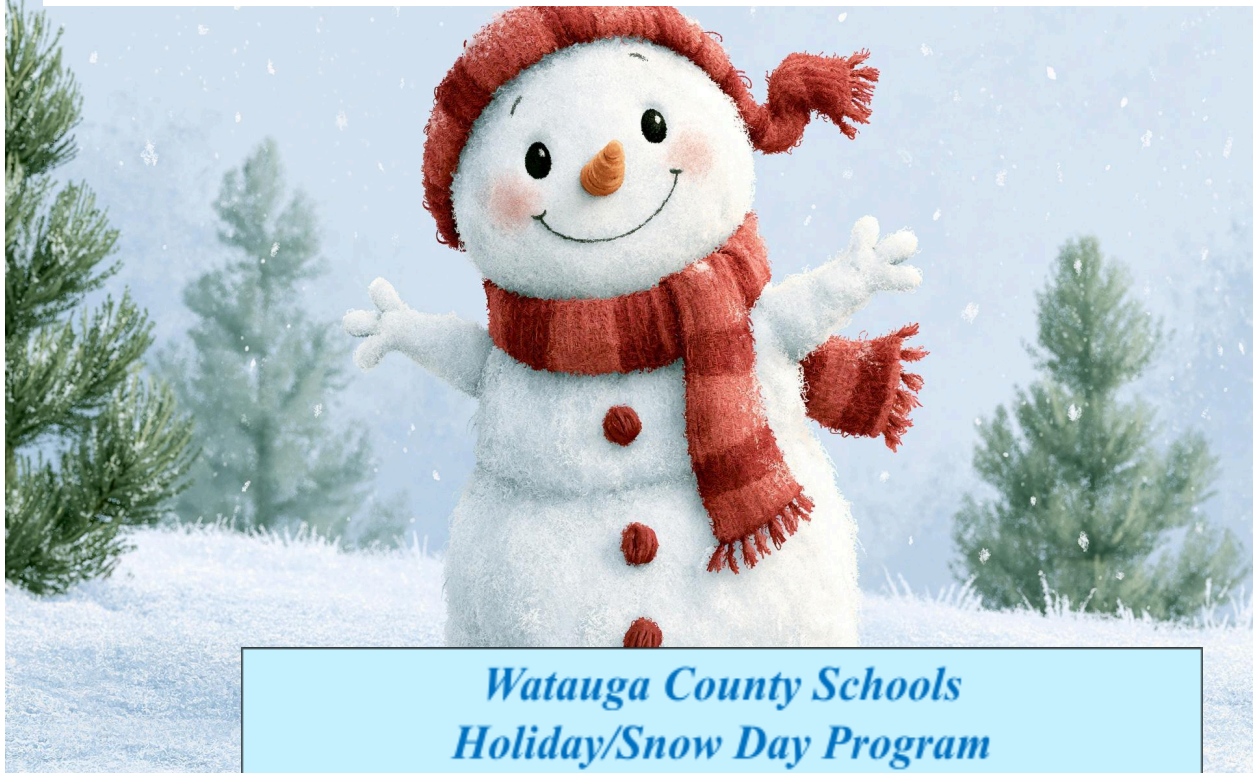


Parent Policy and Information Handbook 2026-2027



Watauga County Schools Holiday/Snow Day Program at Hardin Park

For all Watauga County students in grades K-6

Program Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Predetermined Days

9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. on Inclement Weather Days

Information and program forms at:

<https://www.wataugaschools.org/departments/afterschool/holiday-snow-day>

Program Contact Information

Jennifer Wandler, Student Services/ After School Director 828-264-7190

wandlerj@wataugaschools.org

Trevor Owens, After School Assistant Director 828-264-7190 owenst@wataugaschools.org

Marvin Foronda, Program Coordinator 828-268-1469 elc_hp@wataugaschools.org

McCormick Grubb, Billing/ Program Coordinator grubbm@wataugaschools.org

Payments may be made online through Procure, in person at the Board of Education, or mailed to:

Watauga County Schools, Afterschool Programs

175 Pioneer Trail

Boone, NC 28607

Attn: Trevor Owens

Our Mission

The mission of the Watauga County Schools Holiday/Snow Day Program is to promote the academic mission of Watauga County Schools while providing the working parents of our community a sanctuary of safety as well as an intellectual, social, emotional, and physical well-being space for their children. It is the staff's intent to inspire each child to their highest potential while providing a fun and positive learning atmosphere.

Statement of Purpose

The Holiday/Snow Day Program serves elementary students enrolled in Watauga County kindergarten through sixth grade. 7th and 8th grade students will be considered on a case by case basis, but priority in terms of waiting lists will go to K-6th grade students and their siblings first. Children attending must have attended the first day of kindergarten and be at least 5 years old. Our ultimate goal is to provide supervised care in a convenient location at a reasonable cost. Students are exposed to age-appropriate activities that are safe and fun.

Selection and Training of Staff

The selection and training of staff for the after school programs follows the Watauga County Board of Education policy 7100. Among many other requirements, staff members receive federal background checks and TB checks before they are employed. In addition, they also receive ongoing professional development including child care requirements of the North Carolina Division of Child Development. Many employees are Appalachian State University students.

