

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Framingham Public Schools
Community Resource Development
Explorers Before & After School Programs
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Mission Statement

Framingham Public Schools Department of Community Resource Development (CRD) provides multifaceted, comprehensive, and equitable Out-of-School Time programming for students while actively promoting Family and Community Engagement, in alignment with the FPS Strategic Plan.

Vision

- Further complement student's school day experience through both formal and informal expanded learning time, high quality recreation, project based and social emotional learning.
- Strengthen and prioritize family and community engagement in a continued effort for all stakeholders to serve as equal partners in promoting student success.
- Create more robust professional development opportunities to better equip OST staff to deliver the highest quality program based on students and families needs.

What We Do

- Before and After School Programs at the Pre-K and Elementary Level
- After School clubs at the Secondary Level
- Vacation, Summer and Early Release Day Programming
- Community Partnership Development, Community Events
- Grant Making and Fundraising

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Explorers Program does not discriminate in providing service to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, cultural heritage, political beliefs, ability, sexual orientation, and/or marital status.

Special Needs & Inclusion

Community Resource Development (CRD) supports inclusion and will make every effort to support all children and their needs. Families are allowed to submit a request in writing for special accommodations. Requests will be processed by CRD leadership and the family will be notified in writing with the stated reasons for decisions made. Caregivers may contact the coordinator/designated point of contact to review any decisions. Please see page 10 of this document for the inclusion process.

Community School Philosophy

A community school is created through a shared vision of Caregivers, children, school, staff, and the greater community. Framingham Public Schools are educational and recreational centers that offer programs and activities that reflect the needs, respects and honors the cultural values, and generally supports all members of the community.

Brain Time (Homework Support)

There is allotted time for homework help daily; students are not mandated to complete their homework. If a student does not have any homework, they will be offered a 'brain time' activity such as puzzles, reading, etc. Program Coordinators will work with Caregivers to determine if Caregivers have a

preference as to whether their student completes/works on homework during Explorers. An effort will be made by the Explorers staff to accommodate this request.

After School Snack

A nutritious snack will be provided for enrolled students in the after school program. Students with documented allergies sitting at the required allergy table may bring their own after school snack from home.

Physical Activity/Recess

Children who attend the after school program can expect to spend a minimum of 30 minutes outside (weather permitting) each day. Outdoor play will be canceled due to precipitation, icy ground conditions, temperatures below the school day allowance, or excessive wind or heat. In case of inclement weather, children will still be able to have indoor play in the gym or other large gross motor areas. To maintain safe and required staff to student ratios, all children are expected to go outside with their group unless they have a doctor's note excusing them from outdoor activities.

Clothing Requirements

Children can expect to play outside year-round. Warm clothing, sweaters, jackets, hats, gloves, and waterproof boots are necessary for the winter months and should be labeled with your child's name. Children without boots and snow pants will be asked to stay on dry and shoveled areas. Resources are available to families in need.

For younger students, it is recommended that they are sent to school and Explorers with a spare set of clothes in the event of a bathrooming accident. Explorers does not have access to their extra clothes in their classrooms.

Registration Procedure

Families wishing to tour the program should contact the Program Coordinator. The program is open for touring during normal before and after school hours by appointment with the Program Coordinator. Student enrollment is open to all students at their Elementary School; however, availability is based on a first come, first serve basis. Please note, there is no bus service to and from this program. The completed annual registration and the annual \$50.00 registration fee per child is required to enroll. Monthly tuition fees are applied based on your child's selected schedule.

Program Hours

Before School Care operates from 7:00 A.M. - until the start of school. All children must be accompanied by a Caregivers/adult and signed-in.

After School Care operates from when the end of school day bell rings- until 6:00pm* All children must be picked up by an authorized adult and signed-out.

*Early Release days run from dismissal until 6:00pm and Half Days run from dismissal until 3:00pm.

