



**Columbia
Association
SAS
Parent
Handbook**

2022-2023 School Year

Mission:

Engage our diverse community, cultivate a unique sense of and enhance quality of life.

Vision:

CA creates and supports solutions to meet the evolving needs of a dynamic and inclusive community. This includes the School Age Services programs which strives to provide affordable and enriching opportunities for school-age youth during their non-school hours

.....

SCHOOL AGED SERVICES

SAS General Information	410-715-3164
SAS Billing	410-715-3145
Fax	410-715-0845
Columbia Association	410-715-3000
TDD	410-715-3129
Email address	SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.org
Columbia Association Website	ColumbiaAssociation.org
Operations Manager	410-715-3116
Program Manager	410-715-3125

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Atholton	443-762-8879	Longfellow	443-804-9965
Bryant Woods	443-762-5288	Northfield	443-473-9863
Centennial	443-473-3325	Phelps Luck	443-762-8160
Clarksville	443-768-8200	Running Brook	443-768-3080
Clemens Crossing	443-762-1906	Stevens Forest	443-768-6001
Cradlerock	443-762-7123	Swansfield	443-468-3307
Dunloggin Middle	443-473-2584	Talbott Springs	443-762-9783
Guilford	443-768-2873	Thunder Hill	443-768-2060
Hammond	443-762-7996	Waterloo	443-615-9118
Jeffers Hill	443-473-5305	Worthington	443-473-7321



General Information

LICENSING

The Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care (MSDE/OCC), under current state childcare regulations, licenses Columbia Association's (CA) School Age Services programs. The MSDE's health and safety standards for school-age childcare programs are quite extensive. Child Care Center Licensing Manuals (COMAR) are available at all of our programs.

STAFF

Our programs are staffed in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland (COMAR) regulations. Mandated by the state, a criminal background check is completed for all employees who work with children. CA also requires ongoing safety training and random drug screening for staff who transport children. All SAS staff receive additional state-approved training in first aid/CPR, activity planning, ADA requirements, behavior management, child growth and development, and childcare best practices.

Each site has an experienced program director who is responsible for daily operations, as well as communicating with parents, children, and staff. If you have any questions specific to your site, the program director will be happy to answer them for you. Based on the number of children, a site may also have a teacher and/or one or more aides.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If your child has any special needs as the result of a diagnosed disability, we will do our best to meet those needs. Please share any information pertaining to your child — IEPs, 504 plans, behavior improvement plans, etc — with the office staff when you register your child. Such information includes any special needs, instructions for care in an emergency, special dietary needs, effective methods of interacting, and other relevant information. Introductory sessions with the child's parent or guardian and SAS staff will ensure that all pertinent information is communicated to the childcare provider.

Permitting the SAS staff to access 504 plans and/or IEPs is very helpful, but we need your written approval to do so. The school is not permitted to share information regarding your child without your express permission.

School-Age Services operates group care programs and our staff/student ratios are 1:15, as required by COMAR. While we will endeavor to provide as much specialized attention for your child as possible, we are unable to provide 1:1 care or individual companions. We are unable to assist children with toileting needs and we do not have diapering facilities. With the addition of 4-year-olds to our programs, staff/student ratios will be maintained in accordance with COMAR regulations in those programs with 4-year-old participants.

Please feel free to call the administrative staff at CA Headquarters to discuss any concerns you may have concerning a child with a diagnosed disability. Our management and administrative staff can provide you with many community resources to assist you and your child. They include (in Howard County) The Care Center, The Resource & Referral Hotline, Behavior Specialists, the Office of Early Intervention, the Office of International Student Affairs, the local Children's Board, and Project ACT.

Information for these and other resources for families can be found in the Parent Resource Book located at the sign-in desk in your school's program.

OUR PROGRAM

Columbia Association's schedule is designed in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National After-School Association (NAA). Students are offered a variety of activities that may include art, science, music, dramatic play, and various physical activities and games. Developmental levels of children are taken into account while planning these activities, with developmentally appropriate practices utilized as needed. Our programs are structured in a manner that facilitates opportunities for individual and group participation, striking a balance between self-selected and staff-directed activities with both quiet and active periods.

Each session (AM and PM) consists of four components:

- Snack (which we provide and should not be removed from the program)
- Games (homework can be completed at this time) ***SAS will follow all current and required CDC and MSDE guidelines.**
- Outdoor/gymnasium time
- Take-home craft activity

As required by COMAR, children are taken outdoors both in the morning and afternoon, weather permitting.