Program Hours of Operation

The Holiday/Snow Day Program offers supervised educational, recreational and enrichment activities from 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. on days when Watauga County Schools are closed for select predetermined reasons. The program will be open from 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. on inclement weather days. Please do not bring your children before opening times as staff will not be able to supervise children before this time. To help ensure smooth operation of the program, we also ask that your children arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. on predetermined days. Inclement weather and remote work days will run from 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Make sure to arrive no later than 9:45 a.m. so that we can make sure students are ready for their day with proper supervision. Please make sure you pick up children before the ending time or late fees of \$1.00 per minute apply. ***Please note that with severe weather we reserve the right to open the program later for the safety of our staff, cancel the program altogether, or dismiss early.***

What to expect with school closures

The program does not operate on days when school is dismissed early. Program hours are also subject to change during extremely severe weather. When the decision to close schools is made

after 6:15 a.m. the program opening time may be delayed and communicated to parents on Procure. The program can be particularly delayed on days when a 1 or 2 hour school delay becomes a school closing. Decisions for school closings and delays as well as program opening time will be announced with the school announcement. The methods of communication for inclement weather decisions are the on the district website (www.wataugaschools.org), the school district automated phone system, text and/or email (on request), facebook / instagram, and on local radio stations. The Holiday/Snow Day Program may be canceled on listed dates of operation if less than 15 children are enrolled. At least 2 weeks notice will be given if this is necessary and fees for any canceled days will be refunded in full. We will communicate any changes or announcements via Procure.

Enrolling my child

To enroll your child in the Holiday/Snow Day program, go to the Watauga County Schools district webpage listed on the cover of this handbook. From the top of the webpage choose the “Departments” option from the menu. From the drop down menu select Afterschool. In the left hand column under the schools listed, select “Holiday/Snow Day Program.” Once on the page, click on the link labeled “Register Now.” By submitting this online registration in Procure you will be placed on the waitlist to be processed. You will receive an email including a parent handbook and parent authorization forms when a space is available. If you have signed up for afterschool in Procure ***you will already have an account.*** If you have not signed up with Procure before, you will receive an email from Procure with an invite to create your Procure account for payment and financial information. If you are enrolled in after school and the Holiday/Snow Day program you will see a “switch” or drop down box to change from one account to the other. You will receive an email from the program coordinator with instructions to complete your enrollment.

If you do not have access to a computer, call the program coordinator listed on the cover of this document to make an appointment (a computer and help will be provided if you need help to register).

Please note that ***complete registration is required before a child can attend the program.*** *Your registration is NOT complete ONLY by filling out and submitting the online registration form. Parents MUST ALSO attend an orientation session and pay the initial registration fee with the program coordinator to complete the process.*

A child can be enrolled any time during the year provided there is an opening.

For your child to be enrolled all the following must be completed

1. Complete and submit the online registration from the after school / Holiday/Snow Day web page.
2. Parent/Guardian must meet with the program coordinator (virtually or in-person) for policies to be explained verbally (orientation session).
3. Sign and turn in the parent authorization form to the program coordinator before your child’s first day of attendance (normally sent by email with the parent policy information handbook).
4. Pay for registration fee in advance of service.
5. Children must be legally enrolled in a Watauga County elementary school during the school year, be at least five years old and must have attended their first day of kindergarten.

6. Pay all prior past due balances for ELC *and* Holiday/ Snow Day.
7. Children who require a one on one nurse or professional through the school day will be considered on an individual basis prior to enrollment. The program does not have funding for these services.

Licensing regulations require that certain policies be explained directly to parents, even when the policies are also provided in writing, **registration is not complete until you meet with the program coordinator and pay in advance.**

For Registration you will need

1. 30-45 minutes of your time (orientation class with program coordinator).
2. Names and phone numbers of emergency contacts.
3. Names and phone numbers of everyone you will authorize to pick up your child.
4. Name and number of your private insurance policy or Medicaid, if applicable.
5. Name and phone numbers of your child's doctor, preferred hospital, and dentist.
6. Payment in advance of service for first month fees.
7. 7th and 8th grade students will be considered on a case by case basis, but priority in terms of waiting lists will go to K-6th grade students and their siblings first.

Please pay first payment online through Procure (instructions on web page) by electronic check (\$2.00 fee) or you may mail payment by check or make payment in-person to the address on the cover of the handbook. When paying by check, always write in your phone number, your child's name (especially last name if it is different from yours) and "Holiday Program" in the memo section so we can properly credit your account.

The program coordinator will NOT take your payments. You will be billed through our Procure billing software via email and will be able to view account balances and make payments to your account online. **If your child already attends after school, your after school and Holiday/Snow Day accounts are separate and you will be invoiced for the Holiday/Snow Day program separately.** You can switch between the separate accounts in Procure. If you cannot pay on schedule, please contact McCormick Grubb via email at grubbm@wataugaschools.org to request an alternative payment plan. See Procure instructions at the back of the handbook to set up your personal account to view, print and see all financial transactions on your child's account, as well as have access to see when they are signed into the program and have access to touchless sign out. Alternatively, you may make payment in person, mail it, or set up an automatic bank draft to the Margaret Gragg Education Center, Watauga County Schools, 175 Pioneer Trail Boone, NC 28607, Attention: Holiday/Snow Program, Trevor Owens.

