



**MyTime/21st Century Community Learning Center
West Aurora SD129 / Fox Valley Park District**

Parent Handbook

Various Community Partners

The Parent Handbook

The information in this handbook applies to the MyTime/21st Century Community Learning Centers Afterschool Program. You will need to read and keep this handy.

Providing an after-school program in your community establishes the opportunity for children to engage in a variety of academics, enrichment, and recreational activities, as well as various field trips.

The Goals of the MyTime/21st Century Community Learning Center Program

The primary goal of the MyTime/21st CCLC program is to supplement the education of children who attend low performing schools and live in high-poverty areas with academic, artistic and cultural enrichment during out-of-school time hours, so that they may attain the skills necessary to meet state core curriculum content standards. In addition, the centers offer various educational services to the families of the participating students.

The After-school Schedule

The after-school MyTime/21st CCLC program will be held Monday through Thursday at the school site upon school day dismissal. Elementary sites: 2:20 PM – 5:30 PM. Middle School sites: 3:40 PM- 6:30 PM. The program will not operate on half-days, school holidays, non-attendance days, and emergency school closing days. The program will provide a daily snack, as well as, materials for all academic and enrichment activities.

Activities

Implementation of activities within the following categories:

- homework time;
- remedial education and academic enrichment learning programs;
- mathematics, literacy, and science activities;
- arts and music educational activities,
- tutoring services and mentoring programs;
- programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- drug and violence prevention programs;
- counseling programs;
- character education programs;
- telecommunications and technology education programs;
- expanded library service hours;
- recreational activities;
- career and college readiness.

Recruitment/Retention

The program is offered to students in 1st -8th grades. Students will be recruited by school staff and administration based on the State and School Assessments and quarterly grades. Students are encouraged to be retained in the program

yearly until improved academic performance. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program is authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. The purpose of this important program is to create *community learning centers* that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools, to meet State and local student standards in core academic subjects, to offer students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs, and to offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.

Enrollment Forms

It is required that each participating student in attendance has a completed enrollment form on file prior to starting the *MyTime/21st CCLC* program.

Eligibility

The program is designed to provide academic opportunities and activities to students, targeting those most in need of academic assistance, in low performing, high-poverty schools: Hall, Nicholson, Smith, Freeman, Greenman, Hill, McCleery, Jefferson, Herget, and equitable services to private and public school students and their families. Students, teachers, and other educational personnel are eligible to participate in *MyTime/21st CCLC* programs on an equitable basis.

Homework Time

The after-school program will provide a quiet space and time for children to work on their homework each day. Tutoring will be available to help if your child has questions or needs help. We will do our best to ensure that children spend time on their homework, but we do not guarantee that all homework assignments can be completed during the program time.

Attendance Policy

Daily attendance is taken when your child comes to the after-school program. Your child must be responsible for coming straight to the program after-school is dismissed. If your child is involved in after-school activities (SES, scouts, sports, etc) and will be arriving late to the program, please let the Site Coordinator know. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for safety and best outcomes.

Research has linked the benefits from after-school programs to regular attendance over months and even years. If you enroll your child in our after-school program, it is with the understanding that they should attend on a regular basis. Parents need to help their children keep track of the days they are scheduled to come to the after-school program.

Students must attend a minimum of 3 days per week. Under grant requirements, students must be in attendance for a minimum of 30 days to be eligible as a regular attendee in the program.

Sign-Out/Pick-Up Policy

When your child is picked up, they must be signed out for the day. Only authorized individuals will be able to sign out your child, and they will be required to show identification.

Only persons designated in writing at the time a child is enrolled in the after-school program will be permitted to sign a child out. This is for the child's protection, and we will enforce this rule. The staff will question people we do not know and will check their authorization/identification to pick up your child. **If someone whose name is not on the authorization sheet will be picking up your child, we must have your written permission to release your child from the program.**

We may choose to confirm this with a phone call to you at home or work. It is vital that emergency information is kept current. Your child's safety is our primary concern.

After three late pick-ups (Elementary- 5:30 PM or later, Middle School- 6:30 PM or later) students may be removed from the program.

Supervision Policy

All students served in the 21st CCLC/MyTime program will be supervised at all times by appropriate staff.

Custodial Agreements

If there are custody issues involving your child, you must provide the center with court papers at the time of registration indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The program may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation. If custody changes, the parent is required to notify the program and provide a copy of the changes.

Transportation

Parents and guardians are required to pick up their children at school promptly at the end of the program. If your child takes rides the West Aurora School Bus home, the transportation form and guidelines form must be completed before a student may take the bus home.

