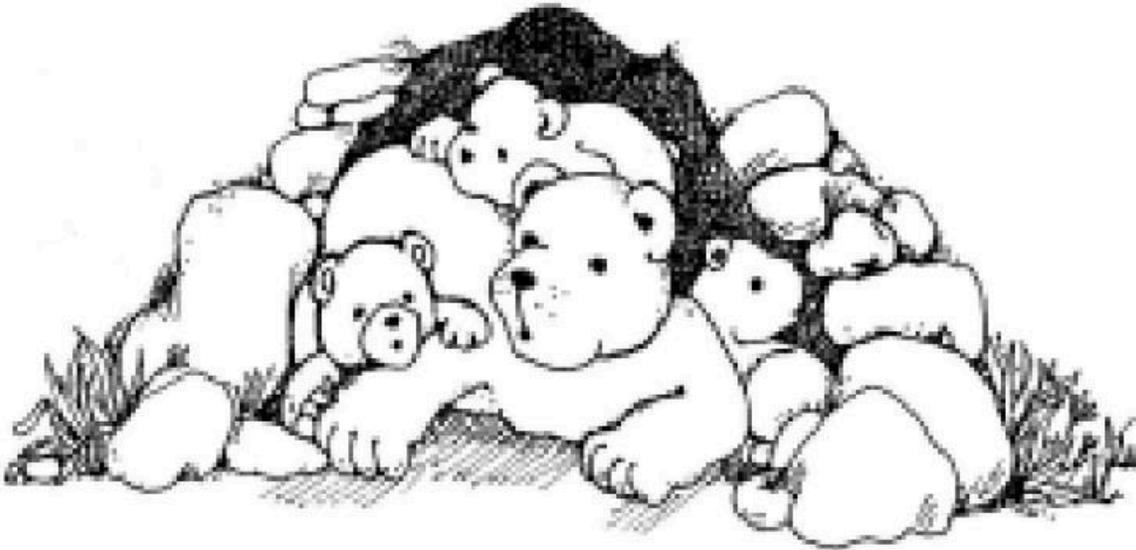


BEARS DEN



AVA AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM PARENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024

AVA R-I SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bears Den Gatekeeper (417) 683-0404

Bears Den Director (417) 260-1138



This program is made possible in part by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Grant. Oversight of the daily operations is done by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Ava R-1 School District also helps to fund this afterschool program.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by the USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

21st CCLC Goals

- Support or increase student achievement and sense of competence in the areas of reading/communication arts, mathematics, and science.
- Develop and maintain a quality program that includes a safe and supportive environment, positive interactions, and meaningful opportunities for engagement.
- Enhance youth's college and career readiness skills and behaviors, including positive school behaviors, personal and social skills, and commitment to learning.

Bears Den Purpose

The purpose of the Bears Den Program in Ava is to provide a safe, positive place for kids to stay before and after school. Enrichment activities will support both academic and social development through fun and engaging activities, along with striving to build successful and productive citizens. Bear's Den is affordable for our working parents. The program provides opportunities for family engagement activities throughout the year and educational resources for families with children participating in the program.

Bears Den Services

- Bears Den serves all students in PK-6th grade who live in Douglas County. Bears Den is available to families Monday through Friday each day school is in session.
- The elementary program runs from 6:45 to 7:45 a.m. in the elementary cafeteria. The middle school program runs from 7:00-7:45 in the MS gym and cafeteria. Students can participate in the walking club, gym activities, visit with friends, work on homework, or attend small group tutoring.
- The after-school program runs from 3:30-5:45 p.m. in the elementary and middle school buildings. Students are given recess, a snack, and tutoring or homework help. The enrichment classes offered are engaging, hands-on, and challenging. Kids are up and moving every few minutes. Classes change every few weeks to keep interest high. Many classes focus on community service projects and promote positive life choices.
- If school is released early because of inclement weather, Bears Den will **NOT** be available. Students will follow the emergency plan parents completed and turned in to the classroom teacher.
- Students who participate in targeted tutoring are provided with a 30 or 60-minute session per night. Tutoring is designed for students who need additional assistance but is not to be considered a punishment in any way. The targeted tutoring is staffed by certified teachers who create an environment that is conducive to learning and that students can enjoy.

