



## **MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> 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/21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Afterschool Program.*

*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/21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program**

The primary goal of the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> 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 services to the families of the participating students.

#### **Schedule**

The after-school *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program will be held Monday through Thursday at the designated school site upon school day dismissal. Elementary sites: 2:20 PM – 5:15 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, dinner pilot in a few select sites, as well as, materials for all academic and enrichment activities.

#### **Activities**

- 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;
- technology education programs;
- expanded library service hours;
- recreational activities;
- career and college readiness
- student choice activities.

#### **Recruitment/Retention**

This program is offered to students in grades 1-8. Students are recruited by school staff, classroom teachers, and administration based on the State and School Assessments and quarterly grades along with other grant eligibility criteria. Students are encouraged to be retained in the program yearly until improved academic performance. The 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **Target Enrollment and Student Recruitment**

Each site will target students in grades 1-5 or 6-8 demonstrating the greatest need for after-school services based on the following criteria:

Families who qualify for free/reduced meals;  
Students residing in single parent and/or foster homes;  
Students repeating a grade level or required course;  
Students who do Not Meet Standards on State Assessment in any content area;  
Students who demonstrate weakness in any content area;  
Students who have truancy concerns;  
Students with needs for additional academic support, tutoring, mentoring;  
Students who are English language learners;  
Students who demonstrate little or no interest in school as determined through recommendations by school counselors, principals, assistant principal, parents, or teachers.

Student enrollment forms are sent home with each student prior to the program's start date. After an initial enrollment period of two –three weeks, registration will be open to all students currently enrolled in the targeted grade levels with West Aurora School District that meet eligibility criteria pending available space.

The targeted enrollment will be 80 students at the elementary schools and 80 students at the middle school unless otherwise indicated with a Program Amendment (and subsequent approval) by the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Division of the Illinois Department of Education.

### **Procedures for Student Recruitment and Retention**

The following procedures will be implemented in an effort to successfully recruit and retain students in the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program* throughout the program's initial implementation in September 2013 for FVPD grantee and January 2015 for SD129 grantee and subsequent program years.

Students, parents, community members will be informed of the program's implementation via news articles in school newspapers, school conferences, school events, flyers, and/or announcements at afterschool -hour events.

Parents will be notified of student eligibility for participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program through student registration forms and a letter from the Program Director.

Student eligibility will be based on the criteria outlined in the program application of students at risk of not meeting proficiency levels and family income levels (participation in the free/reduced federal food program) and by speaking with teachers and families about student's needs. Priority is given to students identified with educational difficulties (e.g. retention, low test scores, poor attendance, non-graduation risk) or other needs determined by the school principal and individual teachers. All recruitment strategies are translated into languages most appropriate for the parents and families.

### **Enrollment Forms**

It is required that each participating student in attendance has a completed enrollment form on file prior to starting the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program. No student will be allowed to stay for any reason unless the forms are signed and completed by parent or guardian.

### **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: Freeman, Greenman, Nancy Hill, McCleery, Herget, Hall, Nicholson, Smith, Jefferson, and equitable services to private and public school students and their families. Students, teachers, and other educational personnel are eligible to participate in *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* programs on an equitable basis.

### **Homework Time**

The after-school program will provide a quiet space and time for students to work on their homework. Tutoring will be available to help if students have questions or need guidance. We will do our best to ensure that students spend time on their homework, but we do not guarantee that all homework assignments can be completed during the program time due to the other ongoing partner activities and scheduled programs.

## Attendance Policy

The *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program* is an instructional program that includes a number of enrichment activities. Thus, an abundance of students would like the privilege to attend such a program. It is for this reason that students may be temporarily excused from after-school due to: illness or a health condition; a religious observance when requested in writing by the student's parents; other after-school activities; or family emergencies. However, once a student has four or more total unexcused absences in a given quarter, parents/guardians will be notified. Staff will maintain daily student attendance, which is to be provided to the Evaluation Team as part of grant requirements for annual reporting. The evaluation team will maintain attendance records.