Refunds

No refunds will be given for the Holiday/Snow Day Program. Given at this time we have to pay/provide staff for anticipated enrollment.

Initial Registration Fees: Options

**Option 1 -
Predetermined Days**
\$40.00/day

There are NO REFUNDS for pre-determined days.

You will choose the predetermined dates that you want your child to attend. These days are October 19th, November 11th, January 18th, March 30th, March 31st, April 1st, and April 2nd,

Option 2 - Snow Days

Choose if you want your child to attend snow days \$30 a day but must sign up for 5 consecutive days until snow day 15. After snow day 15 we will bill for 3 consecutive days.

No refunds will be given for the Holiday/Snow Day Program if your child does not attend, given at this time we have to pay/provide staff for anticipated enrollment.

You will be invoiced \$150 for 5 consecutive snow days. After the first 5 snow days, a new invoice for 5 more consecutive days will be sent. Then, if needed we will bill for 5 more snow days at a time. After Snow day 15, we will bill for 3 consecutive snow days until the winter months are over. If you do not sign up initially, there will be a \$20 charge if we are not notified in 24 hours of your child's registration. You would also pay a regular rate for the remaining days in the 5 or 3 day billing cycle.

- ☐ *Late pick up fees will be assessed as they occur at the rate of \$1.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m on Predetermined Days and 5:30 p.m. on Snow Days.*
- ☐ The costs of two daily snacks and program supplies are included in the program fees. Donations are always welcomed.

All bills will be posted electronically in Procure and sent to your e-mail address. **You must have a valid email address to register.** Please contact the program coordinator or assistant director if you do not receive an invoice in advance of payment due. This handbook serves as your notification of payment amounts and due dates.

Pre-Determined dates of Operation for 2026-2027

Choose carefully, there are no refunds for these days. You may register later provided there are staff and space still available.

October 19, Teacher Work Day

November 11, Veteran's Day

January 18, MLK, Teacher Work Day

March 30th, Spring Break

March 31st, Spring Break

April 1st, Spring Break

April 2nd, Spring Break

FEES (Continued)

It is your responsibility to keep up with payment regardless of whether you receive an invoice or not. You may view and pay your account at any time by setting up a Procure account (see instructions from sheet included in this handbook). **If you already have an account for after school you DO NOT have to set up another account.** You will "switch" schools in the Procure account to view or pay for each program separately.

Non-payment of fees and suspensions in the Holiday/Snow Day program also apply to your child's ability to attend the after school program and vice versa.

Watauga County Schools contracts with CHECKredi for the electronic collection of checks returned for insufficient funds, NSF checks. We will gladly accept your checks for payment with the understanding that you authorize us either to use information from the check to make a one-time electronic funds transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. You authorize us to collect a NSF fee through an electronic fund transfer from your account if your payment is returned unpaid.

Per board policy 5.07.40 "All fees and fines shall be paid or waived before a student can be eligible for graduation."

A decision about which holidays to attend can be made at any time, provided space for that day is still available. Once our limit is reached the day will no longer be available for registration. Please be careful when registering for pre-determined days. ***Once registered for pre-determined days there are no refunds or exchanges.*** Regardless of which type of enrollment you select, when you enroll, you are reserving staff, space and provisions for your child whether he/she attends or not. ***Credits cannot be given when students are absent.***

The program is available on a youngest child, highest usage or greatest need basis. A week before the program begins we will fill all remaining spaces available according to first come, first served. Middle school children will only be admitted after all younger children are assured service. Since we must hire and pay staff based on actual enrollment, fees are charged for each day a child is *registered* to attend, including absences.

Parents can choose to enroll a child for:

- Option 1-pre-determined days only
- Option 2- inclement weather days only
- Option 3- both the snow and pre-determined days option

Parents may select pre-determined days from the list provided on the registration form. **Please select these carefully, there are no refunds for these days.**

If spaces are available, parents may register later in the year after the initial registration period and pay the initial deposit. When registering after the initial registration period for option 3, parents will be billed for the "pre-determined" selections. In any event, all days must be paid in advance of service and all balances must be paid before spring break occurs or your child cannot attend.

Unscheduled "drop-in" use is not allowed. Families will choose predetermined days or preregister for inclement weather days. A late pick up fee will be charged for children picked up after 6:00 p.m on predetermined days and 5:30 p.m. on snow days, at the rate of \$1.00 per minute.

Help with Fees for Low Income Families

Subsidies are available to eligible parents through

- ☐ The Watauga County Department of Social Services (828-265-8100)
- ☐ Caldwell Community College (students attending during after school hours)
- ☐ ELC Reduced Rate is a scholarship available to low income parents who do not qualify for child care subsidies available from the Department of Social Services. Parents must apply and be approved for the scholarship. Reduced rate applications are available online at the same place as registration is found. These scholarships

are limited to 15 children county-wide for both ELC and Holiday/Snow Day programs.

- Watauga County Schools scholarship available only to full-time employees of Watauga County Schools.

School Space, Supplies

The school principal determines the building space and equipment that can be used at the school. Children normally have access to playgrounds, equipment, gyms and audio visual equipment when this does not conflict with school activities. Please have your children wear proper gym shoes. No boots or anything that can damage the floor can be worn.

