



Rankin County
School District
TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Parent Handbook

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Our Goal

We strive to provide a safe, fun, nurturing environment for the children in our care.

What is Frontiers

Frontiers is a self-funded, tuition-based, after-school program serving elementary students who are enrolled in Rankin County School District and have not turned 12 years old as of September 1st. Although scheduling may vary from site to site, all sites feature set times for snack, homework, enrichment, games, and indoor/outdoor play! Our primary location is the school's cafeteria which allows students to stay at school with their friends.

Registration

Frontiers welcomes the application of all children. Applications of children with special needs are considered on a case-by-case, trial basis, according to the program's ability to meet the child's needs in the after-school setting. Students must not have needs that cannot be reasonably accommodated or affect the safety and welfare of students and staff. Registration is required annually. Enrollment does not roll over.

To register, the parent or legal guardian must:

1. Verify availability by contacting the Site Coordinator – phone numbers are listed on the back cover.
2. Complete a Parent Contract AND pay the registration fee.
 - Depending on when the child will start, the first month's tuition may also be required at the time of registration. (**See “Tuition and Fees” for more information.**)
 - All Parent Contracts will be reviewed and accepted by a Frontiers representative. Admission and continued service is based upon the accuracy and completion of information within the contract.

NOTE: During the school year, spots will be reserved for three school days. The day

availability is confirmed is “day one.” If registration is not complete within three days, the spot will be considered vacant again. During the summer months, there are no reservations - all spots are first come, first serve.

WAITING LIST: Site maximums are set according to the cafeteria’s capacity, the number of staff per site, and district distancing guidelines, if applicable. Once a grade/class is full, waiting lists will start. **Parents will be contacted in order of the waiting list as spots become available. Waiting lists start over annually.**

Attendance

Upon dismissal, students who are enrolled in Frontiers will be released to the program area to be signed in by staff. Parents must let the child’s teacher know that he/she will be attending Frontiers once the child is enrolled. **Parents should let the Site Coordinator know of any absences.** We do not always receive information from school staff regarding absences or transportation changes. Phone numbers are on the back cover.

NOTE: We operate on the school calendar and are closed for school holidays, summers, and the early dismissal days in December and May. Tuition is not adjusted for student absences or school holidays.

Withdrawal

As a month-to-month service, tuition secures a child’s spot for the entire month. Parents may withdraw a child at any time during the month; however, tuition is not adjusted or refunded based on attendance. If a child attends any days in a “new” month, but withdraws without paying

Frontiers is NOT a tutoring program.

We do NOT guarantee that homework is accurate, neat, or complete. Parents are encouraged to check homework for accuracy, neatness, and completion each night.

tuition, parents will be billed for days of service. Future enrollment will be based on spot availability. Any outstanding fees must be paid to reenroll.

REQUESTS TO CANCEL AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS must be written and submitted at least one week before the scheduled draft dates. The drafted amount plus a \$40 fee will be charged for all “stopped” payments, holds, or any payments reported as fraudulent - if services are rendered.

A Typical Afternoon

Each site has planned activities to occupy students' time. We provide EVERYTHING students need for activities. Students are not allowed to bring personal items such as cell phones, electronic tablets, smart watches, game boys, trading cards, balls, or similar items. Students will be required to keep such items in their backpacks, or the Site Coordinator will hold them until pick-up. **Frontiers staff, students, nor Rankin County School District will be responsible for lost, damaged, or missing personal items.**

SNACK TIME

The designated snack time is immediately upon student arrival to Frontiers (2:00 p.m. for most schools). In accordance with USDA nutrition standards and meal pattern guidelines for after-school programs, we will provide water and one snack, per child, per day. Students may also eat a snack from home or finish a sack lunch but may only do so during the scheduled snack time. **Food cannot be shared or contain nut products.**

HOMEWORK TIME

Frontiers is NOT a tutoring program.