Little Explorers has two pick up times of 4pm and 5:30pm. Full Day, Vacation Weeks, Summer Program operates from 7:30am - 5:30pm

Caregivers/authorized adults may pick up their children any time before the end of program. Students must be signed out by an authorized Caregivers/adult at the time of pick up. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute per student will be applied if picked up after the program closing time.

Drop off & Pick Up Policy

Caregivers will follow the drop off and pick up procedures outlined by their school and program and call the Explorers Site Phone upon arrival. An Explorers staff member will accompany students in and out of the building, and come in to drop off or pick up their children. Only adults (16 years of age or older) who have been authorized by the student's Caregivers in writing are allowed to sign out children from the program. A note must be received if anyone other than Caregivers or authorized emergency contacts listed in a student's registration is to pick up a child. Photo identification is required. If there are any legal restrictions of a Caregivers picking up their child, the Program Coordinator must be notified of any legal documents, i.e. restraining order or custody decree which are on file in the main office at the Elementary School. Caregivers/designees must provide a copy of all orders/decrees to the coordinator.

Please be aware if staff suspects that an authorized adult has been consuming alcohol or drugs, your student will not be released and you will be asked to have someone else pick up your child.

Late fees of \$1.00 per minute per student will be applied if a student is picked up after the program ends.

Requesting Changes in Schedules

A two week written notice is required to change a child's schedule or to withdraw from the program. Changes will be made at the Program Coordinator's discretion, pending staffing and enrollment capacities on the 1st of each month. If appropriate notice is given, a prorated refund/credit will be given to any child who leaves the program before the end of the month. If your child will not be attending the after school program on one of their normally scheduled days, please notify the main day school's office and Program Coordinator before 2:00pm. Students who miss a day of programming due to illness, vacation, etc. will not receive a tuition credit and cannot make the day up on a non-enrolled day. Students on vouchers must notify the Program Coordinator if their child will not be attending programming and the reason why, per voucher guidelines.

Inclement Weather & Snow Days

If school is closed for the day, there will be no Before and After School Program. If schools are released early due to inclement weather, there will be no After School Program. If schools experience a delayed start, there will be no Before School Program, but After School will be held. There will be no refund if the Program is forced to close.

Caregivers Communication & Program Input

The Before and After School Program maintains an open door policy. Please feel free to direct questions or concerns related to any facet of the Before and After School Program to the Program Coordinator at any time. Your feedback and input is greatly valued.

We welcome Caregivers' input and Caregivers are invited to share special skills, hobbies, or cultural activities with the program as volunteers. An approved FPS CORI form is required to volunteer during the Before & After School programs. If you do wish to volunteer, please communicate and coordinate a schedule with the Program Coordinator.

Additional Caregivers Responsibilities

- Send a note to your child's homeroom school teacher informing him/her of your child's after school schedule before he/she begins and any schedule changes.
- Complete all information in the registration form, either electronically or on paper please keep it up to date (emergency contacts, health information, authorized pickups, etc.). Updating your child's records with the day school office does not translate into updating the Before & After School program records. Caregivers must inform their Program Coordinator.
- Inform the school's main office and Program Coordinator before 2:00pm if your child will not attend after school care.
- Send your child with appropriate clothing for activities and outdoor play.
- Please check lost & found for missing items as needed.
- Label all personal belongings (clothing, hats, water bottles, lunch boxes, backpacks, etc.).
- Please pick-up an ill child promptly.
- Please communicate with the Program Coordinator any concerns, feedback, or problems.
- It is the caregiver's responsibility to treat all students, families, staff, or any other member of Explorers community with respect. Failure to treat others with respect through repeated or offensive conduct will result in the program taking corrective action to prevent reoccurrence up to and including: alternative pick-up/drop off plans for students, no-trespass orders, and other appropriate engagement with our safety and security department.
- Please note that offensive conduct can include things like: Swearing/profanities, physical or verbal threats, and more.

Tuition Fees & Payments

A nonrefundable annual registration fee of \$50.00 per student is required at the time of enrollment along with a completed registration. Tuition is due in full by the first of each month. Late fees of \$1.00 per minute per student will be applied if a student is picked up after the program ends.

