



Parent Handbook
Athens City Schools'
21st CCLC Community Learning

The overarching goal of the 21st CCLC program is to provide students with academic enrichment opportunities and support services to help them meet state and local standards in the core content areas.

Program Mission Statement:

KIDS Connection Mission is to provide a safe, relaxed and secure atmosphere for all children where they can explore, learn, and have fun.

Program Overview:

Welcome to KIDS Connection (KC) we hope you and your child have an enjoyable experience with us. Our program strives to provide a safe, educationally enriching, fun and rewarding experience for all students of Athens City Schools during the hours where there may be no adult supervision in the home. Children will have the opportunity to engage in activities that will benefit them emotionally, physically, and educationally. The program includes crafts, sports and games, art and music, field trips, and many other creative and cultural activities. A special time each day will be allotted for students to begin homework, receive tutoring on subjects that are difficult, and enjoy snacks and leisure activities with other students. The program is conducted and planned by staff trained to meet the needs of your children while serving as positive adult role models. Parent input is important to our programs' growth. We hope your child has a safe, enjoyable environment while you complete your workday. Please feel free to share any comments with your Site Director or the Program Coordinator at 423-745-1796.

Staff Responsibilities:

Staff is hired on the grounds that they will be positive role models for children. A Site Director along with the childcare workers manages each program site. The Site Director who is under the guidance of the Program Coordinator directly supervises all childcare workers. All staff are recruited and interviewed by the Program Coordinator. Each staff member is required to have a background check with the State of Tennessee and to submit three references from individuals who can confirm their suitability for working with school age children.

Grievance Policy Statement:

Parent input concerning the program is important. Feel free to share comments with the Program Coordinator. All questions concerning policies and procedures of the program should be addressed to the Program Coordinator at (423) 745-1796.

Nondiscrimination Policy: (For further information you may contact the Athens City School Board of Education and speak with Janey Morris at 745-2863).

Nondiscrimination Notice: It is the policy of the district's Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts, Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If parents file a complaint during an expulsion investigation the child will not be expelled until the matter has been fully investigated to insure no retribution has occurred.

Program Hours of Operation:

Our Program is for before school care and afterschool care. We do offer care during school breaks and a Summer Program. Please refer to site director for specific dates during breaks and Summer.

School Day hours

Before Care Hours: Monday through Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 7:30/8:00 a.m.

After Care Hours: Monday through Friday: School dismissal to 6:00 p.m.

Break hours: 6:00am to 6:00pm see site director for specific dates.

Summer Camp Hours: Monday through Friday: 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please see schedule for specific dates.

Students' attendance schedule may be altered, if at any time we deem it is in the best interest of the child.

Priority is given to students enrolling on a weekly schedule. Care needed on a daily basis each week will be considered once full time slots are met.

There will not be a reduction in price when KC is closed due to weather conditions/cancellations, certain holidays or other days as indicated: (Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day / day after, Christmas Eve / Christmas Day (or designated days), New Year's Eve / New Year's Day (or designated days), MLK Day, Presidents Day, Election Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th (or designated day/s) & inclement weather / snow days). On the Pre-K and Kindergarten registration date in May, care will not be provided for students currently enrolled in Pre-K and Kindergarten.

Four Star Academy at City Park and Ingleside:

Before Care hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. After Care hours are from school dismissal to 6:00 p.m. There is a 10-hour limit for Pre-K students to be in the building.

Meals and Snacks

Snacks are provided during afterschool care, and during breaks. Parents are responsible for providing children lunches during our break weeks, KC will provide breakfast to children who arrive before 8:00am, and an afternoon snack to all children enrolled. During KC's Summer Adventure a lunch and a snack are provided to us by the schools feeding program and breakfast will be provided to children arriving before 8:00am.

