



Family Handbook

Cowboy Academy Out-of-School Time Program

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Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form

Conrad Public School's 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cowboy Academy, is an out-of-school time program offered *free of charge* through a federal grant administered by the Montana Department of Education. The program offers academic support, academic enrichment, college and career readiness, social/emotional support, recreational opportunities for students, and it also serves students' families. To get the full benefit of the program, your child should attend daily.

Family group activities will be offered. Please attend these as possible! Family participation is very important to our program because of 21st CCLC dual-capacity framework, meaning we serve both students *and* families!

Your child and family are expected to meet program guidelines. Instructors use positive reinforcement during the out-of-school time program to keep a positive and fun learning environment. To maintain that positive environment, we will not allow harassment or bullying. We have a "zero tolerance" policy for any weapons or controlled substances. We follow the practices and procedures described in the Conrad Schools' Handbook. Expectations during the out-of-school time program are the same as during the regular school day. Our behavior/discipline policy states that if a student has a discipline issue, the parent or guardian will receive a copy of the incident report. If your child receives three of these forms, he or she may be suspended from the program for three to five days. The fourth notice may result in termination from our program. We reserve the right to suspend or terminate a student from the program immediately if a student's behavior puts staff or other students in danger. Please refer to the *Conrad Schools' Handbook* for more information.

The program hours go from school dismissal until 5:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday. We will not be in session on non-school days, and will not provide afternoon/evening services on early release days, unless it is scheduled by the Director. Please read and discuss this family handbook with your child. Then, please sign this form and return it to your child's school, with the completed registration form, to confirm your understanding and acceptance.

Student Name

School

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

___/___/___
Date

Please return this signed form to the Cowboy Academy Teacher with your program registration form.

Section I: 21st CCLC Introduction

Vision: Conrad Public School's 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, Cowboy Academy creates happy, engaged, and future-ready learners.

Mission: Conrad Public Schools' 21st CCLC program, Cowboy Academy provides a high-quality out-of-school time program that engages students in exploration of academic content in interesting and innovative ways.

Program activities are designed to support student academic, social and emotional growth. The program focuses on activities that help students meet state learning standards in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, and build critical thinking skills and positive character traits. To honor youth voices, activities are designed to be innovative, hands-on and relevant. They are built on learning goals that are shared with youth. The program strives to create strong, transparent connections to college and career exploration and readiness. It also includes sessions that promote health and wellness and support a student's success in school.

The minimum program requirement at each site is 8 hours per week for a minimum of 30 weeks. This provides an additional 240 hours of support for students. This is approximately 34 additional school days.

Goals

1. Help students achieve standards in core academic subjects such as reading and math.
2. Offer enrichment programs that supplement regular academic programs.
3. Provide educational services for the families of participating students.

Section II: Enrollment and Attendance

Attendance Policy

This learning program is provided *free of charge* to students (and their families) attending Conrad Public Schools. This is possible because the program is funded through a 21st CCLC grant, administered by the Montana Department of Education and provided through the Conrad Schools' site. Attendance is a very important part of our program. To get the most out of the program, your child should attend daily for the full program year. **Parents are responsible for contacting the site before 3 p.m. or After School program Teacher if a child will be absent.**

Section III: Program Hours and Activities

Hours of Operation

The 21st CCLC program begins on September 20, 2021, and ends on May 26, 2022.

The out-of-school time program operates from school dismissal until 5:15 p.m. Monday to Thursday. The last program day during the academic year will be Thursday, May 26.

During the afternoon hours, students will participate in snack time, academic interventions and homework time, academic enrichment, college and career awareness, and recreational activities. Activities vary throughout the year; consult the program activity calendar displayed on the District website's Cowboy Academy page for details of current activities.

Holiday and Bad Weather Policies

During the regular academic year, the calendar for Cowboy Academy follows the calendar of the school district. On days when there is no school, including bad weather days, Cowboy Academy is not in session. If school is released due to bad weather, the program will not be provided. On school days when regular classes are in session but bad weather is predicted for late afternoon, the afternoon program hours may be canceled.

