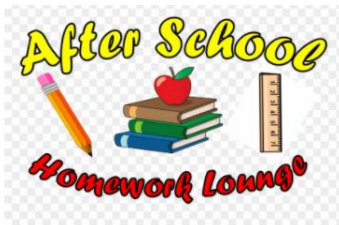


Millcreek Township School District –  
Child Development & Early Learning Programs

# Parent Program Guide: Before / After Care Program

## Mission Statement

The Millcreek Township School District Before/After Care Programs offer students a safe, educational, and recreation environment before and after school. We strive to surround students with caring staff members who are available to assist with tutoring and homework, as well as provide students the opportunity to be involved in creative activities and recreational games on a daily basis.



Millcreek Township School District  
Office of Child Development & Early Learning  
3740 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street  
Erie PA 16506  
814-836-6091



Dear Parents/Guardians of Children in the MTSD School-Age Before/After Care Program,

Welcome to the MTSD Before/After Care Program!

The care of your child in our Before/After Care Program is very important to us! Working with our Before/After Care staff, we will provide a safe and engaging environment for your child. Program schedules and routines are based on developmentally appropriate practices. Social-emotional and academic growth are facilitated through meaningful learning activities and peer experiences.

We welcome and encourage parent involvement. In addition to contacting us with any suggestions, concerns, or questions you may have, please feel comfortable to have conversations with the Before/After Care staff at your program's site. At drop-off and pick-up times, the Before/After Care team will share highlights of your child's participation in our program. This is also a time for you to share pertinent information about your child that will help the team provide an experience tailored to his/her interests and needs.

Respectfully,  
The MTSD Child Development & Early Learning Team

*Sara*

Mrs. Sara Grutkowski  
Child Development & Early  
Learning Coordinator  
[grutkowski@mtsd.org](mailto:grutkowski@mtsd.org)

*Susan*

Dr. Susan Greenaway  
Supervisor of Child Development  
& Early Learning  
[greenaway@mtsd.org](mailto:greenaway@mtsd.org)

#### MTSD School-Age Before/After Care Program Locations

Asbury Elementary School  
5875 Sterrettania Road  
Fairview PA 16415  
814-392-4413

Belle Valley Elementary School  
5300 Henderson Road  
Erie PA 16509  
814-835-5613

Chestnut Hill Elementary School  
1001 West 54<sup>th</sup> Street  
Erie PA 16509  
814-413-5144

Grandview Elementary School  
4391 Lancaster Road  
Erie PA 16506  
814-413-6193

Tracy Elementary School  
2624 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Erie PA 16505  
814-835-5803

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## Before/After Care Program: Overview

The MTSD Before/After Care programs are led by caring staff who value each child in the program. All activities within the programs are geared toward providing a safe environment in which students have fun. Program activities promote students' physical development, support their academic learning, and foster their social and communication skills.

At drop-off and pick-up times, staff will share some of the highlights of your child's participation in the program. You may hear about a new game s/he learned, a project s/he completed with another student, a work of art s/he created, etc. Also, for students who are enrolled in the program at least 15 hours / week, you will receive a 'Child Services Report' every 6 months. This report will identify your child's strengths we see in our program and their next anticipated developmental milestones. A program staff person will share this with you.

We welcome the opportunity to have a conference with you. If you would like to schedule some time to discuss your child's needs and interests, just let the Before/After Care staff know or call Sara Grutkowski or Susan Greenaway at 836-6091 to schedule a time to meet.

Each Before/After Care program has a regular schedule to provide structure for the students. Below is a sample schedule.

