

Student & Parent Handbook



Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program

The Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program is a federal program funded under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

I. Introductory Information

The ACCESS out of school program believes that when youth participate in self-selected, academically rich, structured activities linked back to their school day, academic achievement increases. Just as important, students are better prepared to achieve in school when their academic learning occurs in a safe, caring, and developmentally appropriate environment.

HOURS OF OPERATION: 2:15 pm-5:30 pm, Monday through Friday **when school is in session.** The ACCESS Program does not operate when school is not in session, anytime when a child would not usually be in school. This includes teacher workshops, parent/teacher conference days, and days when the school is closed due to sanitizing and cleaning the facilities, unless otherwise stated on the ACCESS calendar.

VACATION WEEKS: Special mini-camps will be offered during February vacation, and April vacation at the discretion of the ACCESS Program. Parents will be notified in advance if a mini-camp will be offered. Camp will not be offered during December break.

FEES: A fee schedule is necessary to ensure that ACCESS is a permanent/sustainable program, continuing long after the grant has reached its end. Rates are based on a set fee scale. **All fees are collected one week in advance (on Monday, but if there is no school on Monday, Tuesday is acceptable.)** Parents are given a school year or session fee payment schedule when they register a child in their child's program guide.

WEATHER EMERGENCY CLOSINGS: The program intends to remain open according to the calendar adopted each year by the Winchester School. The ACCESS Program follows the regular school schedule and adheres to all closings or late openings called by the Winchester School due to weather and/or emergency conditions. If the school is closed due to poor weather, the ACCESS Program is closed.

If after-school activities are canceled, the decision to close ACCESS will be made by 2 pm. All staff will receive a phone call. The cancellation will also be made on Monadnock Radio Group radio stations, and TV WMUR channel 9.

DISMISSAL OF CHILDREN: A thorough accounting system for how students leave the program will be in place with the Site Coordinator (SC). At the Elementary school ACCESS, children will only be released to those listed on the original ACCESS registration form. A special middle school registration form allows parents/guardians to permit students to sign themselves out of the program.

The sign-out person will verify the person's identity by looking at their driver's license or other appropriate means of verification.

If someone wishes to pick up a child who is neither a parent, guardian, or an emergency contact person, ACCESS must be given verbal and written notice by the parents/guardian before dismissal.

When an unauthorized person tries to pick up a child, immediately notify the Site Coordinator. If the Site Coordinator is not present, alert the Executive Director. If a parent or guardian has

sent a written note stating that the child will be picked up by a designated individual, show the Site Coordinator. If the Site Coordinator is not present, show the Executive Director. Place the note in the Sign In/Out binder for the Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator will place the note in the child's folder for future reference. **The note is only valid for that one specific time.**

INTOXICATED ADULT: If you believe that for any reason a child's safety might be at risk if you release them to an authorized individual (including a parent or guardian), notify the Site Coordinator to discuss other possible options. If the Site Coordinator is not there, notify the Executive Director. If the parent or guardian is uncooperative, first obtain license plate number of adult, then release the child, and the Site Coordinator will immediately call the police with the license plate number of the vehicle.

PARENT NO SHOW POLICY: If a student is not picked up 5 minutes before the end of the program, the staff will inform the Site Coordinator or Executive Director. The Site Coordinator will call a parent/guardian regarding their status. If a parent or guardian is not available, the Site Coordinator will call the student's emergency contacts. If the emergency contacts do not respond, the Site Coordinator will wait until 5:45 pm and contact the Executive Director. If no one has been reached by 5:45 pm, the Executive Director will then refer to the police for next steps.

SNACKS: Students will be provided enough snacks to sustain them until they leave the program. A healthy snack program will be planned, and students may be invited to help with the preparation and serving. The USDA guideline for nutritious snacks will be followed. Snacks may be prepared by the students in any food related activities for the following day.

DRINKING WATER: Drinking water will be available to children **AT ALL TIMES**. Outdoor adventure activities/groups need to bring an adequate supply of drinking water with them. If there is an off-site activity, staff need to be aware/made aware of where they can obtain safe drinking water for the children.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Cell phones, smart watches, laptops, tablets, earbuds/headphones and other electronic devices are **not permitted** during ACCESS. Students must turn all devices off and leave them in their backpacks throughout the program. In case of an emergency, all staff have cell phones and are available to make phone calls. At no time should any student be using an electronic device without explicit permission from an ACCESS staff member.

If a student is seen violating the above policy, the action is as follows:

- First offense: private reminder of technology policy
- Second offense: confiscation of device(s) for the remainder of the program. Students may retrieve the device at the end of day.
- Third offense: confiscation of device(s) for the remainder of the program. Parents must retrieve the device at the end of the day. Meeting with parents to discuss technology policy. Students must sign a technology contract requiring electronic devices be stored in a secure location by staff during program hours.