Since the number of days in each month varies, the yearly tuition is divided into 10 equal monthly payments regardless of the number of program days. August tuition will be prorated. The first month's fee may be prorated based on the student's enrollment start date. Snow days, emergency early closures, delayed openings, and school holidays do not affect the monthly fee. Note: a 10% price reduction for each sibling after the first child is applied. A 10% discount is applied to students of FPS staff members. Discounts and scholarships do not stack, only one applies. Cash payments will not be accepted. Checks

and/or money orders must have payer's name, address, and be made payable to: City of Framingham. The student's name should be identified in the bottom left corner on the "For/Memo" line. Please note: checks returned by a bank due to insufficient funds will result in an additional \$25.00 fee, payable only with a money order. Payment is due on the first of the month. Tuition fees not received by the first of the month will have a \$25 late fee added to their accounts the 4th of each month.

Vouchers & Scholarships

Current approved vouchers from Child Care Resources are accepted. It is the responsibility of Caregivers to secure their vouchers through the voucher agency. Explorers is responsible for submitting monthly attendance to the state, therefore; it is imperative that Caregivers notify the Program Coordinator of their student's absence so they can be marked as excused. It is the Caregivers's responsibility to renew their voucher annually and to be the main point of contact for the voucher caseworker.

Families must adhere to CCRs requirements to maintain vouchers. Please check details at their website: <http://www.sevenhills.org/programs/child-care-resources>

Limited scholarships from FPS CRD are available for families that meet eligibility requirements. Please speak with your Program Coordinator for more details, requirements, and forms. Scholarships are evaluated annually and are not guaranteed from one year to the next.

Balance Policy

The Office of Community Resource Development (CRD) provides a variety of Out of School Time (OST) programs. Any CRD Program that requires a fee for participation provides participants with a monthly statement. CRD makes every effort to accommodate families facing special or difficult circumstances. In some cases payment plans are available. Failure by participating families to submit proper payment on time will lead to automatic student's dismissal from the program. If payment is not sent within the identified timeline, CRD reserves the right to hold or cancel enrollment for a child. A \$25 late fee will be administered on the 4th of each month for all payments made after the 1st. Additionally, if payment is not received prior to the next monthly billing cycle, a student's continued enrollment will require that their account balance be 75% paid. If a family requires special payment accommodations, please communicate with the Program Coordinator as soon as possible and complete a Payment Plan Application.

Bank Returned Checks: \$25.00 City of Framingham Fee Administered

If a bank returns a check due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), a NSF \$25.00 fee will be charged to your account by the City of Framingham. Plus, the check amount for enrollment fees will be recharged since the payment was not received. Families will have to pay all NSF \$25.00 fees and enrollment fees due by bank cashier's checks or money orders. Personal bank checks will not be accepted going forward.

Refund Policy

We understand that needs and schedules can change. If you are not satisfied with your child's experience or if your situation has changed please reach out to us about requesting a refund. We process refunds on a case by case basis. Since the process to obtain a refund can be an extensive one, we also offer a credit option. Credits do not expire and can only be used for CRD programs such as: non-school days, clubs, vacation week as well as summer offerings. Credits can be shared with family members. In recognition of the difference between a refund and credit, should you choose the credit option we will add an additional ten dollars to your account.

In order to process a refund, the person that made the payment either by check, money order, or credit card must become a vendor in our system. Once the individual is a vendor, a requisition is opened. When that requisition converts to a purchase order, a request for refund is filled out and sent to business operations for processing. A refund is processed the same way an invoice is processed. First, the refund is included in an accounts payable warrant, then signed by business operations staff, then signed by the School Committee, and finally, sent to City Accounting for processing and payment. This is a lengthy process and can take up to 30 days from the initial request to be issued.