Enrollment Forms

If you wish to have your child participate, you must fill out and sign an enrollment form for your student. Enrollment forms must be on file before your child may stay at Bears Den. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the staff of any changes. These would include a change of address, a change of contact numbers, a change in lunch status, and changes in family arrangements.

Fees

- The cost is \$1 per day for students on free lunches. \$2 per day for students on reduced lunches and \$3 per day for students on full-priced lunches. Students must have a lunch application on file to qualify for these prices.
- There is a family cap of \$25 per week. If a child attends both the morning and afternoon programs, the family will only be charged once for the day.
- If a family cannot afford these prices, there is the **Tyler Helm Scholarship** available. The gatekeeper has the paperwork for this scholarship.
- No kids will be denied attendance due to the cost of the program.
- No weekly or monthly statements will be sent home. The gatekeeper can let you know what amount you owe and will take payments each night so a receipt can be given to you for documentation.
- **Day camps** will be offered on teacher PD days when school is out. No holidays. Enrollment papers can be picked up from the gatekeeper or online. Must be enrolled to attend day camps.

Release of Students

- The parent, guardian, or authorized person must come **INTO** the building and sign the student(s) out each day they pick them up.
- Students being picked up before 3:45 should go to parent pick-up and **not** Bears Den
- Pick-up may **ONLY** be made by authorized parties. Permission **MUST** be in writing and signed by the legal parent or guardian.
- Students are not allowed to walk or ride their bikes home. All students must leave campus with an adult or older sibling.

Transportation

There is bus transportation home each night, with door-to-door drop-off in town and designated stops outside of town. Buses will leave the campus each night at 5:35 p.m.

Attendance

Attendance in the program is important to us and the grant. The more the kids attend, the more they come away with academically and socially. To encourage attendance, there will be a 60-day field trip at the end of the year. Any student who has attended the program for 60 days or more will qualify to attend this fun trip.

Parent Resources

The program desires to provide opportunities to parents that will help themselves and their children. Activities and classes will be planned that provide time for parents and students to participate in activities together. Other classes will be offered to parents that are designed to improve the personal and work skills of the parents. Outside resources for parents will be shared in newsletters and posted at the student checkout areas.

Program Responsibilities

- Treat students and parents with the respect due them.
- Motivate students.
- Provide a safe, comfortable, and enriching environment.
- Introduce students to new and innovative hands-on activities not available during the regular school day.
- Create an environment in which Bears Den students take pride.
- Conduct safety drills.
- Provide simple first aid when necessary.
- Mediate disagreements between students when necessary.

Student Responsibility

- Attend the program regularly
- Respect district technology and internet policies
- Adhere to bus expectations
- Behave in a safe, respectful, and responsible manner throughout the program.

Parent Responsibilities

- Sign their child out each day if they are not riding the bus home.
- Be on time to pick up their children.
- Treat staff with respect.
- Bring concerns to staff.
- Keep up with policy changes.
- Keep child's records updated by notifying staff of changes in enrollment information.
- Cooperate with staff on discipline matters.

Special Accommodations

If your child has special medications, allergies to foods, or an Individual Education Plan, please complete that information on your enrollment form.

Bears Den vs School Day

- Bears Den is an enrichment program that offers unique opportunities for kids and their families.
- Parent involvement is encouraged and expected in Bears Den
- Class sizes are often larger than in normal school-day classes.
- Appropriate behavior is required from all kids so a safe environment can be provided at all times.
- Bears Den follows the policies and procedures of the Ava R-1 School District. Rules and discipline are the same in the afterschool program as in the regular school day.
- **Students who are in ISS or OSS during the school day are not allowed at Bears Den during the length of the disciplinary action.**

School Day Activities

Children who participate in school activities on or off school property that are not considered part of the Bears Den (sports, clubs, or cheerleading) are welcome to check in and receive a snack BEFORE leaving for the activity. Students must have a permission slip detailing the activity and the time the student will be leaving and/or returning from the activity. Students are also welcome to check into Bears Den after they finish their practice and are waiting for their parents to pick them up (violin, basketball, or volleyball). Students should have an enrollment form on file for Bears Den.

