

Cowan Elementary School

Latchkey Handbook

2025-2026



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CCSC Latchkey Program

The Cowan Community School Corporation has designed a quality, low cost latchkey program. This program is designed to provide childcare services to the children, family and community in a safe and nurturing environment.

This program will remain available when there is, and as long as there is, a sufficient interest by parents and as long as space is available. Each child enrolled in the latchkey program must be enrolled and attend regular classes at Cowan Elementary School.

Latchkey is a privilege, not a right. Violation of rules may result in a loss of privileges. All students are expected to behave appropriately and follow guidelines set by the latchkey director and all school rules. Failure to do so may result in suspensions or expulsions from latchkey itself.

Fees

- **There will be a registration fee of \$25.00 per household**, (anyone living in the same household a majority of the week during the school year), to enroll in the latchkey program. This fee will be used to help pay for supplies used by the children in the program such as paper, writing utensils, snacks, and other needed materials. The initial registration fee is paid once each year and is not refundable.
- **An hourly rate of \$4 per child** will be charged for all families that choose to participate in the latchkey program. All fees should be paid on Monday after you receive your balance. Payments should be on time.

- **Effective January 7th, 2025: if your child's latchkey balance reaches \$50 or more, they will be unable to attend the program until the outstanding balance is paid in full.**
- **You will be charged a full hour if your child enters latchkey**
- Latchkey fees must be paid separately to the latchkey program. Please do not include them in a check for lunch. You may pay using cash, check, or MySchoolBucks. Checks should be made out to Cowan Elementary School.
 - MySchoolBucks is the system in place for making breakfast, lunch, and Latchkey payments. By logging on to www.myschoolbucks.com, you may make these necessary payments throughout the school year. There is no limit on the amount of money that can be deposited into the debit account. Please make sure to keep your student's account maintained throughout the year.
 - At the end of the school year if you have a due balance for latchkey, the upcoming school year your child/children will not be able to attend latchkey until the amount due is paid in full.

Operating Procedures

- The latchkey program begins at **6:45am** and ends at **5:45pm** Monday-Friday.

6:45am-7:45am: Before-school latchkey

- Morning latchkey drop off time will end at 7:30 am. If your child comes after this time you must use the car drop off.

- Parents will walk their child/children up to the latchkey doors in the mornings.

2:45pm-5:45pm: After-school latchkey

- After school latchkey pick up time will start at 3:15pm. If your child needs to leave before this time you will have to use the car pick up line.
- Closing time is 5:45pm promptly. There will be a late fee when a child is picked up after closing time in the amount of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes thereafter. If there has been no parent contact after 6:30pm and no one from your emergency contact list is available, the sheriff will be called and your child will be taken into protective custody until a parent can be located. If this should happen, you should do one of the following:
 - A. Contact the people from your emergency list to verify if any of them have your child.
 - B. Call the appropriate law enforcement agency (sheriff) if you cannot locate your child.
- All holidays and vacation periods will be the same as the Cowan Community School Corporation calendar. Latchkey services will be offered for all days in which school is open and students are in attendance.
- The latchkey program will be closed when school is not in session.

- Accounts must be kept paid down to avoid dismissal from the program.

General Admission Policies

- Enrollment shall be open to any child attending Cowan Elementary, provided the program can meet the needs of that child.
- Children may be picked up from latchkey only by adults who are authorized by a legal guardian. Anyone on the unauthorized list won't be allowed to pick up the child.

Admission Procedures

- A completed registration form must be submitted online.
- A \$25.00 registration fee shall be paid upon the enrollment of each new family and upon re-enrollment at the beginning of each new school year.
- Completion of the registration form and payment of fees constitutes registration.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

- Enrollment in the program shall be granted without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, creed or political belief.

Inclement Weather

- **If there is a school delay, latchkey will operate on the same delay for its opening hours.**
 - **Example: if school is on a 2-hour delay, latchkey will also be on a delay and will open at 8:45am.**
- During poor weather, listen for a school messenger call for early closing information. If there is an early dismissal, children need to be picked up as soon as possible. Parents will be contacted first. If no parent can be reached, then we will contact emergency contacts, if they can not be reached the sheriff will be called.

Health Requirements

- The latchkey program will be sensitive to the physical and emotional well-being of each child.
- The latchkey teacher has the authority to refuse any child who shows signs of illness.
- If a child becomes overly fatigued, ill, or injured while at school the parent will be notified promptly.

School Rules

The following are general expectations for all Cowan students. Our philosophy regarding any school rules is that we expect our students to show RESPECT to themselves, each other, adults, our equipment, and the building. As a staff we hope to model positive behavior and interaction for our students to create a safe and healthy environment. Grounds for suspension according to the regular Student/Parent Handbook still apply during Latchkey hours. Not following latchkey and school rules could result in a student not being allowed to go to latchkey for a certain period of time.

1. Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate in school. Never will kissing or embracing or any other actions that bring inappropriate notice to an individual be considered proper or permissible. If students choose to disregard this expectation, consequences will follow.
2. Food and beverages are to be consumed in the cafeteria, besides clear water bottles containing water only. Food and beverages should not be taken into the gym or classroom without approval.
3. Students are to comply with all reasonable requests made by staff members. A request is deemed reasonable unless it is immoral or illegal.
4. Students are expected to show respect for other students, adults, and school property. Any destruction of clothes, property, inappropriate language, fighting, pushing, shoving, intimidation, using foul language, tripping, lying, stealing, or any other inappropriate behavior will not be permitted.
5. School personnel must give permission for any student to leave a supervised area either inside the school or outside on school grounds. Students are expected to be where they are scheduled at the scheduled time.
6. All students' personal items of considerable value should be left at home for safekeeping. The school will assume no responsibility for items lost or stolen. Trading cards and/or trading or selling of personal items at school is prohibited.

7. Use of profane, loud, or improper language will not be tolerated.
8. Improper or inappropriate use of electronic devices that include but not limited to: cell phones/smart watches, headphones, earbuds, video cameras, computers, IPADS, or any type of digital camera while at latchkey, is grounds for discipline.
9. Students are allowed three referrals before a suspension from latchkey. Depending on the severity of the referral, could result in an immediate suspension from latchkey. After a second suspension your child will not be able to attend latchkey the remainder of the school year. Your bill will still need to be paid in full for them to attend latchkey the next school year.
10. If a student is in New Beginnings they will not be allowed to attend latchkey until they are out of New Beginnings.

Latchkey Rules

Cafeteria-

- Come in and be seated.
- No standing around, walking around, or running.
- Clean up after yourself.
- No being excessively loud.
- If a student does not follow rules, send them to the latchkey room.
- Listen to your teacher!

Gym-

- No dodgeball.
- No contact sports, keep hands to yourself.

- No gymnastics.
- No wrestling.
- Lights stay on.
- If a student does not follow rules, send them to the latchkey room.
- Be respectful and listen.

Playground-

- No monkey bars, football, or contact sports.
- 3rd grade and up only on the green climbing toy.
- No kindergarten/1st grade on the merry-go-round.
- When cars are in the parking lot, kids need to stay on the playground.
- Kindergarten and 1st graders must stay on the playground at all times, 2nd and 3rd graders can play on the hill between the playground and the building, and 4th and up may be on the grassy area east of the playground as long as they are in sight.
- No pushing or physical contact is allowed.
- If a student does not follow the rules, send them to the latchkey room.