Medical & Health Policy

All Explorers Programs follow the medical policies and dismissal for illness policies of the Framingham Public Schools. If your child is absent from school or dismissed for illness, your child may not attend Before or After Care. If your child becomes ill while attending Before or After School Care, a Caregivers/authorized adult will be notified and asked to pick up the sick child immediately. Students can return to the program once fever and symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication. Children will go out to play each day, weather permitting. If your child is too ill to go outside, please do not send them to the program. Students with asthma allergies, or other medical concerns need a doctor's note to be excused from outside recess and/or physical activity.

Students with emergency medications (epi-pens, inhalers, etc.) will not be permitted to attend unless accompanied by their medication, a completed and signed authorization for medication form, and have submitted an individual health care plan (ex. allergy action plan). All medications must be brought to school in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician. The Program will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.

Plan for Administration of Medication

Prescription Medication

- A. Prescription medication must be brought to school in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
- B. The Program will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label

unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.

- C. The Caregivers must fill out the [Authorization For Medication Form](#) before the medication can be administered.

Non-Prescription Medication

- A. Non-prescription medication will be given only with written consent of the child's physician. The Program will accept a signed statement from the physician listing the medication(s), the dosage and criteria for its administration. This statement will be valid for one year from the date that it was signed.
- B. Along with the written consent of the physician, the Program will also need written Caregiver's authorization. The Caregivers must fill out the Authorization for Medication form, which allows the Program to administer the non-prescription medication in accordance with the written order of the physician. The statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed.
- C. The Program will make every attempt to contact the Caregivers prior to the child receiving the non-prescription medication unless the child needs medication urgently or when contacting the Caregivers will delay appropriate care unreasonably.

Topical Ointments and Sprays

- A. Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, and bug spray, etc. will be administered to the child with written Caregiver's permission. The signed statement from the Caregivers will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medication.
- B. When topical ointments and sprays are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, the Program will follow its written procedure for non-prescription medication which includes the written order of the physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization for Medication form signed by the Caregivers.

All Medications

1. The first dosage must be administered by the Caregivers at home in case of an allergic reaction.
2. All medications must be given to program staff directly by the Caregivers/guardian.
3. All medications will be stored out of the reach of children (in a cabinet or on the refrigerator door shelf if refrigeration is necessary). All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
4. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for the administration of medication. In his/her absence, the designated point of contact will be responsible.
5. The Program will maintain a written record (attached below) of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to normal skin) which will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dosage, and the name of the staff person administering the medication. This completed record will become part of the child's file.

6. All unused medication will be returned to the Caregivers at the end of the program or destroyed by the Program Coordinator.

All student injuries occurring during our program hours will be reported to Caregivers. For minor injuries that only require cleaning the cut/abrasion and a simple band aid, our staff will notify Caregivers either by phone or at the time of pick up. Staff will complete an injury/incident report and provide a copy to families. In the case of severe injury, Caregivers will be notified and the child will be transported, accompanied by a staff member, to the MetroWest Medical Center in Framingham, 115 Lincoln Street.

Items/Toys from Home

Children are offered the use of and are taught to share a variety of safe and interesting games, materials, and equipment within the program; therefore, toys from home are strongly discouraged. Use of toys, electronic devices, and phones from home will not be allowed during program hours. Students who bring items from home, including phones, smart watches, toys, etc. will be directed to leave their things in their backpack. On occasion, we may notify you and allow children to bring a special toy/item from home for a planned Show & Tell activity. The understanding is the toy will be shared with all children and the student will take full responsibility for the item. Explorers is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items from home.

Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect Policy

A student's health and wellness is of the utmost priority at Explorers. Explorers has several policies in place to ensure the protection of children from abuse or neglect. Any form of abuse or neglect of children while in the program is strictly prohibited.

All Explorer staff are trained on Mandated Reporting annually. Every Explorers staff member is a mandated reporter under M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A and shall make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) whenever they have reasonable cause to believe a child in the program is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon the child, including but not limited to sexual abuse, or from neglect, including but not limited to malnutrition, no matter where the abuse or neglect may have occurred and by whom it was inflicted.