Weather guidelines for child care state that children can be outside as follows:

- Limited outdoor time will be provided when temperatures (adjusted for wind chill and heat index) are between 32-90 degrees F
- 10-15 minutes of outdoor time when temperatures are between 13-32 degrees F or 90-100 degrees F
- No outdoor play when temperatures are below 13 degrees F or above 100 degrees F.

The program director of your child's school is required to post an activity calendar for your inspection. A monthly menu, listing morning and afternoon snacks will also be posted.

Because our focus is recreation-based, with activities designed to foster social and emotional competencies, electronics are not utilized in the program. Children will also have the opportunity to work on their homework during program hours per parental request. Homework is not a part of our recreational program but we will provide a space for the student to complete it as requested.

We do not show movies, watch TV or play video games (the exception to this could occur on days when the school is dismissed early and the weather prohibits outdoor play).



MORNING DROP-OFF

When children are dropped off in the morning, parents must walk the child into the building and sign them in. **SAS will follow all current and required CDC and MSDE guidelines. Temperature checks will be conducted prior to children being accepted into the program.**

If a child is left, the parent will be called and **must** return to the facility and sign the attendance book. **Failure to sign your child in can result in removal from the program.**

Our School Age Services programs are located in the school cafeterias. Our space is often shared with other programs. From time to time we may be asked to relocate to an alternate space for a day or two to accommodate various school functions. We try to keep these disruptions to a minimum but are unable to control the needs of the school.

Our morning programs (elementary school students and pre-K 4-year-olds only) begin at 7 am and end at the time school begins. Children may not be left at the school prior to 7 am.

We do not serve breakfast but do provide a snack and a drink in the morning. Outside food is not permitted (exceptions may be made for allergies; please contact the program manager). A doctor's note explaining the allergy and the dietary restrictions is required.

AFTERNOON PICKUP

Our afterschool programs begin upon school dismissal and end at 6 pm. When the children arrive, the program director immediately takes attendance. If a child is not present and the school cannot verify their whereabouts, the program director will call the parents.

If your child will be absent from our program please:

- Email us at SAS@columbiaassociation.org
- Leave a voicemail at your CA program (phone contact on page 1)

If your child attends a regularly scheduled after-school activity, please provide information in writing to the program director.

Our School Age Services programs are located in the school cafeteria. Our space is often shared with other programs. From time to time we may be asked to relocate to an alternate space for a day or two to accommodate various school functions. We try to keep these disruptions to a minimum but are unable to control the needs of the school.

Each program director will post his or her daily routine next to a calendar of scheduled activities. We schedule a program that includes outdoor and gym time, as well as physical activities. ***SAS will follow all current and required CDC and MSDE guidelines regarding playground and equipment usage. In an effort to reduce the spread of communicable diseases, hand sanitizer will be used when hand washing isn't feasible. Children will be required to wash their hands upon entering the program each day. Handwashing will also occur, before and after snacks, and after outdoor activities.**

Please dress your child for outdoor play. Children will not be permitted in the gym, nor on the outdoor playground, in sandals or flip-flops. Should your child not have the proper footwear, they will be required to sit on the sidelines during gym/outdoor time.

A snack and a drink are also served during the afternoon program. Outside food, including uneaten food from the child's lunch, may not be consumed during our program. Exceptions may be made for allergies; please contact the program manager. A doctor's note explaining the allergy and the dietary restrictions is required.

Please note that snack food may not be removed from the program. If you arrive before the end of the snack period, your child should sit and finish the snack before departing with you.

When parents arrive to pick up their child at the after-school program, **they must sign out their child.** Failure to sign your child out may result in removal from the program.

Written permission is required before a child may walk home or be released to someone other than a parent, guardian, or emergency contact. Please be advised that individuals with whom the program director is not familiar will be required to show picture identification. Without proper authorization, children will not be released to anyone other than the parent or the emergency contact listed on the registration form and emergency card. No exceptions will be made. If specific instructions allowing children to walk home are not given, individuals picking up your child must be at least 13 years old and your child must be at least 8 years of age. If your child is under 8 years of age, individuals picking up your child must be at least 16 years old.

