childhood/Afterschool Office
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: 781-983-4768 (Grades K/1)
781-866-1063 (Grades 2-5)
Roberts School: 781-866-9288

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

1.Caso necessite de um interprete para traduzir esta informacao, e favor contatar o escritorio de ELL no seguinte numero:
781-393-2348.(Portuguese)

2.Si un Interprete es necesitado para tradusir esta informacion, por favor contacta la officina de ELL en numero : 781-393-2348.
(Spanish)

3.Si w bezwen yo Entèprèt pou tradui enfòmasyon sa a pou wou, souple rele biwo ELL nan nimewo sa a: 781-393-2348.
(Haitian-Creole)

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 Coordinator/Group Leader, Group Leaders and Assistant Group Leaders 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. A completed CORI check that is on file is required for unsupervised family member participation.

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 staff to exchange information. Parents are encouraged to share relevant concerns with the Site Coordinator and/or Director.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT. continued

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

Each spring, parents/guardians 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 Coordinator/Group Leader, Group Leaders and Assistant Group Leaders staff the afterschools. Additionally, community service students and middle school, high school and college students assist with homework and other program components.

The average adult to child ratio is 1:13. Staff credentials vary with a mix of college degrees, experience with school-age children and activity specialization. The program follows the standards set forth in the *Department of Early Education and Care Standards for Licensure or Approval of family Child Care; Small Group and School Age and Large Group and 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. (pick-up is requested by 5:55 P.M.). There are three days per school year that the afterschool program begins at 12 noon. These days are the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, the day before the December recess and the last day of school. NEW: On these three days the program closes at 4:00 P.M.

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. The end of the day offers structured and unstructured opportunities and, weather permitting, outside activities.

SNACKS

The afterschool program in collaboration with the Medford Public Schools Food Service Program provides snack. Please be sure to clearly indicate food and other allergies on the Enrollment Contract form. See page 9 for more information pertaining to EpiPens, etc.

In accordance with the Medford Public Schools Wellness Policy, healthy snack and drink choices are encouraged. Suggestions are always welcomed.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS

An individual file is maintained on each child enrolled. All records are confidential and cannot be released without the written consent of a parent/guardian. The child's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall, upon request, have access to his/her child's record.

Divorced or Separated Families: In order to take the best possible care of your child, please inform us of any custody arrangements, i.e., which parent to contact first for general questions and in an emergency; whether duplicate program information should be sent to both parents; who is responsible for payments; and ,who will or will not be authorized to pick up the child.*

*Note: If a parent has legal custody, or joint legal custody, even if they do not have physical custody, and there is no restraining order in place, the program cannot prevent that parent from picking up his/her child(ren). In such a situation, we will tell the parent who made the request that we cannot prevent a parent with legal custody from picking up his/her child.

Restraining Orders: If a court restraining order is to be respected, a readable copy of the order (including dates) must be on file at the afterschool site and at the Afterschool Office. It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide the certified copy of the order. In addition, the program must be provided with a photograph of the person named in the restraining order. Restraining orders should be submitted annually.

In the event that the certified copy of the order expressly states that either a natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian shall not have any contact with the child or children, and in the event that such person attempts to have contact with the child or children, the afterschool shall first notify the local police department, and only then attempt to notify the custodial parent or legal guardian.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are completed for each child once a year, usually mid-year. Family members will be offered the opportunity to comment and discuss the report with afterschool staff.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Applications for enrollment/re-enrollment are available in the spring of the preceding school year. Priority is given to returning families that submit a Pre-registration Form within the designated re-enrollment time period. Changes in a child's schedule for an upcoming school year will be honored based on availability and date of submission.

Both new and returning families that do not have a voucher are responsible for a yearly non-refundable registration fee per family. If the child withdraws from the program prior to the start of the new school year or at any time during the school year, the registration fee is non-refundable. (Note: Families with vouchers are responsible for a deposit.)

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES- continued

Slots are filled on a first come, first served basis with priority given to returning families and new siblings provided that the Pre-Registration Form and deposit are returned within the stated deadline. Should slots remain open after the deadline, both former and new parents/guardians may enroll children based on program availability. The registration fee will be charged accordingly. If there are no available spaces in the program, the child/ren will be placed on a wait list.

Once registered, changes in enrollment days cannot go into effect until October 1. Additionally, no changes in a child's schedule for the month of June will be honored. Enrollment will remain open throughout the school year on a space availability basis.

A new Enrollment Contract must be renewed and signed annually prior to returning to the program. The parent/guardian signing the Enrollment Contract (contracting parent/guardian) is responsible for all paperwork and payments. This person is the only person that can make changes on the Enrollment Contract. In dual custody situations, a separate Enrollment Contract may be required.

