



## **Safe Harbor Family Handbook 2023-2024**

Safe Harbor is an out of school time enrichment program which inspires excellence in the leadership and academic skills of students through collaboration with families, school officials, and community partners.

### **Safe Harbor I.N.S.P.I.R.E.S.**

Safe Harbor provides an educational environment that is **INCLUSIVE**, engaging, holistic, and culturally responsive. Through **NETWORKING** with local, state wide, and national agencies and organizations, Safe Harbor nurtures partnerships which expand the enrichment opportunities of Michigan City students. Staff members provide emotional and developmental **SUPPORT** to students and families through their commitment to social emotional development, resulting in the **PERSONAL GROWTH** of each student served. As a leader in **INNOVATIVE** enrichment programming, Safe Harbor is dedicated to providing ongoing professional development for staff members. Collaborative **RELATIONSHIPS** between the program staff, community partners, and day school staff result in a dynamic **EDUCATIONAL** experience incorporating real world context with conceptual learning. Safe Harbor ensures **SAFETY** for students and peace of mind for families while providing top tier experiential and enrichment opportunities in the afterschool hours/out of school time hours.

## Safe Harbor History

Safe Harbor is an out of school time enrichment program which was founded in 1999 under the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21stCCLC) grant providing after school services to four Michigan City Area Schools in grades kindergarten through five. Safe Harbor's services have expanded to after school sites at six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school providing services Monday through Friday to over 600 regularly attending students. Safe Harbor provides morning care services at five elementary schools Monday through Friday. Additionally, Safe Harbor runs the Hours for Ours (H4O) Mentoring program at nine MCAS schools. This program matches adult volunteers with MCAS students to meet weekly for one on one and small group mentoring sessions. Safe Harbor also runs FIRST robotics teams at the elementary, middle and high school level. In 2018, our High School FIRST Robotics team won the State Championship and went on to compete in the World Competition. In addition to these school year program's Safe Harbor offers an annual summer S.T.E.A.M. adventure camp for students designed to reduce summer learning loss and engage students in diverse fields of enrichment. Safe Harbor's success has been the result of a collaborative network of partners, dedication to quality programming, and continual assessment of program outcomes. The Program has received the "Pledge of Distinction" as a result of participating schools completing self-assessments administered by our staff and advisory teams at each site under the coordination of the Indiana Department of Education and the Indiana Afterschool Network. Safe Harbor's enrichment programming provides a dynamic experience which contributes to academic, social and personal growth.

### Safe Harbor Goals:

The Safe Harbor Program provides homework help, tutoring, fitness & wellness, STEAM enrichment, and service learning opportunities to Michigan City youth. The components of these opportunities are designed to provide the following:

- A safe environment with positive adult role models during after school enrichment hours
- Socialize with peers in a healthy manner

- Receive assistance with homework
- Engage in learning activities that may not be available during school hours
- Learn sportsmanship and fair play while participating in recreational activities
- Engage in service learning and citizenship activities designed to help students see themselves and their classmates as powerful citizens and agents of positive change
- Create a partnership with families to collaborate in the needs of their child/children to enhance the enrichment experience

Our program is constantly changing to meet the needs of our students. Safe Harbor enhancements and activities may be modified at any time to best suit those needs.

### **Who may enroll in Safe Harbor?**

All Michigan City area youth in grades K-12, including private schools, charter schools, and home schools are invited to participate in Safe Harbor.

### **Where will my child be located while participating in the Safe Harbor Program?**

Safe Harbor Program students will meet in the cafeteria immediately after school to receive a snack. Activities take place throughout the school building and on school property. Parents will be notified of field trips in advance. Morning care drop off location is unique to each building.

### **What are the hours of Safe Harbor?**

Elementary Safe Harbor after school sites are open Monday through Friday immediately after school until 6:00 p.m. Safe Harbor at the middle and high school sites are open Monday through Thursday immediately after school until 5:00 p.m. Safe Harbor morning care programming begins at 6:00 am and ends when the school day staff arrives to supervise the school breakfast. We are not open on days school is closed, including holidays, bank days, half-days, e-learning days and inclement weather closings and delays.

**What can I expect the schedule to be while my child participates in the Safe Harbor Program?**

Each student will participate in daily rotations to include the following:

**Snack:** Students receive a snack daily. After snack time, each participates in a series of activities.

**Homework Support:** Staff members assist students with homework and project-based learning. Students are responsible for bringing homework to the Safe Harbor program and parents are encouraged to check homework to ensure assignments are complete and accurate.