- We will provide a time and setting that is conducive for students to complete homework.
 - Sites are staffed to work with students in large groups; therefore, we cannot devote one-on-one assistance.
 - Time limits for homework sessions will be set according to age/grade level appropriateness.
- Staff will provide assistance in the form of clarification of instructions and supervision.
 - Because of the school setting, we find that most students do well and have little to no problem understanding and completing assignments. It is our goal to encourage students to stay on task and work productively so that, hopefully, their work will be complete at the end of the homework session.
- Students are responsible for properly checking for homework assignments.
 - A homework column on each day's Sign In/Out Sheet will indicate whether the child stated that he or she had homework that day. Please help your child to be responsible/accountable.
 - Staff are not allowed to go through folders or backpacks to check for homework assignments.
 - Staff cannot sign reading logs or verify the completion of similar assignments.
- Students must have all items necessary for homework completion.
 - Staff nor students can return to classrooms for forgotten books, homework materials, water bottles, jackets, etc. This is a school policy. Please help hold your child accountable in this area.

- Students who do not have homework may participate in alternative supervised activities such as silent reading, drawing, spelling competitions, math facts worksheets, quiet indoor games, or outdoor free play as not to distract students who have homework.

We do NOT guarantee that homework is accurate, neat, or complete. Parents are encouraged to check homework for accuracy, neatness, and completion each night.

ENRICHMENT

As part of our Enrichment Curriculum, students participate in a variety of activities that promote thinking, creativity, and discovery. Activities include arts & crafts, brainstorming, centers, movies, organized play, guest speakers, games, edible crafts, and more! Holidays provide opportunities for parties, parades, dances, and fun galore.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Students will participate in outdoor play EVERYDAY, weather permitting. Shorter periods of outdoor play may be scheduled if it is too hot or too cold outside. Students are expected to participate in all play & activities unless a doctor's note is on file specifying medical restrictions/limitations.

GAMES

Students play many interactive games such as Tag, Charades, Four Corners, Freeze Dance, Soccer, & more! At the end of each day, students also combine at tables to play various table games such as: Legos, UNO, Connect Four, Checkers, Monopoly, Dominos, Trouble, etc. with friends!

SPECIAL GUESTS

We welcome special guests from our communities to talk to students about their careers. Past guests include firefighters, police officers, first responders, K-9 units, members of the military, local mayors, medical professionals, archaeologists, zoologists, race car drivers, auctioneers, and even Mr. and Mrs. Claus! Parents can contact their Site Coordinator if they would like to share career information with students.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition covers all program expenses and can be paid at sites by card, personal check, or money order, as students are picked up from Frontiers. Tuition is always due on the first school day of each month and must be paid, in full, by the 5th of each month - regardless of the child's attendance on this day. If the 5th falls on a holiday or weekend, tuition is due the next school day (regardless of the child's attendance) to avoid late fees and suspension. The rate remains the same regardless of school holidays and secures a child's spot for the entire month regardless of how often he or she attends. All spots are considered full-time. There are no "drop in" rates or discounts for multiple children in a family.

Tuition is not adjusted or refunded for absences (i.e.: holidays, quarantines, inclement weather, suspensions, etc.). In the event of unforeseen closures lasting longer than five school days, tuition may be adjusted to charge for the days school was in session regardless of the child's attendance on these days. Remaining balances will become a credit.