### Sample Before/After Care Program Schedule

#### Before School Schedule

7:00 to 8:00 am	Centers; Table Top Activities
8:00 to 8:20 am	Free Choice Physical Activity
8:20 to 8:45 am	Planned Physical Activity
8:45 to 9:10 am	Centers; Table Top Activities (Students participating in the school's breakfast program are dismissed to the cafeteria about 8:55 am.)
9:10 to 9:15 am	Get ready for the 9:15 bell

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#### After School Schedule

3:30 to 4:00 pm	Homework; Centers; Table Top Activities
4:00 to 4:45 pm	Planned Physical Activity or Outside Time
4:45 to 5:15 pm	Free Play Physical Activity; Centers
5:15 to 6:00 pm	Centers; Table Top Activities

*Note: Please be sure to contact your child's After Care program if your child is going to be absent from After Care.*

## Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

### Arrival / Drop-Off Procedures:

- ✓ Before Care begins at 7 am. (Staff are not permitted to allow students into the program until this time.)
- ✓ Use the Sign-in sheet for your child *each* morning. Include the following information:
  - Actual time you and your child entered the program.
  - Legible signature of person dropping off the student.
  - Emergency phone number at which you can be contacted **THAT DAY**.
  - Daily indication of whether or not your child is participating in the school's breakfast program. ('Yes' = student is required to go to breakfast. 'No' = student is not permitted to go to breakfast. '?' = it is the student's choice at breakfast time whether or not he/she participates that day.)
- ✓ Drop-off is a time for sharing information. Before Care staff may share upcoming events and highlights of your child's participation in the program. Also, please feel free to ask questions and/or share information about your child pertinent to his/her participation in our program (e.g. his/her interests, upcoming events).

### Pick-up / Departure Procedures:

- ✓ After Care begins at the school's dismissal time.
- ✓ Use the Sign-out sheet for your child *each* afternoon.
  - Indicate the actual time you arrived in the program space to pick up your child.
  - Legible signature of person picking up the student. (Important note: Each student can only be picked up by the persons listed on his/her 'Emergency Contact – Parental Consent Form.')
  - Be aware that if the staff do not know the person picking up a student, they will check the person's identification to ensure the person is listed as a parent or a 'person to whom the child can be released' on the 'Emergency Contact – Parental Consent Form.'
- ✓ Pick-up is a time for sharing information. After Care staff may share upcoming events and highlights of your child's participation in the program's activities. Also, please feel free to ask questions and/or share information about your child pertinent to his/her participation in our program (e.g. his/her interests, upcoming events).
- ✓ Students must be picked up by 6 pm.
- ✓ *Please note:* On District scheduled early dismissals for academic planning and professional development, After Care starts earlier, when students are dismissed from their school day. After Care on these days will have an additional fee assessed for students who stay after 4:15 pm.



## Snacks



Please send your child in with healthy snacks in his/her book bag for his/her time in Before Care and/or After Care. Do not include candy or pop for your child's snacks.

Students will have an opportunity to snack during Before Care and After Care.



## Student Files

When a child is enrolled in one of our programs, the parents complete the application along with required program forms. These forms are kept for each student in a student file, kept confidential and in a locked space. All forms must be kept up-to-date throughout the school year. Let your child's program staff know immediately if any changes occur.



Required documents in the student files include:

- **Agreement form**

This form designates which schedule option you have chosen for your child and clearly lists the required payment policies. The Agreement form lists persons designated by the parent to whom their child may be released. Agreements must be completed and submitted with the annual registration fee before a student may begin participation in the Before/After Care program.

Refer to our webpage for tuition information. This is updated each school year:

<https://www.mtsd.org/who-we-are/district-offices/before-care>.

- **Emergency Contact – Parental Consent form**

This form identifies the family's contact information as well as indicates persons to whom the child may be released if parents are unavailable. Only identified family members and those listed as 'designated to release to' persons may pick up the child. Individuals new to staff are required to provide identification before the child is released to him/her. Additionally, the Emergency Contact – Parental Consent form includes medical information, such as allergies or other medical conditions, as well as doctor and insurance information.

- **Child Health Forms: Immunizations, Child Health Report, Flu Shot**

An updated immunization list is required each school year your child participates in the Before/After Care program. Additionally, there must be at least one Child Health Report in the file. If your child participates in Before/After Care multiple years, please provide a new Child Health Report each year if you are able to do so.

The Office of Child Development regulations further require participating children have documentation of an annual flu shot or an exemption from the flu shot letter from the parent on file each school year. Please provide this to your child's program staff for his/her student file.

