

Community Education Department

Durham Public Schools

Encore!

Durham's Afterschool Program in Middle Schools



**Before and After
School Parent
Handbook**

August 2024

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Welcome to Community Education

This handbook is designed to assist parents/families in understanding the philosophy and practices of Durham Public Schools' Before and After School Programs. Please read this handbook carefully. If you have any questions, please contact the Before and After School site manager or the staff at the Community Education central office.

The programs operate on an open-door policy, and we welcome parent/family visits. Feel free to come by or call with any questions or concerns you may have.

The Before and After School Programs are designed to enhance the learning and development of all children who attend. Community Education staff members want to work with parents/families to make the Before and After School Programs the best programs possible.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All the Community Education Before and After School Programs are operated through Durham Public Schools (DPS). All DPS Board of Education policies and procedures must be followed in the Before and After school Programs. This handbook is designed to supplement the Board of Education Policy Manual. The DPS manual is available in your school's media center or on the DPS website at www.dpsnc.net.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

The Community Education Before and After School Programs are open to all middle school students (6-8 grades) attending Durham Public Schools.

To enroll your child in the program, complete either the Before and/or After School Program registration form. Send the completed form to the DPS Community Education Department along with your fees. Registrations can be done online at www.dpsnc.net/afterschool.

Mailing Address: Location: PO Box 1967 2107 Hillandale Rd. Durham, NC
27702-1967 Durham, NC 27705

BEFORE SCHOOL CARE (Monthly Fees)

Programs operate at all middle school sites with a minimum of 10 student participants, including: School for Creative Studies, and Rogers-Herr. Programs that do not maintain at least 10 student participants will be dissolved.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Programs operate at Brogden, Carrington, Githens, Lowe's Grove, Lucas, Neal, Shepard, and Rogers Herr

Afterschool Sites:

School	School Phone	Afterschool Office Number
Brogden	(919) 560-3906	(919) 287-5698
Githens	(919) 560-3966	(919) 287-5701
Lowes Grove	(919) 560-3946	(919) 560-3946
Lucas	(919) 560-3843	(919) 287-5702
Rogers-Herr	(919) 560-3970	(919) 287-5703
Carrington	(919) 560-3916	(919) 560-3916
Neal	(919) 560-3955	(919) 560-3955
Shepard	(919) 560-3938	(919) 560-3938

HISTORY

The *Encore! Afterschool Program* started as a grassroots effort of concerned citizens, government, and local non-profit organizations back in 1992 to address the growing problem of adolescent youth going home to an unsupervised home after school. Juvenile crime increases dramatically during the time from 3:00-6:00pm and research has shown that first time negative lifestyle behaviors often occur when adolescent youth are unsupervised after school. First time drug and alcohol use and sexual experiences are often experimented with during this time. It was believed that if worthwhile programs were developed at schools that were fun, enriching and academically based, students would be able to get academic support and have a broader and more positive outlook on school while being supervised by caring adults. Program funding in the past was secured by a grant from the state's *Support Our Students (SOS)* initiative, but due to the state budget crisis, funding ended after 14 years. Currently, Durham Public Schools and the County of Durham continue to support this program, offering availability to parents and students at a very low cost. Durham Public Schools continues to provide in-kind support of staff, facilities, bus transportation and daily snacks to the program free of charge. Local non-profit agencies and volunteers work in the program, providing fun and interesting enrichment experiences for students at each program site. Program evaluations have demonstrated that students behave and perform better in the classroom because of regular participation in the *Encore! Afterschool Program*.

VISION STATEMENT

We believe that the *Encore! Afterschool Program* will provide students with the opportunity to enhance their academic progress, boost skills, and pursue interests. We believe that participation in this program will result in increased school attendance, development of positive peer relationships and reduction of at-risk behaviors.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide positive educational, social, and recreational alternatives for middle school students during after school hours.

GOALS

- To advance student achievement by providing extended learning opportunities in a safe, caring, and supportive environment.
- To engage students in productive afterschool programs primarily at the middle school site.
- To ensure that afterschool activities complement and reinforce middle school programs.
- To provide educational experiences, enrichment programs, and the opportunity to develop intellectual, recreational interests and skills that foster positive peer interaction.

FEES

For a small fee, Community Education provides the *Encore! Afterschool Program* to the children of Durham Public Schools. Funding for this program is provided by the Durham County Government and Durham Public Schools.

Registration fees can be found online at www.dpsnc.net/afterschool. A 3% convenience fee will be charged to customers using a credit card for payment.