LATE TUITION FEE

(\$40 PER FAMILY, PER SITE)

A \$40 late fee (per family, per site) and suspension apply at 6:01 p.m. on the 5th of each month – regardless of the child’s attendance on this day. If the 5th falls on a holiday or weekend, these penalties are enforced at 6:01 p.m. on the next school day – again, regardless of attendance on that day. **School staff will be notified of suspensions to ensure alternate transportation is arranged until full payment is received. Repeated late payments may be cause for dismissal. Lack of payment may also result in the child’s spots being released.**

NOTE: Any payments made at/through our Administrative Office, are considered late after 4:30 p.m. on the deadline date. We strongly encourage parents to enroll in auto draft services to avoid late fees, suspension, and penalties.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

(\$1 PER MINUTE, PER FAMILY, PER SITE)

Students must be picked up by 6 p.m. each day. The late pick-up fee (\$1 per minute, per family, per site) may be charged at 6:01 p.m. at the Site Coordinator’s discretion. Late pick-up fees are due at the time of pick-up and must be paid no later than 6 p.m. the next school day to avoid student suspension. **Repeated late pick-ups may be cause for dismissal.**

DECLINED CHECKS/DRAFTS

(\$40 PER DECLINED ITEM)

Parents are responsible for having funds available when tuition is paid or drafted. Frontiers will not rerun a check or draft. **If a payment is declined, the amount of the check/draft plus a \$40 fee will be due, in full, by 6:00**

p.m. the day after notification. This fee applies to items declined for any reason (insufficient funds, stopped payments, account holds, etc.) Unpaid NSF items will be turned over to the District Attorney’s office for collection following the required 15 – day notice. Partial payments are not accepted for the repayment of returned or declined checks/drafts.

NOTE: Once a form of payment has been declined twice, we will not accept that form of payment for the remainder of the school year. If a payment is declined due to a bank’s error, the \$40 return fee may be waived if the account holder submits a letter from the financial institution, claiming fault, within three school days; however, the amount of the original payment must still be paid, in full, by the designated deadline to avoid suspension and other penalties.

Acceptable Forms of Payment

PERSONAL CHECKS & MONEY ORDERS

(MADE PAYABLE TO FRONTIERS)

- Parents can pay tuition, with a personal check/money order, as students are picked up from Frontiers.
- **CASH IS NOT ACCEPTED & we do not accept business, third party, post-dated, or out-of-state checks.**
- **If a family has children at multiple sites, there must be a separate check/money order for each site.**
- Parents will receive a receipt at the time of payment. Frontiers is not responsible for items made in the wrong amount or payments not received and receipted by Frontiers staff.
- **Parents will be charged a \$40 fee plus the face value amount of any stopped,**

held, canceled, or NSF checks if services are rendered.

FREE AUTOMATIC BANK DRAFT SERVICES

We strongly encourage parents to use our FREE automatic draft service to avoid suspensions and late fees. Through this service, tuition can be drafted from any checking/savings account on the scheduled due date.

- **AUGUST TUITION DOES NOT DRAFT** - Parents must use another form of payment to pay August's tuition.
- **To enroll, the parent must complete a Bank Draft Authorization Form and attach a voided check or bank letter for account verification purposes.**
- Only tuition will be drafted. All other fees must be paid (at sites) by personal check/money order.
- Receipts for drafted payments can be emailed upon request.
- **Parents will be charged a \$40 fee plus the drafted amount for any stopped, held, or cancelled drafts or drafts reported fraudulent if services are rendered.**

REQUESTS TO CANCEL AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS must be written and submitted at least one week before the scheduled draft date. The drafted amount plus a \$40 fee will be charged for any payments that are declined, stopped, held, or reported as fraudulent - if services are rendered.

TAX STATEMENTS

Tax statements are available upon request, during student pickup, by January 31st each year. Parents should ask for statements as they are

needed to prevent losing them. Replacements may take 3-5 days.

If your child is no longer attending Frontiers on January 31st, the quickest way to get tax statements is from the Site Coordinator/site. Parents of students who no longer attend may request to receive statements via mail or email; however, this request may take 3-5 business days to process because statements must be obtained from the Site Coordinator/site then mailed or emailed.