Days not in attendance because of official suspension or expulsion shall not be counted toward the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program* attendance. Students placed on hospital/homebound program due to extenuating circumstances shall be considered present in accordance with the policies and procedures governing the administration of the hospital/homebound program. However, the parent should make contact with the Site Coordinator(s) and/or Program Director for consideration of continued participation in the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program*. If a student is present in the class for at least 30 minutes, the student is considered present for after-school instruction.

Daily attendance is taken when students come to the after-school program. Students must be responsible for coming straight to the program after-school is dismissed. If a student 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 student in our after-school program, it is with the understanding that they should attend on a regular basis. Parents should help their student 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.

## Visitors Procedure

Visitors must report to the school office immediately upon arriving on campus and secure a visitors pass. State issued ID cards are required and all community partners must provide confirmation that a background check has been completed. The site coordinator will be on-site during *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* hours of operation.

## Sign-Out/Pick-Up Policy

When your student is picked up, they must be signed out for the day. Only authorized individuals will be able to sign out students, and they will be required to show identification. Only persons designated in writing on enrollment form and emergency contacts listed in eschool will be permitted to sign a student out. This is for the protection of the student, 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 student, we must have your permission to release your student from the program.** We may choose to confirm this with a phone call to you at home or work. Thus, it is vital that emergency information is kept current. Student 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 released from the program.**

## Supervision Policy

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

## Custodial Agreements

If there are custody issues involving your student, you must provide the site 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 students at school promptly at the end of the program. If you student takes the West Aurora School District 129 Bus home, the transportation and guidelines form must be completed before a student may take the bus home. Bus service is only offered to eligible program sites.

## **Incentives and Retention of Students**

Weekly/monthly incentives and other motivating activities will be offered based on student and family attendance. Attendance is kept for all programming. Students 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, etc., that are consistent with the background and culture of the individuals. Staff will appoint or elect experienced students 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 student'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, parent liaison, or school teachers and we will do our best to look into expanding parent opportunities. We offer several services, programs, and activities for parents throughout the school year including:

- Parent Leadership Series monthly offerings for SD129 parents and guardians (various topics/themes)
- *MyTime/21st CCLC* Parent Events
- 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 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 activities as appropriate.

## **Communication with Families**

- *MyTime/21st CCLC Program* staff will communicate with the parents/guardians of participants about their student's experiences, behavior, successes, and achievements. Encourage family input and participation by inviting families to contribute their expertise and talents to the program and asking for feedback. Initial conversations should include identifying their student's interests, abilities, and talents. Methods of communication may vary, but should include one or more of the following:
  - Verbal
  - Email
  - Written correspondence
  - In person Meetings
  - Phone calls or text messages
- Suggested items for discussion throughout the year are as follows:
  - Respect for others (How does the student treat other students and staff?)
  - Attendance (How many days has the student attend the program: Has their attendance at program affected their grades during the traditional learning day?)
  - Academics (Is student completing homework? Is student experiencing any successes or challenges with specific subjects?)
  - Prepared (Does the student arrive at the program with necessary supplies?)
  - Attitude (Does the student seem ready to work hard on assignment?)

Additionally, family newsletters will be distributed, outlining the upcoming month's events and highlighting previous events.

For families who do not speak English as their primary language, publications are also made available in Spanish.

### **Record Keeping Requirements**

In order for our schools to offer 21<sup>st</sup> 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 student'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 and school ID numbers will not be used in data results.

### **Rules of Conduct/Guidance Policy**

Every student 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/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program Student Behavior Plan.

### **Student Discipline Policy**

*MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program* is an extension of the school day. Thus, student behavior expectations are the same in the After-school Program as those expected during the regular school hours. Our afterschool program requires a cooperative effort among parents, students, and staff. Disciplinary procedures of the regular school day will be used in the after-school program. The staff will manage student behavior in the classroom and the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program Site Coordinator* and/or Program Director will intervene as needed. In the event that a discipline referral is necessary, the Site Coordinator will complete a behavior write up form which is shared with Program Director, building administrator, and parents. Bus behavior will follow the same rules and expectations as well. A written referral will be made to the Site Coordinator(s) and consequences will be determined accordingly depending upon said disciplinary incident.

