

## **Introduction to Warren County R-III Latchkey Program**

Welcome to the Latchkey Program. This program was developed to provide for a community need in the area of school-age childcare. The program is a non-profit corporation, administered by the Warren County R-III School District. The Parent Handbook is a valid part of the enrollment procedure between the Latchkey Program and the parents or guardians of children who are enrolled in the Program.

### **Goals**

The Latchkey Program will provide a daily program. Children in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grades will be given priority for enrollment. Children in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade may enroll in the program upon vacancy availability. The Latchkey Program is flexible and varied, including a large number of age-appropriate activities based on the interests of attending children. Several opportunities from which the children can select will be available at all times. A warm, supportive atmosphere will be provided.

Content will include: social and recreational activities, educationally sound opportunities for small group and individual activities; opportunities for vigorous play interspersed with quiet activities; opportunities to read and to be read to; choices of art, music, drama, movement, and cooking; opportunities to experiment and explore; and study time/tutoring, if age-appropriate and needed. A nutritious snack will be provided in the after school session. Qualified R-III staff will operate the program.

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## **Policies and Procedures**

**Enrollment in the Before and After School Program constitutes an understanding that you will abide by the policies listed as follows:**

### **Section 1 – Parents' Expectations of the Program**

Parents may expect that:

- Their children are cared for in a safe, supportive environment
- They may visit with the Director about concerns related to children or the program
- They will be told about any misbehavior on the part of their child, and to visit with the Latchkey Director in order to bring about improvement in behavior
- They will be informed promptly if their child does not arrive at the Latchkey Program according to his/her enrollment information
- They will be regularly informed by the Director about program activities

### **Section 2 – Program Director's Expectations of the Parents**

The program expects that parents will:

- Pay fees on time as explained in Section 5. Fees and Payment Policy
- Keep the child's records up-to-date as explained in Section 7. Enrollment Forms
- Pick up children on time as explained in Section 11. Afternoon Closing Time
- Follow health policy as explained in Section 16. Health Policy
- Contact the Director if their child will not be attending on a scheduled day by calling 456-5802, Ext. 5348. **Must notify any changes by 2:00 p.m.**
- Pay attention to any communications from the Director regarding the child's behavior and cooperate in efforts to bring about improvement in behavior
- **PARENTS MUST COME INTO FACILITY TO SIGN CHILD IN/OUT (NO DROP OFFS)**
- **NO CHILDREN ALLOWED UNLESS ENROLLED IN THE LATCHKEY PROGRAM**

### **Section 3 – Children's Expectations of the Program**

Children may expect:

- To have a safe, supportive and consistent environment
- To use all the program equipment, materials, and facilities on an equal basis
- To receive respectful treatment

- To have discipline that is fair and non-punitive
- To receive nurturing care from staff members who are actively involved with them

#### **Section 4 – Program Director’s Expectations of the Children**

The program expects that the children will:

- Be responsible for their actions
- Respect the school rules that guide them during the day and while at the Latchkey Program
- Remain with the group and child care staff at all times
- Take care of materials and equipment properly and return them to their place when done, or before taking out new ones
- Arrive at the Latchkey Program promptly, according to the enrollment information

#### **Section 5 – Fees and Payment Policy**

The Latchkey salaries, supplies and administrative expenses are supported entirely by fees. The Warren County R-III School District provides the space, utilities, and custodial services as an in-kind donation to the program. Fees are as follows:

	AM & PM 5:30-8:00 am 2:45-5:15 pm	AM & LATE PM 5:30-8:00 am 2:45-6:00 pm	AM ONLY 5:30-8:00 am	PM ONLY 2:45-5:15 pm	LATE PM ONLY 2:45-6:00 pm
Families eligible for free lunch	\$8.00	\$9.25	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$5.25
Families eligible for reduced lunch	\$8.40	\$9.60	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$5.60
All other families	\$8.75	\$10.00	\$4.00	\$4.75	\$6.00

Fees are subject to change

- There is an extra \$2.00 charge for scheduled or unscheduled early out days. Parents are only required to pay for the days that their children attend – with the exception of the summer program.
- **Tuition payments are due on Friday of each week**
- After 2 weeks of non-payment childcare will be declined until payment is paid in full
- Non-sufficient fund checks are held until a cash or money order is received by the Latchkey Program to cover the amount of the check. If non-sufficient fund checks are not given prompt attention, the child will be discharged from the program.
- If all of the child’s required enrollment forms are not completed and returned to the Director by the day the child is scheduled to start the Latchkey Program, the

child will not be allowed to attend until these completed forms are submitted to the Latchkey Director. The parent/guardian/custodian will be responsible for payment of fees starting from that day in order to reserve the enrollment spot until such times as the completed forms are returned.

