

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Medford, Massachusetts

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MEDFORD AFTER SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK (DRAFT)



Administrative Office:

Before/After School Office
489 Winthrop Street
Medford, MA 02155
before-afterschool@medford.k12.ma.us
Office: 781-393-2102
Fax: 781-393-2123

Program Sites:

Brooks School:	781-760-1430
Missituk School:	781-866-1596
McGlynn School:	781-983-4768 (Grades K/1) 781-866-1063 (Grades 2-5)
Roberts School:	781-866-9288

(phone numbers are subject to change...please watch for communication from your Site Coordinator)

If an Interpreter to translate this information is necessary,
please call the EL Office at 781-393-2348.

1.Caso necessite de um interprete para traduzir esta informacao, e favor contatar o escritorio de ELL no seguinte numero | 781-393-2348 (Portuguese)

2.Si un Interprete es necesitado para tradusir esta informacion, por favor contacta la officina de ELL en numero | 781-393-2348 (Spanish)

3.Si w bezwen yo Entèprèt pou tradui enfòmasyon sa a pou wou, souple rele biwo ELL nan nimewo sa a 781-393-2348 (Haitian-Creole)



Introduction

WELCOME TO THE MEDFORD AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM!

The Medford After School Program is a tuition-supported program under the auspices of the Medford Public Schools and Medford School Committee policies. The full text of school district policies can be found in your child's school specific Student Handbook.

The program is administered and staffed by a team of dedicated educators. The Director of Before and After School Time, Site Coordinators, Group Leaders and Assistant Group Leaders work together to provide quality programming for elementary school-aged children and their families at the Brooks, McGlynn, Missituk, and Roberts Elementary Schools.

The After School curriculum offers diverse, age-appropriate educational and recreational activities based on student's interests. The program aims to enhance development in the areas of self-confidence, independence, academics and friendships.

Medford Public Schools Mission Statement

The Medford Public Schools is a caring educational partnership of school, family and community designed to ensure that all students are afforded a safe and healthy learning environment in which they develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to reach their full academic and personal potential. This partnership is dedicated to providing all students with a 21st century education that will enable them to be life-long learners and contributors to a diverse and rapidly changing world.

After School Program Mission Statement

The mission of the After School program is to provide quality after school activities for Medford Public Schools students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade at the Brooks, McGlynn, Missituk, and Roberts Elementary Schools. The program strives to contribute to the social-emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of children in a safe, supportive learning environment.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with the district discrimination policy, our Medford After School program does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of the Medford Public Schools from or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, housing status, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

Family Involvement

Caregivers are welcome to visit the program but must be accompanied by a staff member. As with any school involvement, a completed Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) must be on file.

While there is no set schedule for conferences, a caregiver may request one at any time. Pick-up time provides a convenient opportunity for caregivers and staff to exchange information. Caregivers are encouraged to share relevant concerns with the Site Coordinator.



Social events are another opportunity to get together. Plays and Talent Shows bring together staff, caregivers and children.

Each spring, caregivers receive an end-of-the-year survey that informs future programming.

Administrative Organization

The Medford After School programs are part of Medford Public Schools. The Managing Director reports to the Superintendent. Experienced Site Directors, Group Leaders and Assistant Group Leaders staff the After School programs. Additionally, community service students and middle school, high school and college students assist with homework and other program components.

The average child to staff ratio is 8:1. Staff credentials vary with a mix of college degrees, experience with school-age children and activity specialization. The program follows the standards set forth in the *Department of Early Education and Care Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Family Child Care; Small Group and School Age and Large Group and School Age Child Care Programs*.

Program Design & Services

Program Design: The program operates from the end of the school day until 6:00PM (pick-up is requested by 5:55PM). There are three days per school year that the After School program begins at 12 noon. These days are the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, the day before the December recess and the day before the last day of school. **On these three days the program closes at 4:00PM There is no AfterSchool on the last day of school.**

Daily Routine: There are age-appropriate activities throughout the After School day with a balance of social emotional, physical and intellectual growth opportunities.

The daily routine consists of activities inclusive of group time, playground and/or gym depending on the weather, snack, project time, and homework assistance. The end of the day offers structured and unstructured opportunities and, weather permitting, outside activities.

Snacks

The After School program works in collaboration with the Medford Public Schools Food Service Program to provide free snacks to students. In accordance with the Medford Public Schools Wellness Policy, healthy snack and drink choices are encouraged.