II. Health and Safety

Our first priority is to keep students safe and healthy. Indoor and outdoor environments are maintained in such a way as to reduce and prevent the possibility of accidents or injuries. A first aid kit will be at the site's "home base." **If all children are engaged at all times, there is less likelihood of an injury to a child.**

The following forms must be file either with the ACCESS Program before a child can participate:

- Registration Form
- Medical Information Form
- Release Forms (transportation, media, off-site, grounds, grades, and attendance release of information)
- Emergency Contact Form (with at least two reachable contacts)

MEDICATIONS: Medications may not be administered by any program staff.

PREVENTION FOR SPREADING CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS: All students and staff must be protected from a contagious illness. While airborne, micro-organisms are more difficult to protect against, the spread of many blood-borne, bodily fluid borne and non airborne germs can be effectively prevented. All people giving first aid must first wear protective gloves when there is blood, an open wound, or a scrape. All students should wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom. This should be reinforced by staff daily.

CRITERIA FOR SENDING A CHILD HOME DUE TO ILLNESS:

- Illness that seriously prevents participation in group activities
- COVID-19 symptoms that require quarantine as outlined by the CDC
- Vomit due to upset stomach

III. Supervision of Students

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:

The behavioral expectations of youth during the out of school program are the same as during the school day. The ACCESS program strives to create a relaxed, safe, supportive environment that reinforces social skills learned during the school day through *The Responsive Classroom Approach*. Discipline and guidance are based on an understanding of the needs, development of the child, and circumstances of the incident. All staff are trained in Crisis Response Institute de-escalation strategies. Restraints should be an absolute last resort, and reported using the Incident Report.

HIGH QUALITY SUPERVISION:

Supervisors and staff should be aware of the location of all students during and after activities. Clear procedures and structures will be in place and communicated to all students coming to the program. Clear expectations for behavior will also be communicated to youth.

CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS:

Group sizes will be kept low, not more than 12 children to 1 staff in most activities groups (according to state standards). The exceptions are open gym, playground, or any pick-up activities.

ACCESS DOES NOT USE any of the following techniques for behavior management:

- Any kind of corporal punishment or physical handling, including restraint (unless administered by a staff trained in CPI)
- Severe or cruel treatment, humiliation, or verbal abuse
- Denial of norms (i.e., food, water, use of restrooms) as a punishment

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL:

It is understood that staff will attempt to work with parents, school, staff, and the students themselves. In the event of consistent inappropriate behavior, and only after the procedures outlined in the attached Disciplinary Procedure instructions have been followed, a child may be suspended from the program at the discretion of the Site Coordinator and Executive Director.

TERMINATION:

The decision to terminate participation is always a last resort. In some circumstances, however, it becomes clear that the program is unable to meet the extreme needs of a child, and it is not an appropriate placement for that student. Such circumstances would be situations in which

1. Youth poses a danger to others or him/herself.
2. Acts out at a chronic level of significant disruption that interfered with program operation.

These decisions will be made with the help of the program staff and ultimately rest on the Site Coordinator and the Executive Director.

IV. Emergency Procedures

ACCESS will hold monthly fire drills. Students will exit the building through the nearest exit. These drills will be logged in the Emergency Drill Log.

ACCESS will also hold emergency lockdown drills. When at the Winchester School District in the Elementary Cafeteria, students will evacuate to the Kitchen. When at the ELMM Center Hall, students will evacuate to the kitchen. When at the Ruth Coffin room at the ELMM, students will evacuate to the ACCESS office. All emergency lockdown drills will be logged in the Emergency Drill Log.

V. Disciplinary Procedure

While working with children in the ACCESS Program, we must assure them that they are safe. This can be accomplished in part by a well-prepared instructor and a set of consequences for inappropriate behavior. Children are expected to participate in the activity that they have signed up for. **It is expected of each child that they follow the same rules held during the school day. This procedure is distributed to all parents.**

If a child is not following the rules, the ACCESS policy has been set to help a child refocus on participating in a safe and community-conscious way. This policy is known as “**Three Strike Three Outs**” and is based on community. Everyone in the community must feel safe for the group to interact effectively and properly. Safety here is defined as adherence to the rules set forth by The Winchester School.

While it is understood that this program is designed to promote community, enrichment, and fun for all of its participants, some may inhibit others from this experience. If this should be the case, the following will be the procedure.

3 Strikes - 3 Outs

Strike #1:

- Child removed from the group
- Assess the child’s needs (if possible, meet that child’s needs: hunger, tiredness, assurance, etc.)
- Explain how they were inconsistent with the rules
- Ask them to perform within the communities’ rules.
- Inform the child that they need to make a better choice in this situation
- Inform the child that if these types of choices persist, they will receive a 2nd strike and they will have to remove themselves from the group
- Re-engage the child in the group activity
- Inform Site Coordinator and log incident in Strike Binder

Strike #2:

- Child removed from the group.
- Explain how they were inconsistent with the rules
- Ask them to think of ways their behavior can be consistent with the rules.
- Inform the child that they need to make a better choice in this situation
- Inform the child that if these types of choices persist, they will receive a 3rd strike and they will be removed from the group and not allowed to participate for the remainder of the day
- The child is to sit-out in the designated take a break section until he/she feels they can interact with the group safely and appropriately.
- **Take a break sections are based on the individual child; some may be more comfortable at a take a break space of their choosing**
- Inform Site Coordinator and log incident in Strike Binder