Incentives and Retention of Students

Weekly/monthly incentives and other motivating activities will be offered based on student and family attendance. Attendance will be recorded for all programming. Youth have power and ability to make conscious decisions about their activities and behaviors and have input about program content, scheduling, and program operations through surveys, informal questioning, and focus groups staff will support youth in understanding their roles and responsibilities in the MyTime/21st CCLC program. Staff will ensure youth have opportunities to develop and engage in a variety of relationships with a variety of peers and adults. Provide a safe place that does not tolerate, accept, or support violence and aggression. Protect individuals from bullying due to sexual orientation, ability, gender, or ethnicity. Provide field trips and special events as incentives and rewards for program attendance. Staff will create a culture of high participation and provide various attendance awards, recognitions, pins, badges, t-shirts, etc., that are consistent with the background and culture of the individuals. Staff will appoint or elect experienced youth to leadership roles in the program and create a systematic program of contacting dropouts to determine their reasons for leaving.

Parent/Family Engagement

Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in *MyTime/21st CCLC* program and West Aurora School District 129 programs and activities whenever possible. It is to your child's benefit to be involved in their education and afterschool activities. If you have particular programs or areas of interest, please share them with site coordinators, and we will do our best to look into expanding parent opportunities. We offer several services, programs, and activities for parents throughout the schoolyear including:

- Parent University
- *MyTime/21st CCLC* Parent Café
- Parent/family program shadowing
- Local resources, tours, and informational sessions during *MyTime/21st CCLC* program hours
- Opportunities to get involved with other families in the community

Parents are also encouraged to:

- Participate in appropriate activities and programs that support the education of their child.
- Get involved with the Parent Advisory Committee and help make program decisions.
- Make contact with other parents to encourage participation.
- Attend site and program sponsored parent trainings and workshops.
- Help plan and participate in healthy activities as appropriate.

Record Keeping Requirements

In order for our schools to offer 21st Century Community Learning Centers after-school programs, we must meet school district, state and federal record-keeping requirements; this involves the collection of information from the child's school records, such as attendance, behavioral referrals, grades, and test scores. In addition, program participants will be asked to complete surveys that ask about their well-being, behavior, and feelings. Student's name or school ID numbers will not be used in data results.

Rules of Conduct/Guidance Policy

Every child is expected to learn and follow the after-school program rules, which are in accordance with School District Code Conduct as well as the *MyTime/21st CCLC* program Student Behavior Plan.

Student Responsibilities include:

- Taking care of equipment
- Cleaning up after activities
- Sharing equipment with each other
- Keeping hands and feet to themselves
- Using appropriate language
- Treating staff with respect
- Follow all rules

Photographs

There may be times when student's name, photographs, writings, artwork, etc. for the purpose of marketing, publicity for program activities (including websites, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter), and documentation of instructional evaluation are used of the children participating in the after-school program. The material, whole, in part, or composite may be used as the program sees fit in a publication of educational material, promotional articles, websites, and/or for any other lawful purpose.

Withdrawing From the Program

If you wish to withdraw your child from the after-school program during the year, please notify the Site Coordinator in the after-school program at your school in writing. We appreciate as much advance notice as possible.

Personal Belongings and Money

We strongly advise against bringing valuables including cell phones, iPods, electronics and money to the program. The *MyTime/21st* CCLC program is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. Cell phone usage is not allowed during program hours.

Fire, Tornado, and Emergencies

The after-school program will follow each school procedure as designed by the school crisis team. Evacuation plans are posted in every room.

Cancellation Due to Weather

When schools close early due to inclement weather, the after-school program will not be held. There may be times when the weather deteriorates toward the end of the school day, and it is up to the School District to decide whether or not to cancel the program. Staff will try to contact as many parents as possible. Parents should discuss early dismissal plans with their children to ensure their safety.

American Disabilities Act

In implementing education reform initiatives, public schools and school systems must abide by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Section 504 prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating on the basis of disability. Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government services by state and local governmental entities, whether or not they receive federal funds. No student in the after-school program shall be excluded based on their gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the *MyTime/21st* CCLC program to prohibit discrimination against any student on account of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or physical or mental handicap. If a student believes that an act of discrimination has been directed towards him or her, the student may notify the site coordinator or a building administrator. The notice must be in writing and should contain a statement describing the acts of discrimination and the person or persons charged. Upon receiving notice, the site coordinator or administrator shall interview the student and conduct an investigation as may be required by the circumstances. Upon conclusion of the investigation, a written report shall be prepared which shall include any findings of the investigation to remedy any discrimination determined to have occurred. Any student making a claim of discrimination can, at any time during the investigation procedure, supplement his or her statement of claim with any information that he or she believes supports the claim. No employee

of the *MyTime/21st CCLC* program may discriminate or retaliate against any student on the basis that such student has made a claim of discrimination.