**Fitness & Wellness:** Students have the opportunity to participate in organized activities and to learn fair play and good sportsmanship.

**Enrichment:** Safe Harbor students attend a variety of enrichment classes. Examples include: Art, Music, Dance, Character Development, Robotics, Engineering, Horticulture, Kidz Lit, Kidz Math, STEM, etc.

**When may I pick up my child?**

Students may be picked up at any time which is convenient for the family, We ask that if at all possible you pick up your child after 4:00 to assist us in meeting attendance requirements set by our funders. Parents are required to pick their child(ren) up by 6:00 p.m at elementary sites. Pick up at middle schools and the high school is 5:00 p.m. if your child is not using bus transportation. Always be prompt in your pick up. A fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be assessed for late pick up. Three occurrences of late pick up will result in suspension from the Safe Harbor Program. Safety is first and foremost for students who participate in the Safe Harbor program. It is required that parents or guardians enter the building to sign out child(ren) from the elementary programs. Children will only be released to persons you authorized as a pick-up person. Please notify the Site Coordinator of any changes of authorized persons who will be picking up your child. A special permission slip must be completed for your child to walk home

from school. Once your child signs out and leaves school property, Safe Harbor assumes no further responsibility.

### **Does my involvement in the Safe Harbor Program really matter?**

Absolutely! Safe Harbor partners with your child's school to provide many enrichment activities that provide opportunities for academic, social and personal growth. Parents/Guardians are an important link in that partnership. When parents are knowledgeable about what their children are learning, there is a greater opportunity for student success and confidence! We invite you to visit the Safe Harbor site anytime. We would welcome you as a volunteer to plan or chaperone special events or to lend your talents in providing enrichment and assistance to staff. Check out the available enrichment activities that need your involvement: Reading coaches, enrichment speakers, share your career, college readiness and much more! Please contact your Site Coordinator with interest in any of these enrichment opportunities.

### **What is the Discipline Policy at Safe Harbor?**

Safe Harbor students are expected to follow the rules in the Michigan City Area Schools student handbook and any other site specific rules that may be established by the respective Site Coordinator where your child attends. **All MCAS and Safe Harbor rules and policies are applicable when students ride school buses.**

In order to maintain a safe and fun environment, Safe Harbor will work closely with you and your child to ensure appropriate behavior. If however, a problem persists, a Discipline Referral will be written and signed by the Site Coordinator. You and the program manager will receive a copy of this report.

Consequences follow the guidelines below:

1<sup>st</sup> Referral: Conference with the child, Site Coordinator and referring staff member

2<sup>nd</sup> Referral: Conference with the parent, child, Site Coordinator and referring staff member

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Referral: Suspension from the Safe Harbor Program

Depending on the severity of the behavioral problem, steps may be skipped at the discretion of Safe Harbor Administration. Continued discipline referrals could result in a child's expulsion from the program.

### **How do I provide feedback about my child's participation in the Safe Harbor Program?**

Your comments and suggestions are important to us. As Safe Harbor participants, you and your child will be asked to fill out surveys and/or assessments that are used to improve the program and ensure continued funding. All gathered information is held in strict confidence. Parental surveys are conducted at the end of the school year. We also invite you to contact your Site Coordinator with any ideas or comments you may have. If the Site Coordinator is not able to provide you the information you request, they may refer you to the Safe Harbor Program Manager or Program Director.

### **What is the Illness Policy?**

If your child is exhibiting any symptoms of illness, please do not send them to school. If your child develops any symptoms of illness while at Safe Harbor, you or your emergency contact will be called to pick-up the child. If your child exhibits any symptoms of Covid-19, please follow the MCAS policy below.

### **Student Re-Entry Policy as per MCAS Covid 19 Protocol**

❖ **Untested Persons** who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least a full 24 hours (that is 24 hours of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved); and

- At least 10 calendar days have passed since onset of symptoms.

❖ **Tested Positive-** may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least a full 24 hours (that is 24 hours of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared; or the individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

❖ **Exposed to a positive case -** may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- Vaccinated students may return to school if they do not exhibit symptoms.
- Un-vaccinated students may return to school after 5 days if they do not exhibit symptoms.
- Vaccinated or Un-vaccinated students who exhibit symptoms should follow the guidelines above.