TUITION

Tuition payments are divided into 10 monthly payments. Families pay on a monthly basis beginning in August. By July 1 families not receiving vouchers must enroll in a payment plan with FACTS Management Company. Sibling discounts are available. (Note: Families receiving vouchers must have a current voucher and submit a deposit by August 20.)

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. A **two-week** written notice is required should you decide to decrease days or remove your child from the program. All requests for changes in days will go into effect on the first of the following month from the date a request change was made (provided there was a two-week notice).

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

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: As specified in the Enrollment Contract, a two-week written notice to the Afterschool Office is required. Any reductions in days go into effect on the first of the following month from notification.

Withdrawal: As specified in the Enrollment Contract, a two-week written notice to the Afterschool Office is required prior to withdrawing from the program. Any withdrawal from the afterschool will go into effect on the first of the following month from notification. Future participation is contingent on availability of space.

STUDENT SCHEDULE CHANGES. *continued*

Additional Days: If you would like to send your child to the afterschool program on additional non-scheduled day(s), you may do so if enrollment permits. Written requests must be made in advance to the Afterschool Office. Should you request an additional day and not use it, the charge will remain in effect. An invoice will be e-mailed to the family.

For the safety of your child please inform your child's classroom teacher in writing of any new afterschool arrangements, e.g., reduction in days, additional days, program withdrawal.

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 \$50.00 registration fee. Future participation is contingent on availability of space.

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 the 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, and has been dismissed early from school or at school dismissal for a medical appointment or family emergency, he/she will be permitted to attend the program at the discretion of the Site Coordinator and/or Director.

Families with financial assistance, e.g., vouchers: Thirty absences either explained or unexplained in a six-month period could result in termination from the program.

You must notify us if your child will be absent for any reason. Please call your 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. Please do not ask the classroom teacher to notify the afterschool. Should parents/guardians not adhere to this procedure, they will be asked to leave the program.

YEARLY SCHEDULE

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program operates according to the 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 PROCEDURES/ LATE FINES

Children may be picked up any time prior to 5:55 p.m., but they must be picked up **NO LATER** than 5:55 p.m. Children will be released only to those persons over the age of 16 listed on a family's Enrollment Contract. A child nine years of age or older may walk home if parent/guardian written authorization and consent is on file.

When picking up your child, **YOU MUST SIGN OUT using a complete signature** and documenting the time of departure. Photo IDs are required unless we know the individual(s)

that are picking up the child (ren). Please refrain from cell phone use to ensure better communication at pick-up time. **When you arrive, there is an assumption that you are then responsible for your child within the rules of the program.** If you have not picked up your child and we have not heard from you by 6:10 P.M., your emergency contact(s) will be called. 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.

The Late Pick-up Fines Procedure using the afterschool cell phone to determine time of pick-up is as follows:

- The late fee is a flat fee of \$10.00 for any late arrival from 6:01 P.M. to 6:10 P.M.
- Beginning at 6:11 P.M. until pick-up \$2.00 per minute above the flat fee of \$10.00 is charged.
- A parent/guardian will be asked to sign a Late Pickup Form.
- Late fees will be added to a family's FACTS account once the Late Pickup Form is received. It is expected that the late fee will be paid on line during the next invoice cycle. Families receiving vouchers will receive an invoice.
- Repeated late pickups could result in your being asked to withdraw your child/ren from the program.

Parents/guardians must notify staff in advance and 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 Enrollment Contract. Additional names can be added in writing at any time during the school year. If staff does not know the individual, a photo ID must be shown before the child will be released. It is important to share this information with anyone picking up your child (ren).

Parent/Guardian Emergency Situation: In an emergency situation a telephone call from a parent/guardian directly to a staff member can request a new pick up person. If a child has been picked up by an individual through telephone authorization, the parent/guardian 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/SNOW CLOSING

Should the afterschool program be required to close early in the event of an emergency, every effort will be made to notify parents/guardians in order to make alternate arrangements. In such cases, parents/guardians 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. Should the school day dismiss on time but weather experts predict that travel will remain dangerous throughout the afternoon/evening, parents will be asked to pick up their children as soon as possible or make alternate pick-up arrangements. Afterschool will remain open for only so long as it takes to get all the children picked up. **(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.)**

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.

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

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program requests that families do not ask staff to 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.