Please be sure to clearly indicate food and other allergies on the Enrollment Contract. See page 8 for more information pertaining to EpiPens, etc.

Student Records

An individual file is maintained on each student enrolled. All records are confidential and cannot be released without the written consent of a caregiver. The student's caregiver(s) shall, upon request, have access to their child's record.

Divorced or Separated Families: In order to take the best possible care of your child, please inform us of any custody arrangements, i.e., which caregiver to contact first for general questions and in an emergency; whether duplicate program information should be sent to both caregivers; who is responsible for payments; and, who will or will not be authorized to pick up the child.*



**Please Note* If a caregiver has legal custody, or joint legal custody, even if they do not have physical custody, and there is no restraining order in place, the program cannot prevent that caregiver from picking up their child(ren). In such a situation, we will inform the caregiver who made the request that we cannot prevent a caregiver with legal custody from picking up their child.

Restraining Orders: If a court restraining order is to be respected, a readable copy of the order (including dates) must be on file at the After School site and at the After School Office. It is the caregiver or legal guardian's responsibility to provide the certified copy of the order. In addition, the program must be provided with a photograph of the person named in the restraining order. Restraining orders should be submitted annually.

In the event that the certified copy of the order expressly states that either a natural or adoptive caregiver or legal guardian shall not have any contact with the child or children, and in the event that such person attempts to have contact with the child or children, the After School shall first notify the local police department, and only then attempt to notify the custodial caregiver or legal guardian.

Registration Procedures

Families can register children for the After School that corresponds to the school they attend during the school day. There is no bussing between schools.

Applications for enrollment/re-enrollment are available in the spring of the preceding school year. Priority is given to returning families and their siblings that submit a Pre-registration Form within the designated re-enrollment time period. Changes in a student's schedule for an upcoming school year will be honored based on availability.

Both new and returning families are responsible for a yearly non-refundable registration fee per family. If the student withdraws from the program prior to the start of the new school year or at any time during the school year, the registration fee is non-refundable.

Enrollment for new students is determined by a Lottery conducted in the Spring. Should spots remain open after the Lottery, they will be available on a first-come, first served basis. If there are no available spaces in the program, there will be a Wait List.

Once registered, changes in enrollment days cannot go into effect until October 1. Additionally, no changes in a student's schedule for the month of June will be honored. Enrollment will remain open throughout the school year on a space availability basis.

An Emergency Contacts form must be submitted and a Permissions page signed annually prior to returning to the program. The caregiver signing the Permissions (contracting caregiver) is responsible for all paperwork and payments. This person is the only person that can make changes. In dual custody situations, a separate form may be required.

Tuition

Tuition payments are divided into 10 monthly payments. By July 1, families must enroll in a payment plan with [FACTS Management Company](#). Families pay 10 equal monthly beginning August 5th (or 20th, depending on your plan). Your child will not be eligible to attend the program if any fees are not paid by the first day of the program.

All students must be enrolled for a **minimum** of one day per week. Obligation to pay the full monthly fee is required. No portion of such fees can be refunded due to absence. Due to the FACTS charging



schedule, a **four-week** written notice is required to decrease days or remove a student from the program with the change(s) in effect on the first of the following month from the date of the request change.

Financial assistance is available to qualified families who can apply two times during the year (August and renewal in January). For information about payment plans/tuition assistance, contact the After School Office at before-afterschool@medford.k12.ma.us.

Student Schedule Changes

Schedule changes are permissible in the months of October-May (see below). Requests for schedule changes **must** be made by email to the After School Office.

Reduction in Days: A four-week written notice to the After School Office is required. Any reductions in days go into effect on the first of the following month from notification (provided there was a four-week notice).

Withdrawal: A four-week written notice to the After School Office is required prior to withdrawing from the program. Any withdrawal from the After School program will go into effect on the first of the following month from notification (provided there was a four-week notice). Future participation is contingent on availability of space. There are no schedule changes for the months of September and June. All registration fees and tuition payments are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Additional Days: If you would like to send your child to the After School program on additional non-scheduled day(s), you may do so based on availability. Written requests must be made in advance to the After School Office and Site Coordinator. **Should you request an additional day and not use it, the charge remains in effect and will be added to the FACTS account.**

For the safety of your child please inform your child's classroom teacher in writing of any new After School arrangements, e.g., additional days.

Program Re-entry: If you choose to take your child out of the program and return before the end of the school year, you must pay a new \$50.00 registration fee. Future participation is contingent on availability of space.