Daily Routine 7:30-6:00

A written lesson plan/activity plan is posted and will be followed every day. These activities will include:

1. Arrival/Free Choice Centers
2. Morning snack
3. Academic learning. We will provide space on remote school work days from 10:00-2:30 for children to complete their school day provided the child brings his/her device with chargers, earbuds/headphones, and materials to complete their work.
4. Physical activity (outdoor play when weather permits or Gym including both gross motor and “free” play).
5. Lunch (parent provides according to USDA guidelines)
6. Quiet Time
7. Enrichment Activities a balance between self-directed and adult-guided.
8. Afternoon Snack
9. Physical Activity (outdoor or Gym)
10. Free Choice Centers

Remote Work Days

Each child will be given the opportunity to work on remote learning or packets provided. They bring school devices, chargers, earbuds, books or other printed materials and necessary supplies. We will provide guidance to children who request it but encourage parents to review assignments at home so they stay abreast of what their child is studying and the progress he/she is making academically. Provide your child’s remote work day schedule to the program coordinator from his/her teacher so we know when they have breaks or other times we need to make accommodations for on remote work days. ***If your child does not have appropriate materials to complete his/her work, the program coordinator will call and request materials be brought or to have the child picked up.*** PLEASE MAKE SURE TO PROVIDE CODES FOR GOOGLE MEETS.

Healthy Snacks and Lunch

Watauga County Schools are committed to serving nutritious snacks to your children. Two snacks and milk are provided by the program daily at no additional cost. **Parents must provide lunch on Holiday / Snow days.** Your child’s lunch needs to be “ready to eat”; however, we will be able to refrigerate your child’s lunch or snack. To ensure that lunches meet or exceed licensing

regulations, we will offer supplementary choices to students as needed to help their lunches meet nutrition standards. We will not “police” a child’s lunch food, but your help in meeting the standards will be good for your child, and it will help us comply with licensing regulations and keep down the fees we must charge.

In addition to lunch, parents should **provide a water bottle for refilling**.

Parents who have children with allergies or a medical reason for altering the normal snack provided must complete the Nutrition Opt Out Form and Medical Form (see program coordinator) stating the child’s specific condition, health care needs, reactions, and necessary responses and medications. Parents will then be responsible for providing two snacks and lunch each day suitable to meet your child’s needs ideally within the USDA guidelines (please see attachment and make a comparable substitute for your child).

Materials

Supplies and materials for program activities will be provided on site. Donations are always welcomed, particularly tissues and hand sanitizer. Please do not allow your child to bring “electronic games” or a cell phone. We discourage bringing any toys with the exception of a stuffed animal for emotional support. Items that become a source of contention among the children will be confiscated for the day. The program accepts no responsibility for any personal items brought by students.

Physical Activity

Physical activity will occur daily as part of our overall program to nurture the whole child. We exceed daily standards set forth by the “Eat Smart Move More” guidelines established by the state of North Carolina. Going outdoors each day weather permitting is a requirement of the Division of Child Development licensing standards (see weather chart provided). We will go outside even during cold weather and hot sunny days. On rainy days we will go outside under shelter. ***Be sure your child has appropriate provisions (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) for going outside each day.***

Discipline Policy and Behavior Expectations

Children must comply with all regular school rules and with the directions of the after school staff. We seek to prevent behavior problems by keeping the program well organized, setting clear expectations, modeling responsible and respectful behavior, offering engaging activities, meeting students’ basic needs, and providing positive reinforcement for good behavior.

When disciplinary actions are necessary, we use redirection, suspension of privileges, separation from the group, notices to parents, and suspension or expulsion from the program as needed. Corporal punishment and other physical punishment (such as requiring a student to run laps or do pushups or withholding food or bathroom privileges) are prohibited. Please support staff efforts to maintain a safe, orderly program for the benefit of all students. ***A parent/guardian contacted about behavior problems is expected to cooperate with the staff in assuring the elimination of inappropriate behavior.***

The basic discipline policy includes the following action steps:

1. Talking to the child about the behavior
2. Redirecting the child to a different activity
3. Removing the child from the group or area
4. Limiting privileges
5. Initiating an age appropriate period of time-out (1 minute for every year of age)
6. A written behavior letter and consulting with a parent in person to discuss a strategy.
7. Calling the parent, a written behavior letter and sending the child home.

Discipline will be handled by the program coordinator, the group leaders, the After School Assistant Director, or the After School Director.

A copy of a behavior letter from your program coordinator will be given to the parent or guardian detailing specific concerns as they occur and asking for help from the parent or guardian regarding how we can best address the problem to prevent repeat offenses of the same behavior.

If sustained problems arise regarding the behavior of your child and we are unable to solve the problem, we will contact you to arrange a parent/teacher conference regarding the problem. This will give you the opportunity to talk with our staff and school personnel in order to help your child. This conference can include the program coordinator, the counselor of the school or others who may experience similar behaviors during the school day. The goal is to come up with a comprehensive plan to address the issue so your child receives the same message from all figures of authority.