.....
NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

In the absence of a court order, non-custodial parents have full access to their child or children. Non-custodial parents who fall within these parameters may elect to provide a list of emergency contacts for the pickup of the child or children. Non-custodial parents with limited access to a child or children must provide a copy of the court order and must provide a list of emergency contacts authorized for pick up on the court-ordered days

.....
EMERGENCY INFORMATION

No registration will be accepted without two emergency contacts located within 15 minutes of the school. Failure to update these contacts will result in removal from the program. Please inform the School Age Services office in writing of any changes to your home or work phone numbers. This includes changing to an unlisted number, as we must be able to reach you. Changes in your emergency contacts must be made in writing as well. **If we are unable to reach you or your emergency contacts and your child is unable to be picked up within 30 minutes, your child will be removed from the program.** Change forms are available on CA's website or by emailing SAS@columbiaassociation.org.
.....



LATE PICKUP

Our program ends at 6 pm. We understand that emergencies occur, however, our programs are not licensed to provide services beyond 6 pm. If you are detained due to traffic or a work situation, it is your responsibility to contact someone to pick up your child and to notify the program regarding the identity of that person. Late pickup fees will be assessed for picking up children after 6 pm. The fee will begin at 6:01 pm (see below). If a child is not picked up from the center by 6:30 pm and CA has not had contact with a parent/guardian/emergency pick-up person, the appropriate child welfare authorities may be contacted. Late pickup fees are not subject to a reduced rate and are due within three business days. Continuous late arrivals (more than four during the school year) may result in a suspension of up to five days from the program or termination of enrollment in the program. There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the School Age Services.

Late fees:

6:01-6:15 pm: \$20

6:16-6:30 pm: \$40

6:31-6:45 pm: \$120 (Any fees past 6:30 must be paid before the child(ren) can return to care)

6:46-7:00 pm: \$200

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Our programs will not operate when school is closed due to inclement weather. When school closes early due to an emergency, inclement weather, or mechanical failure, the after-school program will not operate. When the school opening is delayed, our morning program will be delayed by the same amount of time. This program is only available to children who are regularly scheduled to attend the morning school program. There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the SAS program due to school closings or delayed openings.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

School-Age Services works closely with the Howard County Public School System to create and maintain a safe and secure environment for the children in our care. We work with the schools to keep doors locked and to screen adults who might enter the building. Should you see a situation that does not appear to ensure safety, please contact the operations manager at 410-715-3116. Our directors have received training in conflict prevention and resolution, active shooter protocols, and emergency preparedness. As part of the emergency preparedness training, each program will conduct an emergency evacuation once a year. Please make yourself familiar with the evacuation route posted in the program. We will walk the children to our designated safe spot, and remain there with the children until pickup time. We will notify you in advance when we will conduct these drills so that you will know where your child can be picked up.



Behavior Guidelines

DISCIPLINE

All School Age Services staff receive training in the use of positive methods of discipline. Simple, understandable, realistic rules will be established with the children at the beginning of the

school year and reinforced throughout the year. Constructive methods of discipline may include redirection, separation of the child from the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior.

In cases where a behavior problem is of a harmful nature, the parent will be informed at the end of the day. Parental support will be solicited in developing a plan to help the child control/eliminate harmful behavior. In cases of excessively harmful or aggressive behavior, or eloping (leaving the program) a meeting between parents/guardians and the program manager will be required. The purpose of this meeting will be to share ideas in order to develop a plan to allow for the child's success in the program. Inappropriate behavior that continues despite repeated interventions by parents and staff may result in permanent removal from School Age Services programs.

The School Age Services program has a zero-tolerance policy for physical aggression and/or physical contact of any type, and for eloping (leaving the program). In the event that a child engages in physical contact (rough play, horseplay, hitting, pushing/shoving, tripping, biting, pinching, throwing objects at another child, and kicking, just to name a few) a progressive discipline policy will be implemented. Additionally, verbal threats made to another student or a staff member will not be tolerated, and such behavior will trigger CA's progressive discipline policy:

1. The first instance of any of these behaviors will require a meeting among the parents/guardians, the director, the child, and a member of the management team. **The School Age Services program has a zero-tolerance policy for physical aggression and/or physical contact of any type, and for eloping (leaving the program).** * SAS will follow all current and required CDC and MSDE guidelines. This meeting will be held within three days of the incident. (Failure of the parent/guardian to participate in the meeting could result in a three- to five-day suspension from the program.)

2. The second instance of these behaviors will result in an immediate three-day suspension from the program.

3. A third instance will result in an immediate five-day suspension.

4. Should a fourth incident occur, the child will be suspended until such time as all parties (parent/ guardian, child, director, and member of the management team) are able to meet. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the next steps.

Please note that determinations of intent are not made regarding physical contact — we believe that no child will deliberately try to harm another. However, striking out at another child, for any reason, will cause the above-listed sequence of events to occur.