If an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against a staff member, the staff member will be immediately removed from the program and will not be permitted to have any unsupervised contact with children until the investigation into the allegations has been completed. Explorers shall notify the Department immediately after filing or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the Explorers or during a related activity and immediately upon learning that a report has been filed naming Explorers as alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect of any child. Upon receipt of allegations of abuse or neglect, the Program will be subject to investigation of the allegations by the Department.

Notifications to Guardians/Caregivers

Explorers rely on frequent communication with Caregivers, caregivers, and families. Explorers staff will notify caregivers immediately of any injury, allegation of abuse or neglect, minor first aid administered, identification of a communicable disease or condition, introduction of pets, unanticipated child absence (where the Caregivers/guardian has not already contacted Explorers in regard to the absence), or use of any herbicide or pesticide (prior to use, whenever possible).

Explorers invite caregivers to visit our program at any time. Explorers maintains an Open Door Policy which allows guardians to visit Explorers at any time while their student is present. Caregivers will be required to sign in, wear a nametag, and be accompanied by a staff member at all times.

Behavior and Support Policy

The Explorers program is rooted in positive reinforcement practices and compliments school day culture and language. The staff at the Explorers Program are trained in effective classroom, youth development, and behavior management strategies and work closely with school day staff, families, and students to make sure that students are supported.

Initial Progression of Disciplinary Action

Initial Progression of Disciplinary Action	
1	Students are reminded of expected behavior by Explorers Staff and can be referred to the calming/reflection/reset area of the space. (3 reminders*) Students are offered a check-in with a staff member or the onsite Program Coordinator. *if the situation is unsafe this may be less than 3 reminders*
2	If the behavior is productively discussed with the staff or Program Coordinator, the student will return to the group for a chance to show expected behavior in the program.
3	If the unexpected behavior persists, the Program Coordinator is called to help facilitate the student's transition to the office and the Caregivers is called for an immediate pick up.* Caregivers are required to attend a brief meeting with their child and the Program Coordinator to discuss best support strategies for successful re-entry to the program.

Secondary Progression of Disciplinary Action

Secondary Progression of Disciplinary Action	
1	After 3 separate occasions of caregivers immediate pick-up, the student will take a break from the program (length of break is determined by Program Coordinator). Again, Caregivers & Guardians are required to attend a re-entry meeting with the student prior to re-entry into Explorers.
2	Following three breaks in the program there will be a 1 week break in program from the Explorers program.
3	If the behavior persists after the 1 week break in program, a meeting will be made with Caregivers and child to determine the child's continued enrollment in the program.

*Please note that any safety concerns such as physical altercations, eloping, extreme dysregulation, property damage, bias/racist behavior will be reviewed by the Coordinator/designated point of contact to determine if an immediate break from the program is required. Students who are not picked up immediately when requested, may be asked to take a break the following day. Explorers reserve the right to pause and/or terminate enrollment based on the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

If necessary, behavior plans will be implemented after the first day the student was picked up by the Caregivers/guardian during the program. These plans will be developed and modified with input from both Caregiver(s), the student and will be utilized by Explorers staff.

When behavior becomes significant enough to warrant an immediate Caregivers pick-up, an incident report is filed with the Explorers program and reviewed and signed by the Caregivers. Incident reports are kept with the student file.

Inclusion Process For Out of School Time Participation

Community Resource Development (CRD) is dedicated to engaging all children in Out of School Time (OST) Programming at the Preschool through 12 levels for Framingham Public Schools. In an effort to holistically and successfully support all students, the following is the district’s inclusion process for OST activities. CRD strives to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with various needs who meet the basic eligibility requirements of the OST Programs. Reasonable accommodations may include providing aids and/or services, as may be needed to ensure that a student with disabilities may be afforded equal opportunity to participate in the OST program unless necessary accommodations would be a fundamental alteration to the program or would create an undue financial or administrative burden.