### **Section 6 – IRS Statements**

The Latchkey Program does not provide an itemized statement for tax purposes. We suggest that you keep a record of your weekly expenses. We will provide you with our taxpayer identification number for the Childcare Expenses Form. Giving the name of the school as a non-profit organization will be ample information and the school tax identification number will not be necessary.

### **Section 7 – Registration and Enrollment**

The Latchkey Program encourages children of all backgrounds to attend. The program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, or ethnic background.

**Registration:** The parent must complete a registration form and submit it with a non-refundable registration fee to the Latchkey Director. Registered children who cannot be immediately enrolled will be placed on a waiting list and contacted as soon as an opening comes available. Registration fees are \$20 per child.

**Eligibility:** A child may be registered for enrollment in the program at any time. Children must be in grades K-5 to be eligible for enrollment. Children in 6<sup>th</sup> grade are eligible for enrollment upon vacancy availability.

**Openings:** Full and part-time openings are determined on the basis of FTE's (full-time equivalents) and the number of FTE's permitted by the program. When full or part-time childcare openings occur, parents of registered children are contacted for enrollment on the basis of the schedule indicated on the registration form, and on a first-come basis for the available time according to the date of registration receipt.

**Enrollment:** Parents of registered children will be contacted regarding enrollment in the program

- If the parents wish to enroll their child(ren), the parents will be provided with a set(s) of enrollment forms. Prior to the child's first day of attendance, the parents will complete all forms and submit them to the Latchkey Director. A completed set of forms is required for each child enrolled in the program.
- Upon enrollment, the parent must make payment to the Latchkey Director of a non-refundable enrollment fee. The parent must sign and return a program registration agreement.
- Children will be allowed to attend the program only after all forms have been completed and returned, and payments have been submitted. If the parent has not submitted completed forms after the date when the child was scheduled to start

attendance, the parent will be responsible for payment of fees in order to reserve the enrollment spot until such time as the completed forms are returned.

### **Section 8 – Enrollment Forms**

Parents will be asked to complete the following:

- Enrollment Form, Release Form, Arrival/Departure Forms, Medication Release (as needed), and Emergency Medical Consent

The Latchkey Program expect the forms to be keep current. The parent must provide new information to the Director regarding information on forms such as: emergency persons, names, employers phone numbers, and arrival/departure changes.

### **Section 9 – Withdrawal from the Program**

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from the Program must provide a statement in writing at least one week to the discontinuation of this service. Tuition will be due for the balance of the time agreed upon.

### **Section 10 – Hours of Operation**

Morning Program: 5:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.: Weather conditions can make it difficult for caregivers and custodians to get to school on schedule. For your child's safety, please make sure that the school doors are unlocked and that the caregivers are on duty before leaving your child at school. Each parent must sign in when bringing the child. The child's arrival time must be recorded.

Afternoon Program: 2:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Parents, guardians, or any other person picking up the child must sign out by writing their name, and departure time.

### **Section 11 – Afternoon Closing Time**

The program closes at 6:00 p.m. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 p.m. must pay overtime fees as follows:

**5 – 15 minutes overtime - \$3.00 per child**  
**Each additional 1 – 15 minutes - \$5.00 per child**

- Childcare services may be withdrawn if three overtime charges occur

### **Section 12 – Absences**

If your child will not be attending the Latchkey Program because of scheduled appointments, vacations, or other planned absences, please notify the Director in advance. If your child is ill, when you call the school to report the illness or pick up your child from school, please request the school secretary to notify the Latchkey Director.

Absentees without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child and unnecessary concern and time spent in searching for the child may occur. If a child does not arrive at the program as intended, the Director will contact the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the Director will contact the child's emergency person.

### **Section 13 – Release of Children**

Children will arrive at and leave the program according to the schedule written by the parents on the Arrival/Departure procedures form. **Children will be allowed to leave with persons other than the parents only if written permission has been given to the Director by the parent.** If a one-time exception is made to their schedule, the parents should provide a completed Exception to Arrival/Departure procedures form prior to the date.