- **Parent Permission form**

Parents are requested to sign the photo release and hand-sanitizer permission form as they deem appropriate.

- **Child Service Report, if applicable**

If your child attends Before/After Care 15 hours or more a week, the Before/After Care program staff will complete a Child Service Report and review it with you in January.

- **Medication forms, if applicable**

Children in Before/After Care are not permitted to have any medicines on their person or in their book bag during Before/After Care program times. If your child has a medical condition requiring medicine, the MTSD Medication Guidelines must be followed. Inform your Before/After Care staff immediately if your child has any medical conditions.

Be sure to inform the Before/After Care staff of any changes you need to make to your forms. Additionally, the Before/After Care staff will ask you to review your agreement form and the Emergency Contact – Parental Consent form at least twice during the school year: typically at the start of the school year and in January.

## Emergency / Evacuation Plans & Safety Drills



The Child Development & Early Learning Program Emergency / Evacuation Plan is aligned with the MTSD school safety requirements.

The Emergency / Evacuation Plan uses the Standard Response Protocol to outline what students and staff are to do in an emergency that necessitates a “Hold,” “Secure,” “Lockdown,” “Evacuate,” and/or “Shelter” response. The Emergency / Evacuation Plan identifies locations within the school and outside the school to where students will evacuate if needed in response to an emergency. Also, maps of evacuation routes are located in each program space.

Staff participate in the Emergency / Evacuation Plan training each school year and when, if needed, the plan is updated throughout the school year. Students and staff practice emergency drills on a regular basis. Fire drills are practiced monthly. Program staff will alter the times and hypothetical fire location to practice immediate and orderly evacuation. Additionally, each quarter program staff will practice another emergency drill (e.g. weather) to allow the students and staff to practice the emergency responses of “Secure,” “Lockdown,” “Evacuate,” and/or “Shelter.” Each program maintains a list of all drills in which the students have participated.

## Family Engagement



Parent involvement is very important. Research shows that students do better socially and academically when their parents are involved in their educational programs. With respect to parents' busy schedules and interests, know that there are several ways you can be involved in your child's Before/After Care program. Parent involvement includes many types of contacts parents have with the Before/After Care program staff. It includes conversations you have with the staff at drop-off and pick-up times, written communications (e.g. notes you provide staff about your child's upcoming absence, monthly newsletters share by staff), volunteering to share a hobby or cultural custom with the student group, and providing input to help ensure our Before/After Care program meets the needs of the families. We encourage you to participate in any, or all, of the following opportunities:

- ❖ During drop-off and/or pick-up times, please share pertinent information with staff that will help them provide a super program experience for your child. Additionally, program staff will share highlights of your child's participation in the program.
- ❖ Not much time at drop-off and/or pick-up? Feel free to write a brief note to the staff. Staff can write back or call you to follow up.
- ❖ A monthly newsletter will be provided to you. It will highlight the activities in which students are engaged, provide reminders for upcoming events, and list the program schedule and contact information. Reviewing this with your children is an opportunity to talk with them about their day.
- ❖ Have a hobby or family custom to share? The students will benefit from your sharing. Perhaps you want to read a favorite story to the group. Your enthusiasm will have a positive influence on students' interest in literacy. Does your family celebrate Hanukkah or Kwanza? The students' understanding and appreciation of various cultures and family traditions will expand. Use Yoga for relaxation? Students will benefit from learning some poses that can help them relax. If you have the time to share, please talk with the Before/After Care program staff to set it up.
- ❖ There are opportunities to set up a meeting with the staff, too. Feel free to arrange a day/time that you can meet with the program staff if you want to discuss your child's participation in the Before/After Care program. Also, staff will share a 'Child Services' report with you if your child is enrolled in the program for over 15 hours / week. This report notes your child's strengths the staff see developing in the program. The staff will review this with you.
- ❖ Check out the Child Development & Early Learning Programs page on the school district website: <https://www.mtsd.org/who-we-are/district-offices/before-care>. You will find program overviews (i.e. Preschool and School-age Before/After Care), tuition information, program guides, and other information and updates.
- ❖ Have a question or suggestion for the program? Your input is valued and can help us improve our programs. Feel free to contact the Before/After Care supervisory team by calling 814-836-6091 or through email:



- Sara Grutkowski, Child Development & Early Learning Coordinator – [grutkowski@mtsd.org](mailto:grutkowski@mtsd.org)
- Susan Greenaway, Supervisor of Child Development & Early Learning – [greenaway@mtsd.org](mailto:greenaway@mtsd.org)

## Inclusion



The MTSD Child Development & Early Learning programs welcome all students in an inclusive environment. Inclusion is defined as “including children with disabilities in early childhood programs, together with their peers without disabilities; holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities; facilitating individualized accommodations; and using evidence-based services and supports to foster development, friendships with peers, and a sense of belonging.” (HHS/ED Policy Statement, 2015)

Children of all abilities, needs, backgrounds, cultures, religions, and economic circumstances participate in our programs. We are committed to providing developmentally appropriate experiences that support the access and participation of each child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure each child has the opportunity for optimum success. We communicate with families daily and have meetings as needed. We work with therapists, special educators, and other professionals to integrate accommodations, modifications, and strategies when students need their services. We can help families as they secure additional help and resources. We also work with and accept ELRC funding.

If your child has an Individualized Education Plan, we request you share this with us. We will work to accommodate your child and help him/her achieve his goals.

## Resources for Families

Life can be challenging. If you find yourself struggling, please feel free to call us at 814-836-6091. We will work to connect you to community resources that can help.

Below are some community resource organizations you can contact directly.

- ❖ Achievement Center: <https://www.achievementctr.org/>
  - Provides child-centered and family-focused services in a variety medical and behavioral areas.
- ❖ Family Services of NW PA: <https://www.fsnwpa.org/>
  - Provides services for child welfare and behavioral health.
- ❖ Northwest Early Learning Resource Center: <http://www.nwirelrc.org/Social-Media-and-Links>
  - Provides links to family and community services.

- ❖ PA Department of Human Services: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
  - Provides assistance related to financial needs, medical health care, heating, housing, mental health, crisis, and employment/training programs to qualifying families.
- ❖ PA Positive Behavior Support: <http://papbs.org/Home.aspx>
  - Provides supports to schools and families to create and maintain positive behavior supports and interventions to promote student academic success and social / emotional well-being.

## Student Success & Classroom Management Plan

### Mission and Guiding Belief Statements:

The MTSD Child Development and Early Learning Programs work under the district's overarching mission to provide a high-quality educational experience that prepares the students to reach their potential as life-long learners and responsible citizens. There are five critical belief statements that our program follows and underscores our mission:

- ✓ Families play a critical role in student success.
- ✓ Each student is important and is treated with dignity and respect.
- ✓ All students should have the opportunity to participate in academic programs that are relevant and rigorous.
- ✓ A learning community embraces diversity and allows individuals to achieve their maximum potential.
- ✓ Learning is a life-long experience and does require different approaches.

Working within this mission and these guiding beliefs, the MTSD Child Development and Early Learning Programs envision providing every child the educational experiences he or she needs to be successful in his or her academic career and life.

### Setting Students Up for Success:

With the Mission and Guiding Belief Statements in mind, qualified and caring staff provide each child with guidance that helps him/her acquire a positive self-concept and self-control via the following program practices and structures.



#### Activities / Curriculum / Schedule:

- Activities are developmentally appropriate for whole group, small group, and individual student needs.
- Differentiation occurs based on students' strengths and needs, interests, and learning styles.
- The physical environment and atmosphere are engaging, positive, and respectful.
- Schedules are developmentally appropriate, providing a consistent flow to the children's day that meets their cognitive, social & emotional, and physical needs.

- Each program implements a positive behavior management system aligned with the system used by the school. Characteristics such as responsibility, caring, and team-work are modeled and reinforced on a daily basis.
- The strategies of re-direction, distraction, and active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior are utilized when an unacceptable behavior occurs, or is about to occur. (Corporal punishment and shaming are never permitted. Also, discipline shall never be related to food, rest, or toileting.)