Suspensions

Safety and respect for all children and staff workers are our top priority. Students that are a threat to other children in the program, are continually disruptive to the group, disrespectful to staff, or refuse to follow instructions can be suspended or expelled. Students are also expected to stay with the group at all times. Students who do not stay with the group can be suspended or expelled as well. Suspensions may occur with or without a warning letter, depending on the severity of the incident. An expulsion may occur after three written letters or immediately if the offense is violent in nature, involves drugs, alcohol, or weapons.

Expulsion from the Holiday/Snow Day program will normally result from one of the following:

1. Repeated discipline problems such as disruptive behavior, refusal to follow instructions, or speech/actions disrespectful to other students or staff.
2. A single incident involving violence, possession of a weapon, any illegal substance, or other behavior that threatens the health and well-being of other students or staff.
3. Students who do not stay with their group.
4. Excessive late pick-up of children after 6:00 p.m for pre determined days and 5:30 p.m. for Holiday / Snow days
5. Failure to pay fees in a timely manner.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

North Carolina law requires that any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services. Any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect will be coordinated with the school guidance counselor and principal.

Procedures for safe arrival and departure of children

For the safety of your child, parents are required upon arrival, to accompany all children to the door of the facility by an adult. You must arrive to drop off your child between 7:30 –9:00 a.m. on Predetermined days and 9:00-9:45 a.m. on Snow days as we cannot staff the door indefinitely. If you are late arriving you may message on Procure or call 828-268-1469 for us to meet you. Children must arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. or they will not be admitted for the day for Predetermined day and no later than 9:45 on snow days. We will verify children's arrival by signing them in for the day at the door. In the afternoon, please message on Procure or call the office number above when you are ready to pick up your child and we will meet you at the door. Numbers for the day will also be posted on a dry erase board outside of the main entrance. Your child must be signed in and out according to the program's policies. Upon the child's departure, the program coordinator will identify the person picking the child up, the person's identity will be documented by an original PIN code with the name of the person in Procure and time picked up. Daily arrival and departure times must be recorded. Students are not allowed to go out to a car without an adult and children will only be released to persons listed on the child's application as authorized by the parent/guardian. Staff will request to view a driver's license to verify the identity of persons other than a known parent/guardian even if they are included on your authorized list. Authorization from parent/guardian is required in writing when anyone other than the designated person(s) as listed on the child's application arrives to pick up the child. If an emergency arises and you wish to make special arrangements for picking up your child, you will need to add your pick up to the authorized list from your Procure app. Please be sure you update your phone number with the Program Coordinator if it changes. Once the child is signed out, the person who picked up the child is immediately fully responsible for that child. **Children must never be left unattended.**

The Predetermined days close at 6:00 p.m. The snow days close at 5:30 p.m. Late pick-up fees will apply at the rate of \$1.00 per minute past the closing time.

If children are not picked up by 6:30 p.m. and we have not received a call saying that an authorized person is on the way to pick up the child, we will contact the Department of Social Services to report the situation and to request assistance.

If there are current legal documents regarding custody issues, please provide a copy to the Program Coordinator. We are required to release a child to his or her natural parent unless we have a legal document on file that addresses custody. We cannot deny a parent the right to pick up their child, even if we have been asked to do so without a legal document on site.

100% Tobacco-Free Policy

Smoking and the use of any product containing, made or derived from tobacco, including but not limited to e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, vapes, and hookah is not permitted on the premises of the child care facility, on vehicles used to transport children or during off-premise activities. This policy is communicated to all families, visitors, volunteers, and staff. All staff and parents of enrolled children sign an acknowledgement of this policy. Any persons

found violating the policy will be asked to refrain while on child care premises or asked to leave the premises.

Health Rules for Attendance

Sick children must be picked up immediately, please be prompt. Children who are sick or have had a fever within the past 24 hours or have family members who are sick should not attend the program. Children will be given a wellness check as they are dropped off at the program each day and monitored throughout the time in the program for symptoms of illness.

If your child becomes ill while in our care, you will be called using contact information provided on the registration form (remember to notify the Program Coordinator of any changes in contact information so that you can be reached in the event of an emergency).

Children with any of the following conditions will be sent home:

- Temperature over 100.4 degrees
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started
- 2 or more episodes of vomiting
- A red eye with white or yellow eye discharge until 24 hours after treatment
- Scabies or lice
- Chicken pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional states the child is not infectious
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
- Pertussis, until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment (continued on next page).
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice
- Sudden onset of diarrhea
- When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child will be separated from other children.

Medication Administration

Our staff is certified in Pediatric First Aid, CPR & AED, Medication Administration Basics, Medication Administration: Epinephrine Auto Injectors and Health Emergencies: Life Threatening Allergies.

You must provide written permission to administer medication to your child. In addition, a doctor or health care professional must sign a medication permission form and create an action plan for your child in order that Watauga County Schools after school personnel may make available 1) epinephrine for severe allergic reactions, and 2) inhalants for asthma. This form is to be filled out and updated every six months. It will be kept on file-with the students' records. Please keep track of medication expiration dates as we are unable to keep your child in the program if permission or medication expires. The board of education and its employees assume no liability for complications or side effects of medication when administered in accordance with the instructions provided by the parent and health care practitioner.