Absences/Vacations: The program does not credit families for absences due to illness, vacations, etc. If a family needs to be away from school and After School for more than two weeks, administration will determine on a case-to-case basis the possibility of a fee adjustment and the holding of a slot for the returning student(s).

If a student does not attend school, they will not be permitted to the After School program. If a student attends school, and has been dismissed early from school or at school dismissal for a medical appointment or family emergency, they will be permitted to attend the program at the discretion of the Site Coordinator.

Make sure to notify us if your child will be absent for any reason. Please email or call your program's cell phone no later than 2:00 p.m. Each program's cell phone has 24-hour voice mail. Caregivers will be contacted if a child does not report to the After School program and no message has been received. Although we check a school's daily absent list, for safety reasons, a caregiver **must** contact the program when a child (ren) will be absent. Please do not ask the classroom teacher to notify the After School. Should caregivers/guardians continually not adhere to this procedure, they will be asked to leave the program.



Yearly Schedule

The Medford After School Program operates according to the regular Medford Public Schools schedule. The program is closed for holidays and school vacation weeks. Programming begins at the end of the scheduled school day and continues until 6:00 p.m. The After School Program does not operate if schools are closed.

Pick-Up Procedures & Late Fines

Students may be picked up any time prior to 5:55 p.m., but they must be picked up **no later** than 5:55 p.m. Students will be released only to those persons over the age of 16 listed on a family's Enrollment Contract. A child nine years of age or older may walk home if appropriate paperwork with written authorization and consent is on file.

When picking up your child, **YOU MUST SIGN OUT** documenting the time of departure. Photo IDs are required unless we know the individual(s) that are picking up. Please refrain from cell phone use to ensure better communication at pick-up time. **When you arrive, there is an assumption that you are then responsible for your child within the rules of the program.** If you have not picked up your child and we have not heard from you by 6:10 p.m., your emergency contact(s) will be called. If we have not heard from you or your emergency contact(s) by 6:30 p.m., we will contact the Medford Police Department and have your child transported to the local station.

Late Pick-up Fines are paid through FACTS. If a caregiver receives an invoice it must be paid within five business days. The procedure using the After School cell phone to determine time of pick-up is as follows:

- The late fee is a flat fee of \$10.00 for any late arrival from 6:01 p.m. to 6:10 p.m.
- Beginning at 6:11 p.m. until pick-up \$2.00 per minute above the flat fee of \$10.00 is charged.
- A caregiver will be asked to sign a Late Pickup Form.
- Late fees will be added to a family's FACTS account once the Late Pickup Form is received. Families receiving vouchers will receive an invoice.
- Repeated late pickups could result in removal from the program

Caregivers must notify staff in advance and in writing when someone other than a caregiver is picking up a child and the name is not listed on the family's Enrollment Contract. Additional names can be added in writing, e.g., email, at any time during the school year. If staff does not know the individual, a photo ID must be shown before the child will be released. It is important to share this information along with the After School telephone number with anyone picking up your child (ren).

Caregiver Emergency Situation: In an emergency situation a telephone call from a caregiver directly to a staff member can request a new pick up person. If a child has been picked up by an individual through telephone authorization, the caregiver must verify the telephone call/pick up person in writing the next school day. The individual must show a photo ID before the child will be released.

Emergency Closing / Snow Closing

Should the After School program be required to close early due to an emergency, every effort will be made to notify caregivers in a timely manner in order to make alternate arrangements. In such cases, caregivers are asked to pick up children promptly to ensure the safety of all families and staff.

If we cannot reach caregivers or emergency contacts, children will be transported to a nearby emergency site. Information will be posted at the After School's entrance(s) and a message will be left on the family's cell/home/work telephones. Should the school day be dismissed on time but weather forecasters predict



hazardous travel, caregivers/guardians will be asked to pick up their children as soon as possible or make alternate arrangements. After School will remain open until all children are picked up. **Please be sure to keep all your telephone numbers up-to-date.**

Transportation

The Medford After School Program does not provide transportation. Caregivers are responsible for transportation home or to any extracurricular activities outside the school building. Staff is not permitted to transport children or their family members for any reason.

Field Trips

Field trips are not a regular part of the After School program. If a field trip is planned, caregivers will be notified in advance and will receive a permission form, inclusive of field trip details, to complete.

Babysitting

The Medford After School Program requests that families do not ask staff to babysit for children enrolled in the After School program.

Health Guidelines

Please see the [Medford Before/AfterSchool Health & Safety Policy](#) for more information.