Student Pick-Up / Sign-Out Procedures

- Students will only be released to individuals listed on the Parent Contract.
 - ▶ The pickup list may be updated at any time - Be sure to include tutors and sports coaches.
 - ▶ Parents/authorized pick up persons should make contact with the Site Coordinator or Assistant when picking up and sign the student out on the appropriate class roll/clipboard.
 - Exterior doors will be locked to ensure the safety of all children and staff.
 - Sign out tables may be set up OUTSIDE of the program area.
 - **Parents/pick-up persons MUST NOT go beyond the sign out table, to the playground, or into any area with the students - child(ren) will be called to come to the pickup area.**
 - ▶ Sign out sheets are legal documents. Pick up persons should use full names - not initials, nicknames, or a scribbled signature - and write the time the child is being picked up.

- ▶ Anyone not known to Frontiers staff may be required to show photo identification.
 - Visitors/pick-up persons must be prepared to show photo identification at any time, especially when a child first starts, when the Site Coordinator or Assistant is absent, or when/if staff changes. Please be patient in this event. Safety is our priority!
 - If a child needs to be released to someone who is not listed on the Parent Contract, a note authorizing pick-up must be received prior to pick-up time. A phone call may also be acceptable in the event of an emergency.
- School campuses are drug-free zones.
 - ▶ Parents must be courteous and respectful to staff, students, and other parents while on school property. Failure to do so may result in the child being dismissed from the program.

LEGAL DOCUMENTATION/PICK-UP RESTRICTIONS

To honor and enforce pick-up or custody restrictions, Frontiers must have a FULL copy of legal documentation on file. Legal documentation is required annually and as changes are made by a court.

- We cannot access documents that are on file at school. We must have our own copy.
- We will strictly follow adjudicated visitation dates but are not responsible for monitoring dates.
- Disputes between parents that affect who can pick up must be resolved between parents – staff cannot deny a custodial parent’s rights or access to a child without legal documentation. This includes his or her right to make changes to the authorized pick-up list.

NOTE: Students CANNOT be released from Frontiers until school dismissal

traffic is completely off campus. This is generally 2:30 p.m. for most schools. If a child needs to be checked out prior to this time, parents must follow the school’s checkout procedures.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

(\$1 PER MINUTE, PER FAMILY, PER SITE)

Children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. each day – HAVE A PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES!

- Parents must notify Frontiers staff and put an emergency pick-up plan into action as soon as they realize they may be late or have a conflict.
- **The late pick-up fee (\$1 per minute, per family, per site) is charged according to the time indicated on the program clock - at the Site Coordinator’s discretion.** This fee is due immediately upon pick up and must be paid no later than 6 p.m. the following school day to avoid suspension.
 - ▶ If Frontiers has not been contacted by 6:45 p.m. and no one listed on the Parent Contract can be reached, the child(ren) may be released to the local police department.
 - ▶ Frontiers reserves the right to dismiss any chronic offenders.

Behavior Management

Frontiers uses positive reinforcement and redirection to encourage and maintain positive behaviors. Rules will be appropriate for each child’s age and to the rights, safety, and well-being of others. Consequences for misbehaviors will be logical, such as a verbal warning, redirection to other activities, limiting choices at game/free time, or time-out. All students are evaluated on an on-going basis as to the program’s ability to meet his or her needs. Staff must be aware of

any issues at home or school which may affect (but not excuse) behaviors. Parents are expected to work with Frontiers staff to help children develop self-discipline.

- Authorized pick-up persons may be notified of misbehaviors, disciplinary issues, or incidents at pick-up.
- Notification may be verbal or written on an Action Report, which requires a signature.
- Serious incidents or misbehaviors may require a student to be picked up immediately. Failure to pick up in a timely manner may result in dismissal.