Strike #3:

- Child removed from the group.
- Explain how they were inconsistent with the rules
- Ask them to think of a way their behavior can be consistent with the rules.
- Refer the child to the Site Coordinator for a discussion on the child’s behavior
- The child is no longer able to participate in group activities for the day and must have his/her guardians called to pick him/her up from the program. The child is to “take a break” with the Site Coordinator and work independently of the group until the guardian’s arrival.
- When the parents arrive, the Site Coordinator or Executive Director will inform the parent of the situation and “conference” with the parent to develop an action plan that fits the

child's needs. However, this plan must follow the rules of the program. The child is then considered to have received "out."

Out #1:

- Children reaching the limit of three strikes within one day are considered to have reached an "out."
- Children reaching this level will not be able to participate with the group for the remainder of that day.
- Student will work with the parent and the Site Coordinator to accomplish an action plan that will help the child join group activities in a successful and safe manner.

Out #2:

- Children who have reached the limit of a third strike within one day for the second time within the school year will require a conference between the parents, the Site Coordinator, and the Executive Director.
- An action plan with clearly defined points of action will be developed at this meeting. The child will be suspended from the program for between three and five days, to be determined by Site Coordinator and Executive Director.
- **Students may not return to the program until an action plan has been created to prevent future strikes.**

Out #3:

- Children who have reached the limit of a third strike within one day for the third time in a school year will be dismissed from ACCESS for the remainder of the academic trimester.
- Students who violate policies on violence, elopement, or other serious safety concerns may be dismissed from ACCESS permanently at Site Coordinator and Director's discretion.
- After one trimester, the decision to admit the child back into the program will be delivered to the parent. Any standards and stipulations of the decision must be fulfilled before reconsideration of the child's re-admittance to the program.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the Site Coordinator or the Executive Director.

Parents, school administrators, after school staff, and other relevant professional personnel (such as the child's therapist) should be involved throughout the decision making process.

Some behaviors are non-negotiable and may warrant an immediate suspension or termination. (In some cases, the police may also be called.) These include:

- Fighting
- Threatening to harm, or using threatening language
- Harming or assaulting a teacher or staff
- Possession or use of drugs and/or alcohol

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- Possession or use of weapons (guns, knives, or any objects used as a weapon or a look-alike weapon) in the building or on school property
- Setting off a fire alarm
- Possession of tobacco
- Destruction or threat of school property

VI. Emergency Procedures for an Accident and/or Injury

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER:

In all cases, 352-1100 (Fire and Rescue) is the local mutual aid number to call if the Site Coordinator or Executive Director is NOT present or in the vicinity. (This number is posted on the sign-in binder.) This number will connect you with whatever service you need including local services and those from the poison control center. (This number does not include the police; call the local number).

Youth Code of Conduct

ACCESS is committed to providing a welcoming community and an inclusive culture that allows all youth to feel a sense of belonging and to participate fully and safely. Our values include civility and mutual respect among our youth participants. ACCESS has very high standards and expectations for conduct. Parents/guardians and participants are responsible for reviewing and agreeing to follow these expectations.

1. Be on time and participate fully.
2. Be respectful, use good manners, and follow instructions.
3. Be honest. We expect integrity.
4. Show mutual respect for each other's differences and ideas.
5. ACCESS events are tobacco, drug, vaping and alcohol-free.
6. Youth are expected to use appropriate language.
7. Abide by specific program rules and regulations, including all health and safety procedures.
8. Treat program areas, lodging areas and transportation vehicles with respect. You will be responsible for any damage, theft, or misconduct in which you participate.
9. Dress appropriately for ACCESS programs. Follow the dress code if there is one. If you're not sure, ask.
10. Conduct that is harmful to the safety and well-being of self or others is not tolerated.
11. The possession of fireworks, firearms, knives or any other weapons is not permitted at ACCESS events unless specifically approved for the program by the staff or volunteers in charge.
12. Live up to your highest expectations for yourself so that you can return home proud of who you are and what you have done.
13. ACCESS events are free of bullying (including cyberbullying), hazing, and harassment.
14. Help all persons in your group feel that they belong by making every attempt to include all participants in all activities.
15. Code of Conduct expectations apply to the use of social media before, during and after the event.
16. For remote learning activities, participants are expected to refrain from:
 1. Taking and/or sharing photos or screenshots of images/videos of classmates or instructors without permission.
 2. 'Chatting' privately between classmates or instructors during a group meeting or activity.
 3. Publicly sharing login/connection information to a private meeting.
 4. Private one-to-one interaction between adults and youth.

I have read the ACCESS Code of Conduct and agree to live up to the expectations. I realize my failure to do so could result in a loss of privileges during the event or activity and/or future ACCESS event.

I, _____, have read and understand the ACCESS Code of Conduct.
(student name)

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____