As children are learning and developing their social and emotional skills, staff support their growth by ensuring the following:

- Correct behaviors are taught, modeled, coached, and reinforced.
- Behavior guidance is constructive, positive, and suited to the age of the child.
- Interventions are proactive rather than reactive, are as minimally intrusive as possible, use positive techniques, and are respectful of the student's human dignity.
- Classroom rules are clear, positive, in child-friendly language, developed with student input, visible, and reinforced.
- Children are encouraged to solve as many of their problems as possible, with staff guidance as necessary. (Physical or emotional danger require immediate staff intervention.)

The overall key behavior expectations for students are:

- Act in ways that promote the physical safety and welfare of children and others.
- Respect the rights, feelings, and property of others.
- Cooperate with other children and adults and follow established consequences.

### **Additional Student Supports:**

When the above strategies and practices in the 'Setting the Students Up for Success' section do not result in the appropriate behavior, the following may occur based on the nature of the inappropriate behavior:

1. The child may be removed from the activity. The child and staff member will engage in a brief discussion to decide upon a solution to the behavior and how the student can make a better choice the next time s/he finds him/herself in a similar situation. The child is supported as he/she transitions back into the same activity or is redirected to a different activity.
2. Occurrences of inappropriate behavior may require staff to complete a Behavior Report which will be reviewed with the parent. The parent, the student, and the staff person will determine if additional supports such as an individualized behavior plan is needed.
3. If needed, several data / monitoring strategies are available to use to monitor student behavior and collect data to inform decisions on how best to work with the student.
  - a. Anecdotal journal: Daily, or periodically throughout the school day as needed, document observed behaviors – objective notes, dates, times.
  - b. Charts / Logs – Behavior Frequency Counts: For specific behaviors being considered, tally the number of times the behavior occurs in a given timeframe and/or record time and context each time behavior occurs during the day.
  - c. Identify and document antecedents to specific behaviors of concern and document the subsequent consequence of the behavior. Look for trends.
  - d. Have a conversation with the student about the behavior. Gather input from the student (and/or the family).

- e. School records: Consider attendance information, incident reports, behavior reports, student interest inventory, academic strengths.
- f. Individual behavior management plan documentation.
4. Parent and staff conferences may be required to discuss the behavior and establish a plan of action.
5. An individualized behavior plan may be required. The appropriate staff person will gather data regarding the frequency, timing, and context in which the student is engaging in inappropriate behaviors. Working with the appropriate Child Development Personnel and the child's family, a behavior plan will be developed that outlines direct instruction and managed reinforcements that works to decrease / eliminate the child's inappropriate behaviors.
6. A referral to the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit may be made for the possibility of a more formal evaluation to determine if the child needs more support than is available at the MTSD Child Development & Early Learning Programs.
7. Other, as appropriate per the student's needs.

### **Suspension-Expulsion:**

All efforts, as noted above, are made to help ensure student success. In the extremely rare situation when the severity and/or frequency of a child's inappropriate behavior jeopardizes the health, safety, or well-being of him/herself or others within the program, the Child Development & Early Learning Program Supervisor reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program.

### **Staff Support:**

Staff received supports to ensure their proficiency working with children with challenging behaviors.

- Located in each school, each Child Development & Early Learning Program follows the positive behavior support system of the school. Staff are provided an orientation to their school's system. Staff reinforce their school's Character Pillars, verbally recognizing students, handing out recognition cards, and accumulating credits toward a program/class goal when they demonstrate Character Pillars.
- The Child Development & Early Learning Programs supervisory team responds with any request from staff if/when they experience challenges working with their students. Strategies are shared specific to the staff and student needs, including materials are created/provided (e.g. If-Then charts, visual schedules). Individualized behavior management plans are developed, implemented, and monitored.
- Each year staff take the PA Keys self-assessment. They are encouraged to consider their PA Keys self-assessment results and the students they have that year to select specific trainings that align with the students they have. Training sessions on the topic of working with challenging student behaviors is available to all staff.
- Observations occur by the Child Development & Early Learning Programs supervisory team and outside supports (e.g. IU Behavior Specialist) to help identify strategies the staff can use with challenging students. Modeling of strategies is also provided.