### **Section 14 – Scheduled and Unscheduled No-School, School Opening Delays and School Closing**

- Scheduled No-School Days – When there is no school, there will be no Latchkey services.
- Unscheduled No-School Days – There will be no Latchkey if school is canceled before 8:00 a.m. Parents will be notified by the Director as soon as possible in the morning.
- Scheduled Early Dismissal Days – When school is dismissed early on a regular scheduled day, for snow or heat, Latchkey will be in attendance.

### **Section 15 – Distribution of Medications**

Whenever a child is to be given prescription or over-the-counter medication, the parent must provide the Director a completed, signed medication authorization form. The medication must be provided in the original or duplicate container, or a container accompanied by the doctor's directions.

If medication is to be kept at the Latchkey Program for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than a one month supply should remain at the program at any time.

### **Section 16 – Health and Safety Policy**

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.), please be sure the Director knows what to do if a problem should occur during program hours. Please make sure that any medication is available and that the appropriate forms for its use have been completed.

If a child has any one of the following conditions, the parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately: **Contagious disease, fever over 100 F, vomiting or diarrhea, accident requiring medical attention.**

In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called as soon as possible.

Outdoor play will not be allowed when temperature (including wind chill) falls below 32 F.

Every effort will be made to keep children safe and away from harm while attending the Latchkey Program. In the event a crisis threatening the safety of a child or children occurs, the staff will take appropriate steps to address the issue(s). Staff will use the district's Crisis Response Plan to assist when applicable. Examples of such occurrences might be bomb threats, firearms, persons under influence of drugs/alcohol, intruders, etc. The program requires caregivers to report suspected cases of child abuse.

### **Section 17 – Insurance**

The program provides minimal liability insurance only. Families are encouraged to carry their own insurance coverage. Many families are covered by the parents' policy at work, and/or their own private policies. Public school students may sign up for accident insurance in the fall of each year. Parents who wish to enroll should check with the school.

### **Section 18 – Snacks**

Morning program – Children will have the breakfast program available. No snack will be provided.

Afternoon program – Children will be served nutritious snacks in the afternoon program. Snacks are part of the school food service program. Families that qualify for free or reduced lunches also qualify for free or reduced snack. Parents are encouraged to complete an application to determine eligibility. Parents may want to provide a treat in honor of a child's birthday. In this case, they should contact the Director to determine the number of children to be served and plan the date.

### **Section 19 – Child's Personal Property**

Children's personal property (coats, clothing, school bags, etc.) must be cleared from the Latchkey Program after each session of the program. Any personal property which remains after the session will be kept in a lost and found box. Although the program attempts to help children stay organized, the program cannot be responsible for lost personal property.

Children should not bring money, toys, food or other items not necessary for school activities to the program without checking with the Director.

## Section 20 – Visitors and Observations

Parents and community members who are screened by the Director are welcome to observe at the program with prior approval of the Director. For liability and supervision reasons it is not possible for children who visit the program to take part in the activities.

## Section 21 – Discipline and Discharge

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at the program. The Latchkey Program cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior.

**Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include but is not limited to such behavior that: requires constant attention from the staff, inflict physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses the staff, ignores or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during the school day and Latchkey time. If a child cannot adjust to the Latchkey setting and behave appropriately, then the child may be discharged.**

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children to adjust to the program setting. Disruptive behavior will be dealt with in the following manner:

- The disruptive child will be given a five minute time-out. A 10 minute time-out may also be assigned if child continues to be disruptive.
- If a second, 10 minute time-out is given to the child in a single day, an incident report will be written by the caregiver. This report will be given to the parent or guardian to read and sign. The report will be returned to the caregiver where it will remain with the child's enrollment information.
- If a child received three written behavior-related incident reports, the child will be suspended effective at the end of the day of the third report. During the first week of the suspension, the parents, and caregivers will meet in order to determine the conditions for reinstatement. Parents will be responsible for the payment of tuition during the period of suspension or until the child is withdrawn from the program. Tuition and refund policies shall be set out in Section 5.
- If the severity of the problem is severe enough that it could endanger the safety of the child or other children in the program, discharge will be effective immediately after the Director consults the parents.
- A child may be discharged if he/she is picked up late three times. See Section 11.
- A child may be discharged for non-payment of fees as discussed in Section 5.

***LATCHKEY PARENT HANDBOOK***



***WARREN COUNTY R-III SCHOOL DISTRICT***

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