Our staff is only permitted to administer emergency medication in the instance the child is not able to self-administer; please be sure your child is adequately trained to self-administer asthma inhalers and “epi-pens”. All other over the counter and/or non-emergency medications should be administered before or after program hours. Our program personnel will not administer any non-emergency medication. It is imperative that you record

any medical conditions, health care needs, reactions and necessary responses and medications on your child's registration form and update as necessary.

If your child is injured during play, we will administer first aid and call you. The program coordinator will describe the injury to you and we will give you the opportunity to make a decision regarding whether your child should be picked up or stay with us.

In case of an emergency, the staff will seek medical assistance first and call the parent immediately. Parents and their insurance carriers are responsible for the cost of such emergencies.

Insurance

We strongly encourage parents to obtain insurance coverage for their children either through the accident policy offered at the school or through a family health insurance policy. Parents and/or their insurance carriers are responsible for all costs related to accidents or injury incurred to children during the Holiday/Snow Day Program.

Field Trips

Children do not leave school grounds except for approved field trips. If a field trip is planned for traveling away from the center, you will be given another field trip permission form. Every child must have a permission slip signed by the parent or guardian. If there is a participation fee, the information will be attached to the permission form along with other specific information about the field trip. A field trip schedule will be posted at least one week in advance for your information. The specific location of the trip, the time and date of the trip, when and where the child will be picked up, the name of the person in charge, and how a parent can contact that person if necessary will be included on the posting. A list of children in attendance will also be left at the center for reference. All field trips are optional for students. Transportation for field trips is provided. Parents are invited to accompany students if a field trip is planned with an approved background check. There is a very small probability that a field trip will occur in the Holiday Snow Program.

Emergency Response Plan

The WCS Holiday/Snow Day program follows the same evacuation procedures as the school they are located in for fire, lockdown, and tornado procedures. In the event of an emergency, staff will have each child's emergency information and parents will be notified as soon as the situation is safe to do so. More information is available on request. Fire drills are held once a month and instructions are given and posted at each school. Tornado drills are held prior to and during the tornado season.

Custodial Services

The agreement between the school and Holiday Program regarding custodial service is: Any shared space used by both the school and Holiday Program is cleaned by the custodial department. Floors are mopped and bathrooms are cleaned daily by the custodian.

The Holiday Program staff will clean any space dedicated entirely to our program. Staff will clean and sanitize tables and chairs daily, other student materials will be cleaned and disinfected weekly or more often during times when illness and viruses are prevalent.

Space and Equipment

There are space requirements for indoor and outdoor environments that must be measured prior to licensure. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

Licensed centers must also meet requirements in the following areas.

Staff Requirements

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours, including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. All staff who work directly with children must have CPR and First Aid training, and at least one person who completed the training must be present at all times when children are in care. One staff must complete the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. All staff must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.

Staff/Child Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. The minimum staff/child ratios and group sizes for single-age groups of children in centers are shown below and must be posted in each classroom. The staff/child ratios for multi-age groupings are outlined in the child care rules and require prior approval.

Age	Teacher: Child Ratio	Max Group Size
0-12 months	1:5	10
12-24 months	1:8	12
2 to 3 years old	1:10	20
3 to 4 years old	1:15	25
4 to 5 years old	1:20	25
5 years and older	1:25	25

Additional Staff/Child Ratio Information:

Centers located in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff/child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

Reviewing Facility Information

From the Division's Child Care Facility Search Site, the facility and visit documentation can be viewed.

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every licensed center or family child care home. These files can be viewed during business hours (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) by contacting the Division at 910-914-8300 or 1-800-880-0829 or requested via the Division's web site at www.ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov.

How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development and Early Education to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be issued an administrative action, fined and/or may have their licenses suspended or revoked.

Administrative actions must be posted in the facility. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 910-814-8300 or 1-800-880-0829.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Child Development
and Early Education

Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules (Center and FCCH)

Division of Child Development
and Early Education

North Carolina Department of
Health and Human Services
333 Six Forks Road
Raleigh, NC 27609

Child Care Commission
<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Home/Child-Care-Commission>

Revised January 2021

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.

What Is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis - at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The purpose of regulation is to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, including their own preschool children, and can include three additional school-age children. The provider's own school-age children are not counted. Family child care home operators must be 21 years old and have a high school education or its equivalent. Family child care homes will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

Child Care Centers

Licensure as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Recreational programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The laws and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone

directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your community. For more information, visit the Resources page located on the Child Care website at: <https://nochildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>. For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 818-814-8300 or 1-800-859-0829 (In State Only), or visit our homepage at: <https://nochildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>.

Child Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment

Every citizen has a responsibility to report suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. This occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. It may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. It also occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, appropriate discipline, or when a child is abandoned. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child maltreatment at a child care facility to report the situation to the Intake Unit at Division of Child Development and Early Education at 818-814-8300 or 1-800-859-0829. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any maltreatment complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect in a family to report the case to the county department of social services.

Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratios must be maintained.

Record Requirements

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's, staff, and program. A record of monthly fire drills and quarterly shelter-in-place or lockdown drills practiced must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma policy must be developed and shared with parents of children up to five years of age.