Inappropriate behavior of a non-physical nature will be handled by the director of the program. This includes such things as disrespect, discriminatory language, profanity, refusal to follow rules, or poor play habits. If the behavior escalates or the director is not meeting with success with your child, they will discuss the behavior with you at the end of the day.

If disrespectful or inappropriate behaviors (such as but not limited to, refusal to follow direction, profanity, inappropriate gestures, and discriminatory language) continue after the director speaks with the parent/guardian, a meeting with the operations and/or program manager will be required to discuss next steps.

No credits or adjustments for unused time will be given.

PERSONAL ITEMS OF CHILDREN

Columbia Association staff are not responsible for toys, money, or other personal items your child(ren) may bring to the program. Toy weapons cannot be brought to the program at any time. Cell phones, music players, game devices, and other electronic toys or personal toys, cannot be brought to the program at any time. Smartwatches may be worn for time-keeping purposes ONLY. If a child has an item from home without prior approval from a SAS Manager, they will be asked to return it to their backpacks. Should they refuse to do so, the item will be taken and held by staff until the child is picked up at the end of the day.



Health & Safety

ILLNESS

Childcare staff must monitor children for signs and symptoms of acute illness and notify a child's parent or guardian upon observing signs or symptoms of acute illness. Staff must provide temporary isolation for the affected child in a suitably equipped separate area within the sight and hearing of an adult. Staff may not admit a child to care or allow a child to remain in care when the child is exhibiting symptoms of acute illness. A child may not be readmitted to care for an absence of three days or more, due to an illness, without a written statement from their physician stating that the child is not contagious and may return to a regular schedule.

A child may be excluded from care if:

- The child's illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities that the facility routinely offers for healthy children or mildly ill children.
- The child is displaying any of the signs and symptoms that require an evaluation from a health care provider as indicated by the child's age and condition. In this situation, the parent is notified of the need for immediate emergent or urgent issues.
- The illness requires more care than the childcare staff is able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
- The child exhibits an acute change in behavior. Examples may include lethargy, a lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a quickly spreading rash.
- The child has a fever at or above 100.4 degrees F, taken orally, or by a temporal scan.
- The child has diarrhea. The child will not be readmitted to care until diarrhea-free for 24 hours.
- The child is vomiting. The child will not be readmitted to care until vomiting has ceased for 24 hours.
- The child has impetigo/scabies. The child will not be readmitted until treatment has started, as verified by a healthcare professional.
- The child has Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease.
- Symptoms indicating a probable case of COVID-19.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

Sick children and staff will be required to stay home. Sick staff will be sent home immediately and sick children are required to be picked up by a parent or emergency contact within **30 minutes**.

SAS will do the following:

- Communicate to parents the importance of keeping children home when they are sick.
- Communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with facility management if or when they start to feel sick.

- Establish procedures to ensure children and staff who come to the child care center sick or become sick while at your facility are sent home as soon as possible.
- Keep sick children and staff separate from well children and staff until they can be sent home.
- Sick staff members should not return to work until they have been cleared to return to work. A note by a Physician may be required for children to return to care and staff to return to work.

SAS plan if someone is or becomes sick while in the program:

- Each program will have an isolation area that can be used to isolate a sick child.
- SAS will follow all CDC guidance on how to [disinfect your building or facility](#) if someone is sick.
- If a sick child has been isolated in our facility, clean and disinfect surfaces in our isolation area after the sick child has gone home.
- If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member:
 - CA will contact the Howard County Health Department for guidance on the next steps.
 - Close-off areas are used by the person who is sick.
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - Contact MSDE-OCC to notify them of the confirmed case.
 - Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before you clean or disinfect to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
 - If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection are not necessary. Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

Should it be necessary to contact a parent regarding illness or injury, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange to pick up the child within 30 minutes of notification.

.....

MEDICATION

COMAR regulations permit childcare providers to give medication under certain conditions. In order to administer any medication, including over-the-counter, a medication form (available at the program site and on Columbia Association's website) must be completed by a physician. All medication must be in the original container and prescription medication must have the pharmacy label containing the child's name, dosage, times to be administered, and valid expiration date. The child may receive medication only according to the written instruction on the medication label or medication order form for non-prescription medication. **If your child has a life-threatening health condition that requires an EpiPen® or rescue inhaler we must have those items in our program.** We will not be able to access those items in the school's health room. If we do not have them, your child cannot attend our program.

NOTE: If your child participates in our School's Out program, it is your responsibility to pick up your child's medication from their regular program, deliver it to the School's Out program, and then return it to the regular program.