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 be sure there is a note for the afterschool program AND 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. This information should correspond with the information shared with school day personnel. Due to allergies of many of the children, food from home is not permitted to celebrate a child's birthday. Be sure you send a separate EpiPen/inhaler to afterschool if needed. Paperwork must be on file with the school nurse. See Medication Procedures below.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Minor Accident: Afterschool staff is trained in First Aid and CPR. In the event of a minor accident, a teacher will administer first aid if necessary and notify the family at pick up time.

Mildly ill Child: 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.

Major Incident: In the event of a medical emergency, a child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest 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.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive a written report within 24 hours when a major incident has occurred.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

As there is no school nurse at the afterschool program, medications are not administered in the afterschool program. However, there is an exception regarding medication that staff members are trained to administer, i.e., EpiPen, and two medications that a child can self-administer, i.e., EpiPen, inhaler. Protocol includes the signed parent/guardian consent and signed medication order that are on file at the office of the school day nurse. Additionally, students need separate medical devices from the school day that are available during afterschool hours in order for staff and/or students to administer/self-administer when necessary.

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. 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. Flip flops are not allowed at afterschool. Open toe sandals must have a back strap and be worn with socks for safety on the stairs and playground.

HOMEWORK

There is a homework period each day (Monday through Thursday) for all students Grades 1-5 that receive homework. The homework period is 45 minutes long. **We ask that parents/guardians review their child's homework each night so that we can be part of a team to foster school success.**

HOMEWORK, continued

We also request that each family sign a Homework Contract. The parent, child and Site Coordinator sign this contract. This signed contract commits the child to work on 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 or that the homework is entirely correct.

Note: The program does 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/guardian, classroom teacher. Please keep in mind that students may not complete all of their homework during the designated homework period. We will, however, provide:

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

REFERRALS

Staff is available to assist parents/guardians in making referral(s) for services. Staff work collaboratively with school day personnel to ensure children and families have appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services. The referral protocol is as follows:

- Staff concerns are addressed with the Site Coordinator and/or Director, and if needed, followed up with school day personnel for possible suggestions.
- Additional observations are made, as appropriate.
- As needed, a meeting is scheduled with the parent/guardian to discuss concerns. Observations and referral information is provided.
- Continued monitoring and family assistance is ongoing.

BEHAVIOR

CHILD BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

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. Staff members 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.

At this time the afterschool protocol is as follows:

- When a child's behavior is problematic, the Site Coordinator will inform the Director and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) to gain any insights and suggestions to resolve the problem. The school day teacher or the school's Behavior Specialist may be consulted.
- If the problematic behavior persists, a conference will be scheduled to develop a Safety Contract with child, parent/guardian and afterschool staff.

BEHAVIOR, continued

- If the Safety Contract is not met, the child will be withdrawn from afterschool.

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 at the termination date.

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 Safety Contract will be developed and monitored.

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

PARENT/GUARDIAN BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

The Medford Public Schools Afterschool Program expects that all adults in contact with program staff, program families and friends, and children act respectfully and appropriately at all times. Behavior that is abusive, disruptive or uncooperative will not be tolerated. Inappropriate parent/guardian behavior, including arriving on the premises under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, will be reviewed by the Director.

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

- The individual(s) involved will be asked to attend a mandatory meeting.
- Documentation of the event and meeting will be placed on file.
- When warranted, consideration for suspension, termination or decline to re-enroll the child in the program will be determined by the Director.
- Families will be informed in writing of the decision made by the Director.

BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING POLICY

The Medford Public Schools has a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The summary of the policy can be found in your child's school specific Student Handbook. The 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 the 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

RESEARCH and EXPERIMENTATION. *continued*

of Schools must approve activities of this nature. Note: Research and experimentation does not refer to program evaluation or data collection.

VOLUNTEERS/INTERNS

Volunteers and interns are welcomed to our programs. Volunteers include family members, community service students, and middle and high school students. CORI checks are required. All volunteers and interns are encouraged to participate in training opportunities.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

As a rule, personal property should remain at home except for items needed for homework completion. This includes toys and all electronics, e.g., cell phones, games. Bicycles, scooters, roller blades and skates, skateboards, etc. are not allowed in the afterschool program. If your child needs an item 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!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO COPY YOUR AFTERSCHOOL CELL PHONE NUMBER IN CONVENIENT LOCATIONS. SHARE THE TELEPHONE NUMBER WITH ANYONE WHO MAY PICK-UP YOUR CHILD (REN).

Parent/Guardian Handbook Receipt- School Year 2016-17

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

Child's Name(s): _____

Afterschool: _____

Parent/Guardian name/signature

Date

Please return to the Afterschool Office with your Enrollment Contract
no later than August 19, 2016.