SUSPENSIONS AND DISMISSALS

Frontiers reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any child from the program, with or without prior notice or warning, based on the severity of an incident (even on the first offense), if the child fails to adequately adjust, or if:

- student runs or wanders away from staff and/or designated program areas;
- student possesses on their person [in backpack, etc.] a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object;
- student or parent fails to abide by all drug policies set by Rankin County School District;
- student or parent behavior poses a threat to the safety and/or security of the site and/or other persons;
- student or parent causes or attempts to cause damage to school property or private property on campus;
- student or parent causes, attempts to cause, or threatens to cause physical injury to self or other persons;

▶NOTE: Threats to harm self or others are taken very seriously and will be reported to parents of students involved, RCSD's counseling department, the school principal, and/or other appropriate school or district staff for follow up assessments, disciplinary actions, and investigative purposes.

- student or parent fails to be respectful to Frontiers staff, other parents, students, or property;
- student or parent fails to follow reasonable staff requests and directives;
- student or parent fails to comply with any rules and regulations set by Rankin County School District, Frontiers or school staff, the Parent Contract, and this handbook;
- parents are repeatedly late with pick-up, tuition payments, or any other fees;
- parents fail to pick-up immediately after notification of illness or behavioral issues;
- it is determined that placement is unsatisfactory.

DEFINITIONS

SUSPENSION: If a student is suspended from Frontiers, he or she can attend school/class as usual but cannot return to Frontiers until the suspension has ended. **School staff will be notified to ensure alternate transportation is properly arranged prior to the school's dismissal time.**

DISMISSAL: If a student is dismissed from Frontiers, services are canceled immediately. The child cannot return to Frontiers and may not be considered eligible for future enrollment. **School staff will be notified to ensure alternate transportation is properly arranged prior to the school's dismissal time.**

Frontiers reserves the right to change/amend policies as deemed necessary.

Illnesses

Frontiers is under no obligation to accept a child who is or appears to be sick prior to the school's dismissal time. If a child becomes ill while at Frontiers, he or she will be allowed to rest, away from the group.

- If the symptoms are intolerable, severe, or potentially contagious (such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, undiagnosed rash, inflamed or watery eyes, severe cough/cold, runny nose, sore throat, etc.), the parent or an authorized person will be contacted to pick up immediately to reduce spread/exposure.
- Failure to pick up in a timely manner may result in dismissal.

FEVER POLICY: If a child develops a fever, he or she must be fever-free, without the aid of medication, for 24 hours before returning to school/Frontiers. This policy is to reduce exposure to contagious illnesses and will be strictly enforced. School staff will be notified. Failure to comply may result in dismissal.

COVID 19 PROCEDURES

All practices and preventative measures that Frontiers implements to reduce the spread of COVID-19 will align with Rankin County School District's mandates and recommendations as determined by district leadership. **By attending Frontiers, parents must acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume all risks if their child is exposed to or infected with this virus or its variants, releasing Frontiers, Rankin County School District, and its employees from any and all claims or liability.**

- If a child is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, a parent, emergency contact or other authorized pick-up person will be notified to pick up immediately.
- If it is determined or discovered that the child has been exposed to or infected with COVID-19 or its variants, the parent must notify the Site Coordinator or school staff immediately and comply with student quarantine mandates as set by Rankin County School District.
- The child cannot return to Frontiers until he or she can return to school.

NOTE: Tuition is not adjusted for absences regardless of the reason. If a parent misses the tuition deadline due to student quarantine, the full payment must be paid within three days of the student returning to Frontiers to avoid penalties. Frontiers staff follow district mandates related to COVID-19 and its variants.

Accidents

Please understand that even under adult supervision accidents may happen from time to time.

- If a minor injury/accident occurs, authorized pick-up persons may be informed at pick-up via verbal or written communication.
- If a serious injury/accident occurs that may require attention by a licensed medical professional, the parent or other authorized pick-up person may be contacted immediately so that the child can be picked up and taken for medical observation or treatment as soon as possible.
- Failure to pick up in a timely manner may result in dismissal.