.....

INJURY

The program staff will call you if your child sustains a serious injury requiring medical attention while participating in the program. You will also be contacted if your child sustains any kind of injury or bump to the head or injuries with excessive bleeding. Minor injuries (i.e., scrapes, bumps) will be communicated to parents upon arrival in the program.

If medical treatment is required and a parent cannot be reached, a CA staff member will accompany your child to Howard County General Hospital. It is important to know that the hospital will not treat the child without the permission of a parent. Please be sure the program director has current work and home phone numbers. Also, please update these numbers as necessary.

.....

ALLERGIES

All snacks served are nut-free. If a child has gluten or dairy allergies, as verified by a physician,

alternate snacks are available. Parents may also provide a snack for their child/children if they wish. Snacks provided by parents should be in a plastic container clearly marked with the child's name. Children may not eat food out of their lunchboxes or backpacks due to the possibility of allergen containment. Food may not be removed from our program. If you arrive during snack time, your child may remain until they have finished with their snack. If a child has allergies or sensitivities to any food or drug, the parent should discuss these with the site director. Please be sure to update the health information sheet as needed.

NOTE: If your child participates in the School's Out program, do not send ANY lunch items containing **ALL** nut products – some examples are no peanut butter, granola bars, or any item that lists tree nuts on the ingredients label.



When Schools Are Closed

EARLY CLOSING PROGRAM

When schools are scheduled for early closing, a program is provided for children enrolled in the after-school program at the child's regular program site. There is no extra charge for these extra hours of care. When school is closed early due to an emergency, inclement weather, or mechanical failure, our programs will not operate. No credits or adjustments for unused time will be given.

SCHOOL'S OUT PROGRAM

On most days when schools are scheduled to be closed, i.e. teachers' in-service days and non-major holidays, we will provide a program at the Columbia Association Art Center located at 6100 Foreland Garth, Columbia, MD 21045. The cost is \$55 per day, per child.

Monday, September 26, 2022	Winter Break: December 27-30, 2022*
Wednesday, October 5, 2022	Monday, January 23, 2023
Friday, October 21, 2022	Spring Break: April 3-7, 2023*
Tuesday, November 8, 2022	Friday, April 21, 2023
Wednesday, November 23, 2022	Friday, May 19, 2023

*These dates are subject to change.

PROGRAM CLOSING

PLEASE NOTE-There will be no programs on the following dates:

Monday, Sept. 5, 2022	Labor Day
Monday, October 24, 2022	CA Mandatory Training Day
November 24 & 25, 2022	Thanksgiving Holiday
Monday, December 26, 2022	Christmas Holiday (observed)
Monday, January 2, 2023	New Years Day (observed)
Monday, January 16, 2023	Martin Luther King Jr. Observance Day
Monday, February 20, 2023	Presidents Day

Monday, April 10, 2023	Easter Monday
Monday, May 29, 2023	Memorial Day

.....

TAX AND FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS

Your monthly invoices contain a record of payments made, as well as our address an

Federal Tax ID# 52-0823992. **Please save a copy of your invoice for tax and flexible spending accounts, as we do not send end-of-year statements.** If you do not receive a statement by the 15th of the month please contact us and a copy can be emailed or mailed to you. Requests for prior month statements will incur a \$25 processing fee.

Please note: The law prohibits us from releasing any payment information to any person other than the person to whom the invoice is sent. If you require payment information, and you are not the person to whom the invoice is sent, you must provide us with a notarized release from the billed party.

.....

PARENT FEEDBACK AND INPUT

Parent feedback and input are very important to us. Comment cards are available at every program, every day. We periodically send evaluations to randomly selected customers. However, parent input is not limited to those times. Please feel free to talk to the program director at your school, call the office at 410-715-3164 or email us at SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.org at any time. We want to know what you are thinking and we'd like to have your suggestions. Many existing components of the School Age Services programs have come from parent suggestions! You are welcome to visit our program at any time; however, you must sign the visitor's log and interact only with your own child.

.....

QUESTIONS

If you have a question regarding the program, we suggest you speak first to the program director. If you feel you need more information or have a suggestion, please call the office at 410-715-3164 or email us at SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.org and your question will be directed to the appropriate person. Columbia Association's phone system is equipped with voicemail. If an employee is on another line or away from his or her desk, voicemail will pick up. Please leave a message. We assure you that we will return your call promptly. If you leave the nature of your call, we can call you back with complete information.

.....