**The number of students Safe Harbor is able to serve is directly linked to the number of staff members scheduled to work. If your student's staff member is sick, and a substitute is unavailable, we will be unable to serve the students in that group, and you will be notified as early as possible. We understand that this is an inconvenience, but in order to keep a 15 to 1 ratio we will be unable to make an exception. Please plan ahead for this occurrence.**

**What is the importance of Emergency and Health Information?**

Providing accurate health and emergency information is critical in case your child has an event that requires immediate attention. Guardians are requested to provide this information on the Safe Harbor Program application. This form includes requests for home and employment

information as well as health issues and directives for handling emergency illnesses and injuries. It is an important guardian responsibility to keep this particular information current at all times.

### **What is the Medication Policy?**

If your child requires medication during Safe Harbor hours, an MCAS authorization form must be completed. If your child receives medication during the school day, a separate form must be completed for Safe Harbor. The Site Coordinator will be able to provide you with the proper form.

All medication must be kept in the original containers. Information regarding dose and time of administration must be provided in writing. Arrangements for administration should be made with the school nurse during the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### **Does Safe Harbor offer field trip opportunities for participants?**

Yes, Safe Harbor Program may occasionally offer field trips/or special activities of enrichment for our participants. Information regarding field trips will be provided at least one week prior to the event. Your signature on the Safe Harbor Program Family Guidebook Pledge/Acknowledgment provides permission for your child to attend planned trips. If you do not wish your child to attend a particular trip, please contact the Site Coordinator to notify in advance.

### **What is the Special Movie Statement?**

As part of the enrichment at Safe Harbor, participants occasionally view movies during the program. All movies viewed at the elementary grade level will be rated “G or PG” depending on grade level.

### **What is FERPA and why am I required to complete this form?**

The Indiana Department of Education, known as “IDOE” would like to collect data on activities and events taking place in the classroom, schools and any school-related activities (such as Safe



Harbor program) throughout the state of Indiana. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, known as “FERPA” requires the IDOE and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center, known as “21<sup>st</sup> CCLC” to obtain prior written consent from the parent, guardian, or eligible student before releasing any personally identifiable information about a student. The information requested will be used to calculate the impact the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC has on student performance and to meet reporting requirements as a result of receiving state and federal funds.

### **What is Consent to Release Information?**

The Safe Harbor Program works closely with your child’s school site. As part of our program, we will share information with Michigan City Area Schools, teachers and other school staff, contracting agencies, program evaluators and funders. Sharing this information ensures continued funding support as well as the best possible services and support for your child as a participant.

Your consent gives Safe Harbor Program permission to access records and exchange information regarding your child as a participant.

### **What is a Media Release of Information?**

Safe Harbor Program staff may photograph, videotape and/or audiotape participants and others. Any or all forms of media may be used at the discretion of the Safe Harbor Program for working with and promoting the program. Examples of use include posting on social media. If you do not wish to have your child photographed, recorded or published, please select “no” on the registration form.

**What is the cost of Safe Harbor?** Safe Harbor after school program at the elementary sites K-6<sup>th</sup> grade is \$30.00 per month paid at the beginning of the month- September through May. The High School and Middle school students are not charged a \$5.00 entry fee collected in the first week of the school year or upon registration (**waived for the 2023-2024 school year**). If the site has a before care program, that charge is \$1.50 per half-hour paid every other Friday. Invoices for morning care fees will be provided by your site coordinator. Suspension from

morning care services may occur if payment is not made within 6 weeks. If payment of fees is a hardship for your family, please ask your site coordinator for a sliding fee scale form to apply for reduced fees. Forms are submitted with pay stubs for the previous month. No student will be denied Safe Harbor services based on lack of payment. However fee collection is directly linked to the Safe Harbor overall budget therefore Fee Collection is essential to the program's sustainability. All payments are made in cash or money order. Receipts will be given upon payment.

**Are there scholarships to Safe Harbor programs?**

Yes, temporary hardship scholarships are available and determined through a sliding fee scale. Applications for scholarships/sliding fee scale will be made available at each site. The Safe Harbor administrative team will make the final award decision after receiving a completed application with supporting documents.

**Is transportation provided to participants of Safe Harbor?**

Students in the Middle School and High School Safe Harbor programs are eligible for bus transportation at the end of the program day provided they live within city limits.

Students riding the bus home from Safe Harbor programs are subject to all of the Michigan City Area Schools behavior and transportation policies found in the district's Student/Parent Handbook on the MCAS website.

There is no transportation available for students participating in the elementary school programs.

**Safe Harbor Administration**

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[educatemc.net/safeharbor](http://educatemc.net/safeharbor)

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As changes are made to this document, an updated version will be available on our website.