### **Code of Conduct/Student Behavior Policy**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Verbal Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Written warning, Phone call to parent/guardian or inform parent during program dismissal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Suspension from the program for \_\_\_# days, Phone call to parent/guardian
- 4<sup>th</sup> Student may be dropped from the program, Meeting with parent/guardian, student, grant director and/or building administrator.

Note: Depending upon the severity of the action at the discretion of the Site Coordinator, a student can be suspended or dropped from the program immediately upon consulting with a building administrator and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program Director. The Site Coordinator will also monitor student behavior, and according to it, he/she will decide if the student will be allowed to participate in certain activities.

#### **• Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Infractions**

- Committing Acts of a Sexual Nature
- Violence or Threats against a Staff Member
- Possession of or Use of Weapons
- Possession of or Use of Drugs/ Alcohol

### **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 students 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 student from the after-school program during the year for any reason, please notify the Site Coordinator in the after-school program at your school in writing.

### **Personal Belongings**

We strongly advise against bringing valuables including cell phones, iPods, electronics and money to the program. The *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> 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. Emergencies drills will be practiced during the *MyTime program*.

### **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 students to ensure their safety. Please check School District website for emergency closings at [www.sd129.org](http://www.sd129.org) or visit social media district/school pages for important updates.

### **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 his or her gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program to prohibit discrimination against any student on account of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or disability. 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/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program may discriminate against any student on the basis that such student has made a claim of discrimination.

### **Data Collection**

The *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* program collaborates with external evaluators for the after-school program. This evaluation involves the collection of information from your student'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. Student's names and school ID numbers will NOT be used in reporting. Upon request, a parent may inspect any student survey created by grant evaluators.

### **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 education, worship, or prayer. The following types of religious activities are prohibited in 21st CCLC programs: Bible verses for handwriting; Praying before snack; Memory exercises with religious verses; Bible trivia; and Spelling religious words.

### **Missing Child Policy**

Sometimes a parent forgets to remind the Site Coordinator of changes in the student's schedule, or a student forgets what to do after-school that day. If your student is scheduled to come to the after-school program, but does not arrive, staff will seek out their whereabouts.

**If we 1) cannot find your child, 2) cannot reach you or your child at home, 3) cannot reach persons listed in the emergency information you provided, we will report your child as missing to the Aurora Police Department.**

This is to ensure student safety and wellbeing.

### **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
- Redness on the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Vomiting

The Site Coordinator should be informed of any illness, and if a student is not present due to illness during the school day, the student should NOT attend *MyTime* that afternoon.

### **Medication**

Medications will not be administered by the afterschool staff. This policy includes common and widely used preparations such as aspirin and cold medicines. All medications must be given prior to the program with the exception of Epi-pens and inhalers which must be administered during the after-school program. Epi-pens and 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 student'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. No designated nurses are on staff during after-school programs.

### **Serious Injury**

If a student is seriously injured or a medical emergency occurs while attending the after-school program, emergency services will be called and the student will be transported to the hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or emergency contact persons listed in the student's file. The emergency information you have provided will be taken to the hospital. **It is vital that the emergency contact information is current.**

### **Outdoor Play**

Research has shown that students stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play/recreation. Based on this information and state requirements, this will be included in our program on a daily basis, weather permitting. 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 *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **Program Sustainability**

One of the most important tasks of the Advisory Council is to establish and finalize a Sustainability Plan that will ensure that the *MyTime/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC After-school program and Summer Programs* are able to continue to provide the same amount and rigor of services in later years of the grant term when funding may be decreased and in later years when 21st CCLC funds are no longer available. Parents will be invited to participate in sustainability planning.

**Questions or Comments**

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

- School Principal
- Debbie Smith, Fox Valley Park District, Project Director at 630-966-4555
- Rachel Shields, West Aurora School District 129, 21<sup>st</sup> 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 aid in ensuring quality programs.