## Family Supports:

Additional support for families and staff can be found through the following resources:

- Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: <https://www.ecmhc.org/>
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, Practical Strategies for Teachers/Caregivers: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#teachingskills>
- Common Sense Education: <https://www.commonsense.org/education/toolkit/family-engagement-resources>
- The Incredible Years: <https://incredibleyears.com/>
- National PTA: <https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-Student-Success>
- PA Department of Education: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/equityandinclusion/EPH/Family/Individual/Pages/default.aspx>
- Pyramid Model: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

## Alignment with Federal Policies:

The MTSD Child Development & Early Learning Programs' Student Success & Classroom Management Policy ins in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Civil Rights Compliance.

## Transitions

Students who are new to our programs are welcomed warmly. Staff get to know their interests and take these into consideration when planning program activities. Opportunities to get to know new friends and learn new games occur on a daily basis.

As students progress from one grade level to the next, the school provides formal transition opportunities for its students. At the start of each school year, teachers have an Open House for families and students to get to know their new teachers and be comfortable with the school and classroom. Students moving on to the middle school will have the opportunity to take a field trip to their new school before the end of the school year. This allows them to become comfortable with the school they will attend in the fall, as well as with their new teachers.





## Weather Related Delays, Early Dismissals, & Cancellations

Weather may cause the school district to have a 2-hour delay, an early dismissal, or a school closure. Please follow inclement weather reports on the local TV and radio stations for school delay, dismissal, and closure notifications.

***Whatever the district implements, please remember your discretion will best determine your child's attendance during inclement weather.***

### **2-Hour Delays:**

When the school district enacts a 2-hour delay, the Before Care Programs will operate on a 1-hour delay. School-age Before Care will open at 8:00 am.

Though the School-age Before Care Programs will be a longer program on 2-hour delay days, there will not be an additional charge to enrolled families.

#### **Notes:**

- *Given the size of the school district, time is needed to ensure passable parking lots and walkways for everyone's safety. As a result, the School-age Before Care programs will operate on a delay.*
- *In the event of an exceptional weather-related challenge, BC program delays may extend to 2-hour delays. In such cases, BC families will be notified through the District's Infinite Campus Notification System.*
- *In the event of a 2-hour delay, stay tuned to the TV and radio stations should the school delay change to cancelation due to worsening weather conditions*

### **Early Dismissals:**

When the school district enacts an early dismissal, the After School Care Programs will close by 4:00 pm instead of 6:00 pm. Students can still participate in the After Care program upon their dismissal from their school day. Parents are encouraged to pick up their children as soon as is possible, by 4:00 pm at the very latest.

If you decide your child will not participate in After Care on the weather-related early dismissal day, you must notify your school's main office in a timely manner so they can inform your child that s/he will be picked up or take the bus home instead of going to After Care.

Because the School-age After Care Programs will operate their normal length of time, there will not be refunds for early dismissal days.

### **School Closings:**

When the school district closes the district, there will be no Before/After Care Programs.

Should school be canceled after you have signed your child in to a Before School Program, you, or one of your designated release persons, are to pick up your child from school as soon as is possible.

Before/After Care days not used due to weather-related school district closures will be credited toward the enrolled families' future invoices.



*Thank you for your attention to these important inclement weather procedures.*

### **Access to Chapter 3270 Child Care Centers: Regulations**

MTSD Child Development & Early Learning Programs are licensed child care programs with the Office of Child Development – Department of Public Welfare. Chapter 3270 regulations are available at each program site for parent review.

Additionally, parents can contact the regional site for the Office of Child Development & Early Learning directly at 11 Stanwix Street, Suite 240; Pittsburgh PA 15222: 1-800-222-2149.

Parents can also access Chapter 3270 regulations electronically at [dhs.pa.gov/providers/Child-Care/Pages/Child-Care-Regulations.aspx](https://dhs.pa.gov/providers/Child-Care/Pages/Child-Care-Regulations.aspx).