Annual scholarships are available to families with special financial needs. If you are interested in applying for assistance, call the main office at 560-9488 or go to www.dpsnc.net/afterschool (Middle School Tab) to download an application.

WITHDRAWAL NOTICE (Before School Care)

A two-week advance written notice is required in order to not be charged for the next billing cycle. Enrollment is based on full-time attendance and one month (20 day cycle) in advance. We will honor withdrawals with a minimum of two weeks notice whether or not the advanced cycle is paid.

UPDATE OF STUDENT AND FAMILY INFORMATION

Parents or guardians are responsible for notifying the Community Education and central office of any changes that might affect your child's stay or well-being. Please update telephone numbers, address, medical conditions, adults with permission to pick-up etc. with the Community Education and Accounting Office. This information will be shared with the school staff.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

At times, our office is obligated to share a child's information with a biological parent not living in the home. We are required by law to share any information we keep on a child we serve, such as a registration, account balances, attendance forms, sign-in and out sheets, or disciplinary write ups with either of the biological parents or if a subpoena is issued through an attorney or the court system.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES (Before School Care)

Parents are required to pay each monthly billing cycle by the 15th of each month and be current with their accounts throughout the year. When parents become delinquent in their payments, a termination process begins. This process is intended to get accounts current as we value your business. The Community Education accounting staff will notify you when your account becomes delinquent and will give you time to make payment or discuss making payment arrangements before your child is actually removed from the program. If a child continues to attend after the deadline, parents will be contacted on the advertised date to pick their child up from the school's main office.

ACTIVITIES OFFERED

Community Education Before and After School Programs offer an enrichment based and recreational program for students in grades 6-8.

Students are given an opportunity to:

- Strengthen social skills by participating in cooperative and team building activities. • Participate in hands-on activities such as computer, STEM, and Project-Based Learning lessons.
- Experience recreation and enrichment activities such as arts and crafts, drama, music, sports, and dance.
- Focus on academic enhancements through homework assistance and college & career activities.
- Enjoy a healthy afternoon snack prepared by the Durham Public Schools Child Nutrition staff.
- Free transportation home
- Please note that students will participate in a variety of activities each day. **Students will have an opportunity to work on their homework during program hours. We cannot guarantee that students will finish their homework during Before and After school program hours.**

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

This program is designed to assist students in a variety of areas. It is extremely important that students attend on a regular basis to benefit from the program. Students are strongly encouraged to attend every day. **In the interest of fairness and availability to all students, your child is required to attend at least two days per week excluding sicknesses and family emergencies.** If, in a twenty-day period, a student's attendance averages less than the two days per week, s(he) could be dropped from the program to allow other students to participate more fully. We ask that parents communicate with the afterschool manager if scheduling conflicts arise.

Student athletes are encouraged to participate each afternoon. Students that are enrolled in afterschool and participate in school athletics must be able to attend afterschool at least two full program days or one hour each day of the week. Management staff should be contacted if scheduling conflicts prevent your child from attending the program regularly.

TRANSPORTATION

Yellow school buses are used with assigned stops made for each student. The stops or drop off points are created from the addresses provided in Powerschool. **Only students living within a school's attendance zone will be provided transportation. Students living outside the district must be picked up at school by the close of the program.** Transportation is a privilege; misconduct or disrespectful behavior on the bus will result in the loss of these services. **All buses are scheduled to depart from each program site at 5:30pm. Stop times can vary each day depending on student attendance, weather, road construction and vehicle accidents. Make a plan with your child if nobody is home.**

Parents will be responsible for transportation until bus services are arranged. Delays can be expected at times during the year.

LOST CHILD

If your child does not arrive home, you should call the afterschool manager at the school and call the appropriate Transportation Department supervisor listed below. Bus routes should be completed by 6:30pm barring any poor weather or unusual traffic problems.

- Southwest Division (Githens, Rogers-Herr) 560-9192
- Southeast Division (Lowes Grove, Neal, Rogers-Herr) 560-9194
- Northern Division (Brogden, Carrington, Lucas) 560-2097
- Exceptional Children's Division 560-3824
- Main Bus Headquarters 560-BUSS (2877)

PARENT/FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Each Before and After School Program encourages family involvement. Parents may meet with staff to discuss their child's needs and exchange information. Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate as much as possible. These are examples of ways to participate:

- Attend special programs and/or parent-teacher conferences.
- Volunteer to help in the program – reading stories, sharing a game or craft, teaching a language, special skill, or talent.
- Share enrichment ideas and outside resource leads.
- Donate books, games, craft items.
- Volunteer to help with special projects or seasonal events.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND MEETINGS

We encourage daily communication between program staff and parents. Please feel free to communicate your child’s needs to the Before and After school manager. Parents may schedule individual conferences with the Before and After school manager.