Registration Forms Requirement Statement:

State childcare laws require that all students be officially registered in the program for service to occur. Registration forms must be completed and on file with the program's office for the child to be enrolled and attending. New registration forms must be filled out for school year and summer programs. Non-refundable registration fees are assessed for each school year and summer program. The Department of Children's Services or Local Police Department may be contacted for all students dropped off in the program without registration forms. No student is to be left outside of the program's site. Program staff cannot and will not be responsible for any child who is not officially registered in our program. The person who leaves the child unattended will be held responsible and liable for whatever happens to the child.

Payment Guidelines:

All checks must be made to Athens City Schools or ACS.

- **Payment is due on Monday of each week by 6:00 p.m., whether or not child attends.** This includes **daily rates** for the upcoming week, whether your child attends on Monday or not.
- Daily rates are for children attending 2 days or less.
 - If your child needs to attend weekly on occasion your child will be moved to a permanent weekly status.
 - Please call each week to inform your site director of which days your child will attend, if days are not designated at time of enrollment.
- We offer care for our students on a daily or weekly basis. Fees are due every week we are in session whether your child attends or not. If you have children at more than one site, please pay at each individual site. Please do not make payments for one site at another site.
- A late charge of \$5.00 will be charged if payments are not received by the 6 pm deadline.
- We appreciate your understanding, and following our guidelines. If school is closed on Monday for a holiday, payments will be accepted on Tuesday without a late fee.
- **Please do not send payment with child or leave payment with school staff, all payments should be handed directly to a KC staff member.** Checks can be misplaced and deposited into other accounts.
- If your child is absent from school for sickness or vacation, you must continue to pay your regular fees (weekly/daily) for KIDS Connection. We are open for Fall Break, Winter Break and Spring Break, if your child does not attend, regular fees remain due.
- Your child must be enrolled in Before Care to attend the Before Care program. If a problem arises and emergency care is temporarily needed, this can be arranged, as long as the adult/child ratio is met. There is a \$6 per day fee for emergency care added to your regular payment. **This must be approved before you bring your child in.**
- If payments are 2 weeks late - your child will not be able to continue and will be dismissed and placed at the bottom of the waiting list.
- All payments including late charges and a new registration fee must be paid in full before child can be re-enrolled.
- **No partial payments will be accepted.** You must pay in full the amount owed to keep your child enrolled in the KC Program.
- Please make sure **all checks are written to Athens City Schools or ACS.** A \$15.00 service charge will be assessed on returned checks. All returned checks must be paid in full, including the service fee, within 24 hours to Athens City Schools' Finance Department located at the Central Office (943 Crestway Drive). After receiving **two** returned checks, KIDS Connection will only be able to accept exact cash or money orders. Payments will be documented at time of receipt.
- During the **Summer Program** only, we offer the option of a vacation week, in which your child does not attend & no fee is due. You must notify your Site Director if you want to use the vacation week.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up of Children:

When dropping off a child, please escort him/her inside the building and sign them in. During the summer program or full-day sessions, parents are still required to escort all children into the building and sign them in personally. Each child should be signed in as soon as he/she arrives at the center. They cannot be dropped off before the program begins. To help with each child's daily routine we ask that you say a quick goodbye and leave. Some children have a hard time with goodbyes while others do not and this way all children are treated fairly.

All children must be personally checked-out from the program in the afternoon by means of a sign-out sheet. Children will not be released to any person other than the parent or other persons authorized to call for the child as indicated on the registration form. Identification will be required for pick up. Please notify the program Site Director in writing if a person other than those authorized will be picking up a child.

Children will not be allowed to wait for parents in the parking lot. They will not be released to commercial transportation personnel (i.e. taxi drivers), nor will they be released to anyone whose behavior may place the child(ren) at immediate risk. All persons picking up children must be 18 years of age, unless parent permission is hand written and placed in child's file.

Please check with the program Site Director for the specific location of drop-off or pick-up at each location.