Discipline and Behavior Management

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in the discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all centers and family child care homes. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development and Early Education that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

Training Requirements

Center and family child care home staff must have current CPR and First Aid certification, IT5-SIDS training (if caring for infants, 0 to 12 months), prior to training for children and every three years thereafter. Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training is required and each facility must create an EPR plan. Center and home staff must also complete a minimum number of health and safety training as well as annual ongoing training hours.

Curriculum and Activities

Four- and five-star programs must use an approved curriculum in classrooms serving four-year-olds. Other programs may choose to use an approved curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Activity plans and schedule must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. A written activity plan that includes activities intended to stimulate the development domains, in accordance with North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore, use materials on their own and have choices.

Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed family child care home and center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. For Centers and FCCs, meals and snacks must be nutritious and meet the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed centers to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. Children must have space and time provided for rest.

Two through Five Star Rated License

Centers and family child care homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one-star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five-star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program, and one quality point option.

Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background qualification is a pre-service requirement. All staff must undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter. This requirement includes household members who are over the age of 16 in family child care homes.

CHILD MEAL PATTERN

Snack				
(Select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack)				
Food Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ² (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)
Fluid Milk ³	4 fluid ounces	4 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
Meat/meat alternates				
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products ⁴	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Large egg	½	½	½	½
Cooked dry beans or peas	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 tbsp	1 tbsp	2 tbsp	2 tbsp
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened ⁵	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Vegetables ⁶	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Fruits ⁶	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains (oz eq) ^{7,8}				
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁹ , cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{9,10}				
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 ¾ cup	1 ¾ cup
Granola	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup

¹ Select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Only one of the two components may be a beverage.

² Larger portion sizes than specified may need to be served to children 13 through 18 years old to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children six years old and older.

⁴ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226.



Watauga County Schools
Educating for Productive Citizenship & Life-Long Learning
2026-2027 School Calendar

BOE Approved
1/12/2026

August 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- Mandatory Work Days (5)
- Optional Work Days (10)
- Annual Leave (10)
- Holidays (10)
- Early Release Days (6)

R Remote Learning Days TBD

August
 11-14.....Mandatory Work Days
 17.....First Day of 180 Day Term

September
 7.....Labor Day Holiday
 23.....Early Release/
 Professional Development Day

October
 16.....End of First Quarter
 19.....Optional Work Day
 28-29.....Early Release/
 Parent Conferences

November
 11.....Veterans Day Holiday
 25.....Optional Work Day
 26-27.....Thanksgiving Holidays

December
 18.....Early Release/
 End of 2nd Nine Weeks/End of First
 Semester

21-22.....Annual Leave
 23-25.....Christmas Holidays
 28-31.....Annual Leave

January
 1.....New Year's Day Holiday
 4.....Students Return
 18.....Optional Work Day/
 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February
 24.....Early Release/
 Professional Development Day

March
 19.....End of Third Quarter
 29.....Spring Holiday
 30-31.....Annual Leave

April
 1-2.....Annual Leave

May
 25.....Last Day of Fourth Quarter/
 End of Second Semester
 26.....Mandatory Work Day
 27-28.....Optional Work Days
 31.....Memorial Day Holiday

June
 1-4,7.....Optional Work Days

**The last day of the 2026-2027 school year
 will be an early release day.**

January 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Inclement Weather Guidelines for the Holiday/Snow Day Program

1. We plan to open the program at 9:00 a.m. on days where we have inclement weather.

We ask for your patience in these situations:

2. The **program opening will be delayed when a decision to close schools is made after 6:15 a.m.**, unless road conditions are extremely severe in which case we may close. The decision may be postponed until as late as 8:00 when a decision to close schools is made after 6:15.
3. **If a one or two hour delay becomes a closing**, or if rapidly changing weather and road conditions are extreme, we reserve the right to delay opening with the knowledge that staff do not know until a school decision is made and must have time to make it in safely and prepare the program for the day.
4. **The program will NOT open when schools are dismissed early due to weather** or when road conditions are extremely severe.

We will announce decisions about program opening as soon as possible. In most cases, **the decision will be announced when the decision to close the schools is made**. Decisions are announced through local media, facebook / instagram), the Watauga County Schools district webpage (www.wataugaschools.org), X @WataugaSchools, or the Connect 5 automated telephone/text/email (upon request) service. We will communicate all information on Procure as well.

The program may close early if road conditions start to become dangerous or if we lose power or water during the day. We will contact parents to pick up their children if these situations occur. Please be sure to keep the Program Coordinator (phone# 268-1469, 9:00a.m.-6:30 p.m.) up-to-date on changes in phone numbers so that we may contact you promptly in case of these or other emergencies.

North Carolina licensing requires child care facilities to take children outside each day according to the following weather chart. Please be sure to send appropriate and adequate clothing for going outside.