ITEMS PROVIDED BY PARENTS

Parents are not required to send any additional items with their child to the program. There may be times when a program requests donations of items for special projects, such as baby food jars, paper towel rolls, egg cartons, etc.

OPERATING HOURS

The Before School Program begins at 6:30 AM and lasts until the first school bell rings. **Before School Care programs will operate on Early Release Days.** The After School Program starts at the time of school dismissal until 5:30 PM. We operate Monday through Thursday. **Please note that we do not operate Encore! Afterschool programs on Early Release Days.** The following policy will be implemented for children who remain after the program ends:

LATE PICK-UPS

1. Parents will be charged \$10.00 for each 10 minutes or portion thereof that they are late (1-10 minutes=\$10.00, 11-12 minutes=\$20.00, etc.). Charges are recorded on a form provided by Community Education, and will be turned in to the central office accounting department staff members each time a parent/designee is late, regardless of the reason. Once five (5) late pickups have accumulated childcare services may be discontinued for your child.
2. For the purpose of recording pick up times, the time showing on the clock in the Before and Afterschool office or cafeteria will be utilized. The Before and Afterschool Manager will verify the clock time by calling the time & temperature number on a regular basis. The number is 919-683-9696. Children must be signed out and leaving the building by 5:30PM.
3. Children must be picked up by the end of the program. After closing, the site manager will attempt to contact all emergency numbers. If the site manager cannot reach an emergency contact, the administrative supervisor will be notified. The supervisor will

contact Durham County Department of Social Services to file an abandonment complaint after 6:00pm. Please make sure that the Before and After School manager has an updated list of emergency contacts and telephone numbers.

OPENING DELAYS/EARLY DISMISSAL

If there is an early dismissal from the school, the After School Program will not operate.

Before and After School Programs are in session when schools are in session. In case of a delay of school opening, the Before School Program will meet on the same delay schedule. For example, the Before School Program begins at 6:30AM. If Durham Public Schools announces a two-hour delay, the Before School Program will begin two hours late, at 8:30 AM. Please listen to local news programs, check the Durham Public Schools website at www.dpsnc.net, or watch the DPS television station (Cable 4) for information.

PROGRAM PRACTICES/CHILD SUPERVISION

Before and After School managers and staff members are responsible for supervising children at all times. A central pickup or activity schedule is established so that adult family members know where to come each day to pick up their children. Daily attendance is kept, and the program schedule will be posted so that the location of each child can be established at all times. Children are allowed to leave the program only with a parent/guardian or with an individual who has been granted permission in writing by the parent/guardian.

Children are never left unattended. Children are not allowed to be away from the group alone at any time except for bathroom use or transitioning between spaces with staff approval. All students are to go to the bathroom or get water accompanied prior to arriving at the program. For safety reasons, children will not be used as “runners” for messages or to locate other children in the program. Groups of children must always be within full view and voice range of the staff members who are supervising them. Groups should not be larger than 25 students, and a 15:1 student-staff ratio should be kept at all times.

FIELD TRIPS AND PLAN FOR TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Field trips are scheduled when possible. Once a trip is approved by the Community Education central office, the site manager will provide parents/guardians with all the information relating to the trip and obtain permission for the child to participate.

Students will be transported utilizing Durham Public Schools buses operated by certified drivers. There may be circumstances in which a charter company bus is utilized. All charter bus companies must meet guidelines for bus driver training and company liability.

CHECK-IN PROCEDURE

To assure the safety of children, we ask that children be escorted and signed in to the Before School Program by a parent/guardian. In the afternoon, attendance will be taken as soon as the children arrive from their classroom. If your child is going to be absent for more than two days, please send a note to inform the manager so that we can account for every child on our roll sheets. We expect children to attend daily but recognize that they may be involved in other

school and community activities such as clubs and sports. Managers will call parents if a child stops coming to the program after one week without prior notification.

In addition, all students are to report to the afterschool program immediately following the dismissal of school. Students are expected to visit the rest room and their lockers before checking in. Since each program operates differently from one another, students will be told where to report so that adult staff can take attendance within the first 15 minutes of the program.