Late Pick-Up Procedure:

Failure to comply with the closing time on 3 occasions may result in dismissal from program. Per our state childcare regulations, all program sites close promptly at 6:00 p.m. Parents are responsible for making sure their child is picked up by 6:00 p.m. If you arrive after 6:00 p.m. a late fee will be assessed for every 10 minutes. (i.e. if you arrive between 6:00 p.m. and 6:10 p.m. you owe \$5.00 for one child, \$10.00 for 2 children, etc.). Payment will be expected at time of late pick up. If your child is not picked up by 6:30 p.m., we have received no communication from the parent & all emergency numbers have been tried, the local authority and/or Department of Children's Services will be called for assistance with the child (ren).

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is crucial for your child to succeed in our program. It has been found that intensity and duration are necessary for students to show improvements in report card grades, behavior, and state assessment scores. If your child(ren) misses more than 10 consecutive days of the program, they will be withdrawn from the program.

Field Trips and School Sponsored Events:

We are always excited to share our plans for student field trips and parent/child activities for our families to enjoy. As always we welcome any additional suggestions or ideas.

- Field Trip Procedures: KIDS Connection strives to make your child's experiences educational and fun. We will have many opportunities throughout the year to take field trips out of town or to local community events and/or places. We will walk or be transported by Athens City Schools Transportation Department.
- Permission Form: Each child will have a permission form that needs to be filled out **for each trip** they attend. Please fill out the form with your child's name and the date/time of the sponsored activity.
- Volunteers: If you would like to attend as a chaperone you must first complete our local background check by the local police department at no charge to you. All chaperones must drive their own vehicle or they may walk with us.
- All students who attend field trips to pool or outside activities must wear sunscreen. Sunscreen should be applied by parent/guardian. KC staff will re-apply sunscreen on face, arms, and shoulders if needed.

Parent Involvement Notice:

Families are a part of the program. Family nights, newsletters about program activities, bulletin boards with announcements, and individual feedback to parents on each child's participation in the program will help in creating the best experiences for the children in the program. Parent suggestions on enrichment offerings are always appreciated.

The Program Coordinator will keep parents informed about special events in the program through postings and newsletters. Please check our website for special announcements.

It would be helpful to keep our program informed of any changes which may occur in a child's environment such as illness in the family, a change in living location or any other stressful situation that may be important to the child. The staff will be able to better meet the needs of the child if they are aware of these situations.

Child Abuse:

State Law 37-1-403 requires that anyone having knowledge of or cause to believe that a child (child being anyone under the age of 18) is being brutalized, abused or neglected, must report their suspicions to the police or juvenile judge having jurisdiction where the child lives. Persons specifically named to report abuse include school officials, doctors, and day care providers. Report suspected abuse to Department of Children's Services. Hotline number is **1-877-237-0004**.

Sick Child Policy:

The program will not provide care for sick children. Please do not send children to the program if they are ill. Policy requires that a child be picked up as soon as possible in the event of illness while in the program. Children must be fever free for 24 hours and without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before they can come back to school or KC. The Department of Children's Services may be contacted if a child continues to be dropped off with an illness or symptoms of an illness without medical attention (including lice). If a child has been found to have lice, parent will be notified to pick up their child from the program. Students will not be allowed to return to the program until the Site Director/Manager has proof the child has been treated and the hair is totally clear of all nits.

Medication Policy:

If a child has to be given daily medication (prescription or non-prescription) a medication form must be on file with the program Site Director. This form must have clearly stated instructions including the name of the medication, dosage, and time of day to be administered. The instructions should include the physician's signature. The medication must be given to the program Site Director in a current prescription bottle or original packaging.

Inclement Weather/Emergency:

KIDS Connection will follow Athens City School Policy on Inclement weather. If schools are closed, KIDS Connection will also be closed. If schools are delayed, KIDS Connection will be open unless otherwise noted by School Cast. If school is dismissed during the school day KIDS Connection will be closed also. Please listen to your local radio stations 1390 AM, 1450 AM, or 101.7 FM. If any changes in the weather happen after school hours, please listen to the radio stations above for KIDS Connection closing.