Process for Requesting Inclusion Support Plan in an OST Program	
1	Caregivers will fill out the OST Inclusion Request Form (attached), identify any needs or accommodations that the student may require in order to access OST activities; potentially including accommodations noted within 504 plans, IEPs, Behavioral Assessments, In-School or Outside Counseling, etc. Caregivers should submit the OST Inclusion Request form and any supporting documentation to the Site Coordinator for the applicable OST program. If the child is already enrolled in OST programming, a staff member may also suggest the initiation of the inclusion process to ensure equity in the request process. Caregivers will be provided a weekly update as to the status of their inclusion request form following its initial submission. These updates will be provided in writing by the Coordinator/designated point of contact of the applicable OST Program.
2	The Out of School Time (OST) Site Coordinator/ designated point of contact will review the application with the student’s Caregivers & the Student Support Team (SST) located at the student’s school, to comprehensively analyze the request. Additional meetings and/or documentation may be requested to gain further understanding of the request being made; this may include medical notes, classroom observations, program observations, gathering and evaluation of data, and other relevant information.

	The Site Coordinator/point of contact of the applicable OST Program, and members of the SST, in consultation with the Caregivers, will propose what, if any, accommodations, modifications, related aids and/or services are appropriate to provide the student with equal access to the program.
3	The support plan will be reviewed by the District's OST Inclusion Review Committee. The District OST Inclusion Review Committee will be composed of the following persons: Directors of CRD, Health & Wellness, Special Education or their designee(s). The Inclusion Review Committee will review the support plan to ensure that the student may be afforded equal opportunity to participate in the OST program unless necessary accommodations would be a fundamental alteration to the program or would create an undue financial or administrative burden. If it is determined that the accommodations would be a fundamental alteration or would create undue financial or administrative burden, the District will consider whether other modifications would afford equal access. The decision will be communicated to the Caregivers/Guardian in writing by the Coordinator/designated point of contact of the applicable OST Program or designee.
4	The support plan may be reviewed throughout the school year depending on the student's lived experience within OST, if requested by Caregivers, staff or student, in which case the process will be repeated.
5	All students who receive inclusion support plans will be reevaluated each year to determine if the plan continues to be needed or should be modified for the following school year. The reevaluation process will occur each spring, unless otherwise needed, following the process for reviewing the inclusion support plan described below.

Process for Reviewing Inclusion Support Plan

1	If the support plan for the student needs to be reevaluated based on the student's experience in the program and/or if requested by Caregivers, OST staff, the student themselves advocating for a change, or from new needs being developed, the process will be repeated from Step 2, above, with any new or additional information.
2	The Caregivers may request a follow-up meeting regarding the decision on the inclusion support plan. Such requests shall be made in writing within ten (10) school days of receipt of the decision, and sent to the Coordinator/ designated point of contact of the applicable OST Program. Within ten (10) school days of the follow-up meeting, the Caregivers will be notified of any determination including changes, if any, to the decision or support plan.

Out of School Time (OST) Programs Inclusion Request Form

Student Name	Student School	Student Grade
Caregiver's Name	Caregiver's Number	Caregiver's Email
Request Made By	Date of Request	

Is the student currently enrolled in an OST Program? If so, which program and location?

What is the student's current OST program schedule?

If none, what is the requested schedule?

Does the student have an IEP?

Does the student have a 504?

Does the student have any other formal or informal support plans in place during the school day and/or during OST programming? If yes, please provide known details.

What accommodations and/or modifications are being requested at this time?

Please note that the Out of School Time team will meet with varied stakeholders including school day staff, medical professionals, etc. in order to assess the request and level of need. Once the observations are completed, the team will convene and determine next steps.

Caregivers/Guardian Signature

Date

Acknowledgement of Policies Above

By registering for CRD OST Programs, you are agreeing that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the Out-of-School Time Family Handbook. Policies, procedures, and practices outlined in this handbook may be updated and revised; families will be given notice if/when changes are made.

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback please contact your Explorers Program Coordinator or Yemi Ajao, Director of Community Resource Development, aajao@framingham.k12.ma.us.