Understand the Weather



Wind-Chill

- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- -20° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute



Heat Index

- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
 - 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
 - 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
 - 110° considered *dangerous*
- All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)											
Air Temperature		Wind Speed in mph									
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	
40		40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	
30		30	26	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	
20		20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	
10		10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	
0		0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	
-10		-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	



Comfortable for out door play



Caution



Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)																
Air Temperature (°F)		Relative Humidity (Percent)														
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100		
80		80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87		
84		83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103		
90		91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132		
94		97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135					
100		109	114	118	124	129	130									
104		119	124	131	137											



Our Online Parent Portal

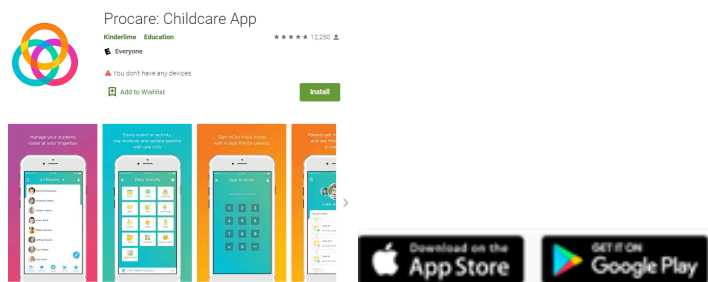
[Myprocare.com](https://myprocure.com) allows you to access your student's account, be notified when fees are due, and make payments online with an electronic check. You can also set up automatic recurring payments so you never receive a late payment fee again.

Creating a Procare account is a requirement of enrollment in the after school program. So you must provide an up-to-date email address when registering your child.

Once your child's registration is accepted for enrollment, you will receive an emailed invitation from Procare to create your family account. Below is a list of steps you will need to follow once you receive your invitation to create your Procare account:

1. To begin, enter your primary email address (this is the email address you will use when registering your child for the after school program) and click the Secure Login button.
 2. You will then be prompted to check your email for a confirmation number, which you will enter in the indicated box.
 3. Choose a password and enter where indicated.
 4. Confirm your password where indicated.
 5. Click Submit.
-

MyProcure has an Awesome Mobile App available!



With the free Procare Mobile App, you are able to receive photos, videos, messages from your child's program coordinator, and other updates about your child's activities in the after school program. You will be able to keep track of when your child is signed into the program and signed out.

You are also able to make payments online by electronic check, set up recurring payments, see your monthly statement, and access your child care tax statement. With the Mobile App you are able to sign your child in and out of the program as needed using Procare's contactless QR Code.

You may contact Trevor Owens at owenst@wataugaschools.org or call 828-264-7190 with any questions.

This is a Continuation of the Online Registration Form

Photo/ Video/ Audio Consent

There may be occasions when after school activities will be photographed, videotaped, or have audio recorded by employees of the Watauga County Schools, the news media, and others for training or public relations purposes. With your consent, film including your child may be used in these photos/videos/Audio in the school system and/or after school; publications, newspaper and television stories, teacher training materials, presentations to professional and community groups, on school system web pages and social media, and for other noncommercial purposes. Any film / photo/ audio of students for commercial purposes will be prohibited without the consent of parents.

By my signature below, I indicate that I approve or disapprove of having my child (as listed on this form above) photographed or videotaped during after school activities as described above.

I approve: _____
(Parent Signature) Date _____

I disapprove: _____
(Parent Signature) Date _____

This is a Continuation of the Online Registration Form
Child care application signature page
Receipt of Handbook and Emergency Authorization

By my signature below **I agree or acknowledge:**

- **In the event of an emergency** the program coordinator or other staff may authorize the physician of his/her choice to provide emergency care provided that I cannot be contacted immediately.
- the program coordinator or other after school personnel may arrange transportation as needed to the nearest hospital or evacuation site.
- The Extended Learning Center Parent Handbook Policies and Procedures including but not limited to the program discipline policy have been explained to me and I will abide by the rules and policies governing after-school care included within the handbook and support the staff in their efforts to make this program a safe and fun learning experience.
- I have either received a printed copy or have access online at <https://www.wataugaschools.org/departments/afterschool/parent-handbook-fees-tax-info-child-care-voucher-info-reduced-rate-eligibility> to the Watauga County Schools Extended Learning Center's Parent Policy and Information Handbook including discipline policy.
- Any changes of the program discipline policy will be given to me in writing 14 days prior to implementation.
- For my child to play outside fenced playground areas of the school.

In this handbook, I have been given information for the following topics:

1. How to register my child
2. Types of enrollment
3. Fees and services
4. Online billing information
5. Hours of operation
6. Procedures for safe arrival and departure of center
7. Medication policy- Sick child policy
8. 100% Tobacco-Free Policy for N.C. Child Care
9. Emergency evacuation plan
10. Discipline and behavior expectations
11. Inclement weather
12. Healthy snacks
13. Child abuse and neglect policy
14. Custodial Services
15. School Calendar
16. Summary of North Carolina Child care Law and Rules
17. Weather Chart
18. Field Trip/Photography Consent Form
19. Permission to play outside fenced playground areas of the school.

Again, if a student is signed up for a day and does not attend, THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS. Snow days are grouped into groups and they will be consecutive. If you pay for one of the days with the group that you paid for but missed a day or two, there is no refund for that.

Child's Name (please print)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

I, the Program Coordinator, will provide or arrange transportation to an appropriate medical resource or pre-determined evacuation site in the event of an emergency. In an emergency, other children in the program will be supervised by a responsible adult. I will not administer any drug or medication to the children in this program except during a life threatening emergency when a child is unable to self-administer medication as authorized by the parent and physician in the action plan on site.

(Program Coordinator Signature)

(Date)