If there is an emergency, we will use School Cast to inform you. KC will follow the safety plans and procedures for all emergencies.

Broken/Lost/Stolen Items Policy:

The program strongly discourages children from bringing toys/personal items from home. The program will not be responsible for broken, lost, or stolen items (including toys, clothing, backpacks, books, food items, eyewear, money, any electronic items, cd's, dvd's, cell phones, MP3 players, jewelry, and other personal items brought into the building).

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or MP3 Players (iPods) at any KC site location during program hours.

Withdrawal Policy:

Parents have the right to withdraw children from the program at any time. Please advise your Site Director if you will no longer be using the KC program to serve your Before/After School needs.

The program reserves the right to withdraw a child for any of the following reasons:

- Repeated failure of parents to pick the child up from the program on time. (3 Occasions)
- Failure to provide the program Site Director with current emergency/medical information as stipulated by our state licensing agency.
- Continuous student disciplinary problems and any zero tolerance issues.
- Failure to comply with payment policy.
- Inappropriate conduct of parent or guardian.
- 10 consecutive missed days

Discipline Policy:

The success of students enrolled in KIDS Connection is dependent upon their behavior. Good behavior will result in positive reinforcement, while negative behaviors will be corrected in a positive manner. Repeated negative behaviors will result in consequences. If all efforts are exhausted, the parent may be called to pick the child up immediately.

Consequences include, but are not limited to:

- Redirection/alternate activities
- Time out
- Isolation from group
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Verbal/written warnings
- Consultation with child's principal or teacher
- Parent/Student conference
- Suspension or expulsion from program (no tuition/registration refund)
 - If a child is suspended, a parent/student conference with Site Director or Program Coordinator must be held prior to student's return.

Student Rules of Conduct

Clear expectations result in a safe, productive environment for your child. It is important that you stress to your child the importance of good behavior, and that you work with the KIDS Connection staff to help correct negative behaviors. Please discuss these principles of conduct with your child, then sign the behavior policy acknowledgement on the enrollment form.

- Respect other students, staff members, and others' belongings. This includes respecting school environment and property.
- Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself.
- Ask permission before leaving assigned area (always stay with instructor).
- Use appropriate language, voice levels, and tones.

The following behaviors may result in immediate suspension or expulsion:

- Zero Tolerance offenses
- Fighting, wrestling, spitting
- Destruction of property
- Vulgar behaviors, language, cursing, or improper bathroom behavior
- Unsafe behaviors (such as but not limited to: climbing on furniture, tackle football, throwing objects, improper use of equipment, leaving group without permission)
- Stealing
- Behaviors (including sexual behaviors,) deemed inappropriate and unacceptable by Program Site Director and Program Coordinator
- Bullying and or harassment behaviors towards staff and or students

KIDS Connection will not use corporal punishment or refusal of snack as punishment.

Parents Responsibilities:

Parents are important to the support and expansion of our program, so please come to us with any concerns you may have. Please let us know if your child is going through any changes that may affect his/her day at our program. Your child is important to us and we want to work in cooperation with you to provide quality care. A working relationship between parents and program staff is crucial to address any behavior that may interfere with the child’s success in the program.

Parents who demonstrate abusive language and/or inappropriate scenes or disturbances to children, staff, or other adults during the program hours will be asked to withdraw their children from the program. Harassment or bullying, by student or adults will not be tolerated.

The Athens City School system appreciates you entrusting your child to our care in the KIDS Connection program. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to serve your child. We need and appreciate all your support. If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact us at any time. Please feel free to share any comments with your Site Director or the Program Coordinator at 423-745-1796.

KC Phone Numbers

City Park	649-2990
Ingleside	745-6295
North City	744-0657
Westside	649-2868
ACMS	744-1359
Program Office	745-1796