Dismissal

As described in Section II of this handbook, attendance is important. To get the full benefit of this program, your child should attend each day for the full program length. The procedures outlined below will be followed during program dismissal:

- Students who take the bus home will meet in the program classroom to be dismissed after signing out for the evening, and then board their designated bus. **In town transportation is temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 policies.**
- Parents will be picking students up outside of the building. They will need to contact the lead After School teacher for their child's class by text/call to the afterschool cell phone or Remind class, in order to notify staff of the arrival for pick up. All students will be picked up from the Main entrance of Meadowlark and 4-6 students from the main door of Utterback. Families with multigrade children can pick students up from the door of the youngest child's designated door. If students are to be picked up by persons other than those designated at the time of registration (those listed on the student's registration form), the after school program Teacher must be notified prior to pick-up time, or the student will not be released.

- o K/1 Program cell number - 406-607-1513
- o 2/3 Program cell number - 406-607-1514
- o 4/6 Program cell number - 406-607-
- Students who will be walking out at the dismissal time will be required to have the “Walk-Out Consent” section of the registration form signed by the parent before the student will be released.

Late Pick-Up

Students must be picked up when the program ends. This means no later than 5:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The learning center is not staffed after these hours. **A student may be removed from the program if he or she is picked up late three times.** Local authorities may be contacted for assistance if a student is not picked up after program hours and we can't reach the parent, guardian or emergency contacts.

Family Participation

Family involvement is a very important component of your child's education; we encourage each adult family member to participate in this program as much as your schedule allows. Activities may include, but are not limited to, the following types of workshops: GED, parenting, how to help with homework/studying and community/family events and learning support.

The community/family events are designed to be fun for the whole family, so we hope you will attend! We will provide the information for these events in advance.

We select the adult workshop topics based on community feedback and the sessions have been designed for adult learning. Please let the program Director or after school program staff know if there are workshops that would be of interest or benefit to you.

Section IV: Behavior Policy

The behavior policy at our site was established to help students develop self-discipline so they may function independently in a socially acceptable manner. Students will be expected to follow their school day MBI expectations. Self-control and social skills are developed over time by participating in activities and interacting with others. The main reasons for establishing behavior expectations are these:

- to prevent possible harm to self or others;
- to prevent infringing on the rights of others; and
- to prevent damage to equipment and property.

To provide a safe and secure environment for everyone, the following expectations will be in effect at all times:

- Follow the rules of the school district handbook.

- Follow the directions of staff the first time they are given.
- Show respect and treat others with kindness.
- Ask permission to leave an area.

Students will be taught to be responsible for their own actions; they make the choice to follow the rules and enjoy the rewards or to ignore the rules and accept the consequences. Appropriate behavior will be encouraged by verbal praise, rewards and positive communications with parents. Whenever possible, natural and logical consequences will be provided for inappropriate behavior.

If a student has a discipline issue, the parent or guardian will receive an incident report. Parents will be informed of their child's behavior and may be asked to participate in a discussion to resolve special situations. If your child receives three of these incident reports, he or she will be suspended from Cowboy Academy for three to five days. The fourth write-up will result in termination from the program for this school year. We reserve the right to suspend or terminate a student from the program immediately if a student's behavior warrants it. Please refer to the School Handbook.

Section V: 21st CCLC Staff and Volunteers:

The Cowboy Academy Out-of-School-Time Program has a teaching team that consists of teachers and paraprofessionals from the school day and part-time staff hired specifically for the Out-of-School-Time Program.

Each activity adheres to a 1 to 20 staff-to-student ratio, which provides several benefits:

- more one-on-one attention from the staff;
- students get to know each other better; and
- staff can tailor instruction to students' individual needs.