Personal Belongings

Children need to bring all of their belongings to the area where the program is held. They are responsible for taking care of their clothing and storing their other possessions in the space provided. Please do not allow your child to bring toys (i.e., handheld video games, iPods, playground equipment) to the Bears Den. The Bears Den is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal items. NO CELL PHONES are allowed in the afterschool program. Students may ask to use the school phones if a student needs to call out.

Illness and Accidents

- If a child shows signs of illness (fever, vomiting, etc.), parents will be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately.
- Immediate treatment will be obtained for a child who sustains a minor injury (scratches, scrapes, insect bites, etc.)
- In the event of a major injury, the staff will immediately call for professional help. The emergency contacts designated by the parents will be notified. **IF THE EMERGENCY IS SUCH THAT IMMEDIATE ATTENTION IS NECESSARY, THE BEARS DEN STAFF HAS PERMISSION TO CALL AN AMBULANCE.**
- If a student is not in attendance due to an illness during the regular school day, they will not be allowed to attend Bears Den activities that same day.
- A child who does not appear to be fully recovered from an illness will not be readmitted to the program unless there is a statement by an attending physician that the child can return and participate in activities.

Medication

- If a child needs to take oral medication regularly during the hours of the Bears Den, the medication must be in the original container, along with a note from the child's physician
- prescribing the medication, stating the reason for which it is given, and any special instructions. Parents must also give written permission.
- If medication is requested to be kept on hand "for emergencies only" (i.e., asthma attacks, etc.), special instructions must be given in writing from parents and physicians.

Media Release Information

Student's names, pictures, and/or work may be released to the media or used on the school web page. This applies to any existing or future media sources local or worldwide. If you wish for your child not to be included, please contact the program director.

Healthy Snack

- A healthy snack will be provided each day. Medically prescribed diets for a child enrolled in the program shall be provided as ordered by a physician. Such diets shall be on file and adhered to in preparation and service.
- Bears Den participates in the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFD).
- The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) assures that nutritious meals and snacks are served to children and eligible adults enrolled in child care centers, family child care homes, after-school programs, emergency shelters, and adult day care programs by providing reimbursement for meals that meet minimum nutritional standards.
- CACFP requires that well-balanced snacks/meals are served and good eating habits are taught. The program also provides training and technical assistance on nutrition, food service operations, program management, nutrition education, and recordkeeping.

- CACFP is administered by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or by email atprogram.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Discipline

Activities will be varied and interesting enough in hopes of eliminating boredom-related discipline problems. Discipline will be based on reason and understanding. Exception: there is no tolerance for fighting or hands on other students.

If rules are broken, the staff:

- I will take the child aside and discuss the problem.
- Will remove the child from the group for some time with the understanding that when the child is ready to rejoin the group and follow the set guidelines, he/she may do so.
- Loss of privileges in the class/program can be taken away.
- Will contact the administrator if the child's behavior is severe.
- Administrator will contact parents/guardians.
- The Bears Den adheres to the "3 strikes and you are out" policy. After the third infraction, the child will be removed from the program for the remainder of the semester. Staff reserves the right to modify this policy at the discretion of the director and the appropriate principal.
- Students who are expelled or placed in ISS from the regular day of school are not allowed to attend the Bears Den on those days.
- Students who have been suspended from riding the school bus during the regular school day are not allowed to ride the after-school bus home.

Things may happen at home that affect your child's behavior. Please feel free to discuss these matters with the staff. For us to instill self-discipline, we need the cooperation and support of all parents.

Parents may also have a conference with the Bears Den Director or the school principal.

The Bears Den makes every effort to ensure the safety of all children. Disciplinary problems will be handled following School Board Policies and the Missouri Safe Schools Act.

Students may be disciplined or suspended for any of the following:

- Possession, transmission, and/or use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol
- Disrespect or insubordination
- The use of improper language
- Fighting
- Inappropriate display of affection.
- Rowdy behavior such as pushing & shoving
- Leaving a classroom or school grounds without permission
- Vandalizing, damaging, or stealing school or private property
- Threatening, intimidating, or causing bodily harm to any person (bullying)
- Weapons
- Sexual harassment

Emergency Procedures

In cases of severe weather, Bears Den will move to the Performing Arts Center (APAC). **IF** this happens, you can check your student out at the APAC with the gatekeeper