Students not joining the program within 10 minutes after school is dismissed **will not** be considered a part of the program for that day unless they have a note or are accompanied by a school staff member. These students will **not** be permitted to join the program late or ride the bus home that day.

SIGN OUT PROCEDURE

A sign out procedure is established for the safety of your child. Children are to be signed out each day prior to leaving the program by an adult listed on the child's application form (no one under the age of 16 is allowed to sign out a student). Please have a picture identification card available the first few days of the program until we get to know you. Any unknown person will be asked to show identification prior to signing out a child.

AFTERNOON SNACKS

Community Education, in collaboration with the Durham Public Schools Child Nutrition Department, provides a healthy snack for every child that attends the afternoon program. A snack menu will be posted at each site. All dietary concerns should be noted on the child's registration form. Managers will in turn, arrange appropriate snacks with the Child Nutrition staff person at the site to meet your child's needs. Children are welcome to bring their own afternoon snack which meets nutritional guidelines, if they desire. A monthly menu should be posted in a designated area for your review.

CLEANING SCHEDULE

The Before and After School Programs are operated in Durham Public Schools facilities. The program areas are cleaned daily by the custodial staff at each school. Tables located in the snack area are cleaned by program staff each day before and after snack.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Managers and assistant managers are authorized to administer medication prescribed to a student by a physician. This can only be done if the parent/guardian has completed and signed the Durham Public Schools Medication Form that must have a physician's signature and date.

The Before and After school manager and assistant manager are required to be certified in CPR and Standard First Aid. They are authorized to give emergency health care when reasonably apparent circumstances indicate that a delay would seriously worsen the physical condition or endanger the life of a student.

SICK CHILDREN

If a child becomes sick during Before and After School Programs, a family member will be contacted. If the child is not feeling better after having the opportunity to rest, the family member or emergency contact will be asked to pick up the child. Children who are feeling sick will have a place to rest that is isolated from the other children.

VOLUNTEERS

Site managers may recruit volunteers for their Before and Afterschool Programs. All volunteers must be 18 years of age and older and have a completed criminal background check through the DPS Human Resources Department. Volunteers assist staff members but are not allowed to be alone with students.

SPECIAL NEEDS

All children are important in Durham Public Schools. The Before and After School Programs are not designed to be therapeutic or treatment programs and do not provide 1:1 ratios. The staff members will work with children and families to assure a positive experience in the before and afterschool in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We ask parents/guardians to inform site managers of any special needs or conditions that require special attention or observation. Please write any needs or conditions on the application. You may also speak with the site manager directly.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

All injuries requiring any kind of attention will be documented and the information shared with parents/guardians and kept on file. An accident report will be completed for any injury requiring more than a simple Band-Aid.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All Before and After School Programs are required to hold a monthly fire drill during the hours of the program. Maps are posted in all areas of the school to ensure safe exit. In addition, a quarterly tornado drill must be held following the safety guidelines established by Durham Public Schools. A safety and emergency procedures notebook is available in the school office.

COMMUNICATION

The Before and After School manager provides information and updates about your school's program through monthly newsletters, bulletin board postings, flyers, and handouts. If you need to contact the manager for any reason, please use their office phone number.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

All Community Education employees are required to adhere to a specific policy on behavior management. Managers and assistant managers are the site staff members responsible for assuring a positive environment. Effective communication between family members, children,

and staff is crucial in avoiding misunderstandings about behavior management.

The Before and After School Programs comply with all the Durham Public Schools' policies and procedures and with the rules and student code of conduct developed by your child's middle school.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS

Students may be suspended if their behavior is creating a barrier to quality programming, or if a safety concern develops for the students or staff. Behavior challenges of a persistent nature will be documented and reviewed with the child's parent/guardian. A behavior contract may be implemented to assist with guiding a child's behavior. Student suspensions are reviewed and approved by a supervisor in the Community Education office prior to implementation.

If you have concerns or questions about the Before and After School Program, we encourage you to speak with the manager. If you feel that your concern has not been addressed, please contact the Community Education and Family Engagement Department to speak with a program supervisor. The program supervisor can be reached at 560-9488.

Students may not be suspended without the approval of the Community Education supervisor or school administrator. Students who have been suspended from school may not attend the *Encore! program* during the period of suspension. Students suspended from the *Encore! program* will be reported to the school administration. A student who is suspended from the *Encore! program* may also be suspended from school.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse occurs when a partner or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse 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. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services.** In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829 and make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a childcare operation. 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 abuse/neglect complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the childcare facility.