Instructional Staff is available to assist students in a variety of ways: small-group tutoring for academic skill practice, apprenticeship or technical skill instruction, and enrichment projects. Other staff members work behind the scenes on administrative tasks.

~~We welcome all family members who would like to volunteer with the 21st CCLC program!~~

COVID-19 policies currently do not allow Volunteers in the building. If you or someone you know would like to donate a few hours ~~in the classroom~~ behind the scenes, please contact Keri VanDyke, Director, at 406-402-7359.

All Cowboy Academy team members, paid instructors and volunteers, are required to pass a fingerprint/background check. Your child's safety is a priority, so this policy is strictly enforced.

Section VI: Communications

It is important to keep the lines of communication open between Cowboy Academy staff and families of enrolled students. Listed below are ways we plan to keep families updated, and a way for families to contact program staff.

Remind Communication: Join the Meadowlark Cowboy Academy class with the code, @mlcowboy and the Utterback Cowboy Academy class with the code, @uscowboy. If you prefer to not have the App, you may join by texting the class codes to the number 81010. Staff will communicate announcements, updates and individual messages.

Homework: Staff will assist your child with assigned homework. However, based on the daily program schedule, there may be times when not all homework is completed. (This is a learning engagement program, not just a homework program!) Staff will let you know the status of your child's homework by using the school day planner.

Program activities: A newsletter will be shared once a month. A monthly program schedule may be included in each newsletter.

Questions, concerns, suggestions: Please contact the Program Teachers at each site.

Section VII: Additional Details

Snack

A nutritious snack will be provided daily at no charge through the Food and Nutrition Services Department. The staff must be notified of any special dietary concerns.

Medications

The Cowboy Academy staff are not responsible for giving medications to students. Arrangements must be made to have medications administered before students arrive at the program. Exceptions to this rule include EpiPens for allergic emergencies or inhalers for asthma treatment. These medications will need to be kept locked in the school office. Cowboy Academy does not have a supply of EpiPens or inhalers.

Health and Safety

Our staff provides a safe and healthy environment for all youth. Please list your child's medical conditions on the registration paperwork. If your child has a known medical or health condition (such as asthma, diabetes, ADD, autism, seizure disorder), be sure the site coordinator knows what to do if a problem should occur during program hours. Please notify us of your child's physical or health condition so we can do our best to serve your family. If a child becomes ill while in the out-of-school time program, the parent, guardian or approved adult will be notified. Depending on the nature of the illness, the adult may be asked to pick up the student. If a child has any of the following symptoms or behaviors, the parent or guardian will be notified to pick up the child immediately:

- Any communicable disease

- Chills and/or fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Undiagnosed rash
- Cough
- Head lice
- Ringworm
- Pink eye
- Accident requiring medical attention

21st CCLC Emergency Policy

In case of an accident or illness, we will call the parent or guardian of a child. Please be sure we have your correct phone numbers and address on file. In serious emergencies, you will be contacted and 911 may be called. Directions from the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) will be followed until you have arrived. If the EMT determines the need to transport the student and you have not yet arrived, the student will be transported to the hospital and accompanied by a staff member. Once you arrive on campus, you will be updated on the transportation of the student. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student will be responsible for the cost, if any, of the emergency vehicle and/or emergency room.

Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies

Cowboy Academy follows the emergency action plan procedures of Conrad School District in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency. If you would like to review the school or district plan, please contact the program Teacher.

Field Trip Permission

You will be notified of plans for any field trips. Permission slips are required if a student is taken off campus. The usual district and school policies for field trips will carry over to the Cowboy Academy program. **Field trips are currently on hold.**

Personal Belongings

We assume no liability for lost/damaged items. Students should keep personal belongings, including cell phones and other electronic devices, in their backpacks. These devices should not be used during program hours unless there is an emergency or a student has permission from the program staff. Students are *not* permitted to return to their classrooms once the school day is over.

On behalf of the entire Cowboy Academy team, we look forward to an outstanding year of learning and fun!