EMERGENCIES

If an accident, injury, or incident occurs that requires immediate medical attention:

- Staff will call 911, then contact the parent or other authorized pick-up person(s).
- Once on site, medical personnel will decide on the appropriate action.
- Parents will be notified if medical transport is required.
- Staff on site are trained in CPR and First Aid.

Medication

Frontiers can only administer medications with a current, completed, and signed Medical Authorization Form on file. All medication must be in the original container. Containers must be properly labeled including the student's name and dosage information. Frontiers may only keep 6 days' worth of prescription medication on site. We cannot store medication that requires refrigeration or access medication stored by school staff.

- **EpiPens:** A child who needs an EpiPen for any reason, will NOT be allowed to attend Frontiers until we have an EpiPen on site or verification that the EpiPen stays in the child's backpack/possession. Frontiers must also have a copy of the school's action plan and/or any other necessary authorization forms.
- **Bronchial Inhalers:** A child who needs an inhaler will NOT be allowed to attend until Frontiers has an inhaler on site or verification that the inhaler stays in the child's backpack/possession. Frontiers must also have a copy of the school's action plan and/or any other necessary authorization forms.

In May, Site Coordinators will begin contacting parents to pick up OTC medication. Students must have daily and emergency prescription medications on site until the last day of Frontiers. Any medication, whether OTC or prescription, that is not picked up by the last day of Frontiers will be discarded at no expense to Frontiers.

Note: Students cannot carry or possess any medications other than an EpiPen or inhaler. Proper authorization forms must be completed to carry or have the EpiPen or inhaler in his or her possession. The last day of Frontiers is always the last full day of school in May. We are not open on the "half day" in May.

Crisis & Emergency Procedures

In addition to first aid training and CPR certification, Frontiers staff go through crisis training that is coordinated with Rankin County School District's plan as well as local fire and law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of all children and staff. If a parent arrives and a drill is in progress, students will not be released until the drill is complete. We ask parents to be patient, understanding, and courteous in this event.

In a true emergency or crisis, measures will be taken as deemed appropriate by Frontiers staff under guidance of school district officials. As noted in the Parent Contract, Frontiers, Rankin County School District officials, and/or responding medical personnel have authority to: a) make decisions and/or give consents necessary for the health or welfare of students; b) provide any medical care deemed necessary; c) determine if a child should be transported; d) share any & all medical, psychological, behavioral, and/or educational information between emergency

medical professionals, district personnel, and Frontiers staff - at any time - without liability.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect: Employees who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, of any form, must lawfully report it. Reports of abuse or neglect are confidential. Our responsibility is to report suspicions of abuse or neglect, not to prove that the child is indeed being abused or neglected.

Emergency Closings

(due to severe weather, loss of utilities, or other emergencies)

- If school does not open OR closes early, Frontiers will not open.
- If Frontiers is in session but needs to close early, parents will be notified as soon as possible.
 - The cancellation of “after-school activities” will only include Frontiers if specifically indicated.
 - Parents should call our office or their Site Coordinator when in doubt!

NOTE: In the event of unforeseen closures lasting longer than five school days, tuition may be adjusted to charge for the days school was in session regardless of attendance on these days. Any balance after the adjustment will become a credit on the student’s account.

**Rouse
Elementary School**

601.750.1271

**StoneBridge
Elementary School**

601.750.0121

**Brandon
Elementary School**

601.750.1266

**Steen's Creek
Elementary School**

601.750.1243

**Florence
Elementary School**

601.750.1244

**McLaurin
Elementary School**

601.750.0211

**Flowood
Elementary School**

601.750.1250

**Northwest Rankin
Elementary School**

601.750.1246

**Highland Bluff
Elementary School**

601.750.1242

**Northshore
Elementary School**

601.750.1290

**Oakdale
Elementary School**

601.750.1240

**Pelahatchie
Elementary School**

601.750.1252

**Pisgah
Elementary School**

601.750.1248

**Richland Lower
Elementary School**

601.750.1249

Richland Upper Elementary School

601.750.1247



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