Data Collection

The *MyTime/21st CCLC* program collaborates with external evaluators for the after-school program. This evaluation involves the collection of information from your child's school records, such as attendance, behavioral referrals, grades, and test scores. In addition, program participants will be asked to complete surveys that ask about their individual well-being, behavior, and feelings. Such information is confidential. Children's names or school ID numbers WILL NOT be used in reporting.

Upon request, a parent may inspect any student survey created by Aurora University and/or any community partners.

Confidentiality Agreement

Students in the West Aurora School District have the right to expect that information about them will be kept confidential by all staff and student leaders. The U.S. Congress has addressed the privacy-related concerns of educators, parents, and students by enacting the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (known more commonly as "FERPA") The Illinois School Student Record Act of 1975 and the Mental Health and Development Disabilities Confidentiality Act. Among other provisions, FERPA allows the government to withdraw federal funds from any educational institution, including the above-stated school districts, which disseminates a student's educational records without his or her parent's consent.

Religion

No funds provided pursuant to this program shall be expended to support religious practices, such as religious instruction, worship, or prayer.

Missing Child Policy

Sometimes a parent forgets to remind the Site Coordinator of changes in the child's schedule, or a child genuinely forgets what to do after-school that day. If your child is scheduled to come to the after-school program, but does not arrive, we will look for him/her.

If we 1) cannot find your child, 2) cannot reach you or your child at home, 3) cannot contact those persons listed in the emergency information you provided, we will report your child as missing to the Aurora Police Department. This is the only way we can be sure your child is safe.

Illness

If a child has any of the following signs or symptoms of illness, he/she will be sent home from the after-school program:

- Diarrhea
- Untreated skin infection
- Severe coughing
- Temperature
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Vomiting
- Redness on the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes

The Site Coordinator should be informed of any illness, especially where there is a chance that others may be exposed.

First Aid/Accidents

If a child is injured while attending the after-school program, emergency first aid will be administered, and an Incident Report will be filed. Parents will be notified immediately of accident or injury.

Medication

Medications will not be administered by the afterschool staff. This policy includes even common and widely used preparations such as aspirin and cold medicines. All medications must be given prior to the program with the exception of inhalers which must be administered during the after-school program. Inhalers must be in their original containers with the prescription information. Written permission from the parent and a doctor's note must accompany the medication on the district medication authorization form.

The child's name, the name of the medication, and the time and dates to administer the medicine must be identified on the authorization form along with a signature of the parent/guardian and physician. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Serious Injury

If a child is seriously injured or a medical emergency while attending the after-school program, emergency services will be called and the child will be transported to the hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact person listed on the child's enrollment form. The emergency information you have provided will be taken to the hospital. **It is vital that the emergency information regarding your child be kept current.**

Outdoor Play

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play/recreation. Based on this information and state requirements, an outdoor play will be included in our program on a daily basis. We will limit the amount of time outside when the temperatures are very warm or very cold. If the situation requires, we will adjust outdoor time due to rain, threatening weather, etc. On days that outdoor play is not provided due to these conditions, we will include a time for indoor gross motor activities.

Playground Safety Rules:

The school playground will be used for recreational and physical activities and games. The same behavior and regulations to which student must adhere during regular school hours will be observed during the time the child is enrolled in the MyTime/21st CCLC program.

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

All children providers have mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect in the State of Illinois. All staff is trained and mandated reporters of child abuse. The role as a mandated reporter is to inform the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services when a determined there is reason to believe that a child has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed – physically, sexually, or through neglect- and that a caretaker either committed the harm or should have taken steps to protect the child from harm. Parents will not be told that a report has been filed. The after-school staff must cooperate fully with Child Protective Services representatives when a report is made.

Questions or Comments

If you have any questions or comments regarding the *MyTime/21st CCLC* program, please feel free to contact any of the following individuals:

School Principal

Rachel Gilmour, West Aurora School District 129, 21st Century Project Director at 630-301-5056.

Karen Harkness, Communities In Schools, Director of Programs at 630-692-9524.

Your feedback is important to us and will ensure quality programming.