The following guidelines should be followed when determining whether your child is well enough to participate in the After School program. Keep your child home if they have:

Fever: Children may not attend with a temperature over 100.4°F. Children should be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school/After School.

Rash: Any rash of unknown cause, or a rash that is blistered or has discharge. Children need to be rash-free or bring a physician's certificate stating they are not contagious. (Please be sure there is a note for the After School program AND for the school day nurse.)

Pink Eye: Conjunctivitis needs to be seen and treated by the physician. Signs of pink eye include red, itchy eyes often accompanied by a yellow discharge.

Vomiting or Diarrhea: If your child has either vomiting or diarrhea the evening before school, they should remain home the next day.

Cough: Students who are unable to sleep due to cough, or students who have a productive cough.

Nasal Discharge: Any discharge that is not clear (yellow or green).

Crutches: Students may attend After School with a note from the physician stating that they are able to handle crutches in the school environment.

Chicken Pox: A child with chicken pox must remain at home for seven days or until all sores are scabbed over.



If a child is found to have any of the above symptoms, a caregiver will be called for immediate pick up. If a caregiver cannot be reached, the Emergency Contact listed on the forms will be called. If no one can be reached and the symptoms get worse, the Program will call 911.

The program Director will notify caregivers if any communicable diseases have been introduced into the program.

Health Information

The After School program follows the Wellness Policy of the Medford Public Schools.

It is imperative that caregivers/guardians notify the school and After School of all injuries or extended illnesses affecting their children's ability to attend school and the After School program. All children attending the program are expected to be well enough to participate in regular activities and outdoor/gym play.

The Enrollment Contract provides space to report any allergies, dietary restrictions, or chronic health problems so that an individual plan may be developed, if needed. This information should correspond with the information shared with school day personnel.

Due to allergies of many of the children, food from home is not permitted (exceptions may be made if there is a doctor's note).. Be sure you send a **separate EpiPen/inhaler** within the first two weeks to After School if needed. Paperwork must be on file with the school nurse. See Medication Procedures below.

Accidents & Emergency Procedures

Minor Accident: There are After School staff that are trained in First Aid and CPR. In the event of a minor accident, a teacher will administer first aid if necessary and notify the family at pick up time.

Mildly Ill Child: If a child becomes ill while attending the program, a caregiver or emergency contact will be asked to pick up the child within the hour. The program will try to provide a quiet area away from other children until they are picked up. The program calls a caregiver and requests that a child is taken home if the child has a temperature or any contagious illness or condition.

Major Incident: In the event of a medical emergency, a child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital for medical treatment. Staff will notify the caregiver of the emergency and agree on a course of action. If a caregiver cannot be reached, staff will notify an emergency contact person on file. A staff member will stay with the child until an authorized adult arrives.

Caregiver(s)/guardian(s) will receive a written report within 24 hours when a major incident has occurred.

Medication Procedures

As there is presently no school nurse at the After School program, medications can not be administered in the After School program. The one exception is EpiPen. Families must provide a doctor's order and caregiver permission form that are on file at the office of the school day nurse. Additionally, students need separate medical devices from the school day that are available during After School hours in order for staff and/or students to administer/self-administer when necessary. If an EpiPen or inhaler is not brought to After School by the second week of school, the student will not be permitted to attend the program.



Dress Code Expectations

Medford After School Programs follow the district Dress policy. This includes the expectation that clothes are appropriate for safety, the time of year, and weather conditions. After School spends a lot of time outside, so on cold days all students should come to school with a coat/jacket, hat, and gloves/mittens..

Sneakers and rubber-soled shoes are the safest type of footwear for children and are **highly recommended** for After School activities.

Homework

There is a homework period each day (Monday through Thursday) for all students Grades 1-5 that receive homework. The homework period is up to 45 minutes long. **We ask that caregivers/guardians review their child's homework each night so that we can be part of a team to foster school success.**

We also request that each family sign a Homework Contract. The caregiver, child and Site Coordinator sign this contract. This signed contract commits the child to work on homework in After School or releases a child from homework responsibility while at the program. Please note that we cannot ensure that a child completes their homework or that the homework is entirely correct.

Note: The program does not provide one-to-one tutoring. We do not force children to do their homework, grade homework assignments or discipline children if their homework is not completed to the expectations of another adult, e.g., caregiver, classroom teacher. Please keep in mind that students may not complete all of their homework during the designated homework period. We will, however, provide:

- Communication, when requested, with families and teachers about assignments;
- Guidance when a child needs assistance, e.g., a student is “stuck” on a problem;
- Assistance so that a child stays focused on the homework assignment and remains on task;
- Encouragement and support to develop good work habits.

Referrals

Staff is available to assist caregivers/guardians in making referral(s) for services. Staff work collaboratively with school day personnel to ensure students and families have appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services. The referral protocol is as follows:

- Staff concerns are addressed with the Site Coordinator, and, if needed, followed up with school day personnel for possible suggestions.
- Additional observations are made, as appropriate.
- As needed, a meeting is scheduled with the caregiver to discuss concerns. Observations and referral information is provided.
- Continued monitoring and family assistance is ongoing.

Behavior

CHILD BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

It is the policy of the Medford Public Schools to provide an environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying (similar policies exist and define sexual harassment and hazing).

Bullying is not tolerated at any of the After School programs. (*NOTE:* See next section.)

The After School program provides guidance and support to children as they manage their emotions. Staff members set clear and consistent limits and expectations. When possible, children may help establish group rules. Children are given reminders and redirection in order to support positive behavior.

At this time the After School protocol is as follows:



- When a child's behavior is problematic, the Site Coordinator will inform the Director and the child's caregiver(s)/guardian(s) to gain any insights and suggestions to resolve the problem. The school day teacher or the school's Behavior Specialist may be consulted.
- If the problematic behavior persists, a conference will be scheduled to develop a Safety Contract with child, caregiver and After School staff.
- If the Safety Contract is not met, the child will be withdrawn from After School.

There are instances where a child may not be ready for the program or the program is not appropriate for a child's growth and development. We reserve the right to withdraw a child from the After School program with a two-week advance notice to families. We will meet with the family and put the concerns in writing, if requested. Suggestions for other programs will be made, as appropriate. If a child is asked to withdraw, tuition charges will cease at the termination date.

Immediate suspension from the After School program will occur when a child's behavior poses an extreme threat to self and/or others. Caregivers/guardians are expected to pick up the child immediately upon notification of suspension. Emergency contacts may also be notified. After a meeting with caregiver(s)/guardian(s), program staff and the Director will decide whether the child may return to the program or be withdrawn. If the child returns to the program, a Safety Contract will be developed and monitored.

It is our responsibility to provide a safe and pleasant environment for all After School participants.

CAREGIVER BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

The Medford After School Program expects that all adults in contact with program staff, program families and friends, and children act respectfully and appropriately at all times. Behavior that is abusive, disruptive or uncooperative is not acceptable. Inappropriate caregiver behavior, including arriving on the premises under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, will be reviewed by the Director.

In the event of inappropriate conduct, the following procedures will be instituted:

- The individual(s) involved will be asked to attend a mandatory meeting.
- Documentation of the event and meeting will be placed on file.
- When warranted, consideration for suspension, termination or decline to re-enroll the child in the program will be determined by the Director.
- Families will be informed in writing of the decision made by the Director.

Bullying Policy

The Medford Public Schools has a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The summary of the policy can be found in your child's school specific Student Handbook. The copy of the plan is posted on the school district's website. A written copy of the Medford Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be provided to caregivers upon request.

It is the responsibility of every student, caregiver and employee of the school district to recognize acts of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation. Any student who believes that they have been the victim of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation in the After School program should report it immediately to the Site Coordinator.

Bullying Report Forms are available from the Coordinator, the school principal or online.

Research

The program will not conduct research or experimentation involving children, without written informed consent of the caregiver for each occurrence. The Superintendent of Schools must approve activities of this nature. Note: Research and experimentation does not refer to program evaluation or data collection.



Volunteers & Interns

Volunteers and interns are welcomed to our programs. Volunteers include family members, community service students, and middle and high school students. CORI checks are required. All volunteers and interns are encouraged to participate in training opportunities.

Personal Property

As a rule, personal property should remain at home except for items needed for homework completion. This includes toys and all electronics, e.g., cell phones, games. Bicycles, scooters, roller blades and skates, skateboards, etc. are not allowed in the After School program. If your child needs a specific item for security, please let us know.

If you have any questions kindly check with your program's Site Coordinator or the After School Office.

WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR CHILD(REN) WILL ENJOY THE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO COPY YOUR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM
CELL PHONE NUMBER IN CONVENIENT LOCATIONS.

SHARE THE TELEPHONE NUMBER WITH ANYONE WHO MAY PICK-UP YOUR CHILD(REN).

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN A FORM ATTESTING TO HAVING READ THIS HANDBOOK