

2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR



Youth Services
School Age Programs
PARENT MANUAL

ca
Columbia Association

Telephone Listing

SAS	
General Information	410-715-3164
SAS Billing	410-715-3145
FAX	410-715-0845
Columbia Association	410-715-3000
Toll Free from	
Washington	301-596-1109
TDD	410-715-3129
Atholton	410-964-1292
Bryant Woods	410-964-1294
Centennial	410-461-4322
Clarksville	301-596-9849
Clemens Crossing	410-964-1297
Cradlerock	410-381-0430
Dunloggin Middle	410-461-1419
Guilford	301-490-1608
Hammond	301-725-2115
Jeffers Hill	410-964-1393
Longfellow	410-964-1398
Northfield	410-461-4349
Phelps Luck	410-964-1399
Running Brook	410-964-1409
Stevens Forest	410-964-1476
Swansfield	410-964-1488
Talbott Springs	410-964-1492
Thunder Hill	410-964-1497
Waterloo	410-799-0538
Worthington	410-461-5914
E-mail Addresses:	
SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.com	
or	
YouthServices@ColumbiaAssociation.com	
Columbia Association Website:	
www.ColumbiaAssociation.org	

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Philosophy

► The Columbia Association’s objective is to provide high quality care and supervision for children enrolled in our School Age Services programs. Our programs provide a place where children have positive experiences, and parents have the comfort and convenience of licensed childcare.

The policy of the Columbia Association is to promote equal opportunities in all of its activities, and to provide services to the residents of Columbia without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, sex, physical or mental disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Licensing

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

Staff

► Our programs are staffed in accordance with the Annotated Code of MD (COMAR) regulations. Mandated by the state, a criminal background check is completed for all employees who work with the children. The Columbia Association also requires ongoing safety training and random drug screening for staff who transport children.

Each site has an experienced Program Director who is responsible for programming, as well as communication 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 upon the number of children, a site may have a group leader and one or more aides.

Ongoing mandatory staff training, provided by trainers certified through MSDE, includes, but is not limited to: cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, safety, administering medication, regulatory guidance, age appropriate activities, constructive discipline, and child growth and development.

Special Needs

► When a child with special needs joins the program, information to assist the staff in best serving the child will be requested from the parent. Such information includes instructions for care in an emergency, special dietary needs, effective methods of interacting, etc. Introductory sessions with the child’s teacher, parent, and SAS staff will ensure that all pertinent information is communicated to the childcare provider.

School Age Services operates group care programs and our 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.

Please feel free to call the administrative staff at CA Headquarters to discuss any concerns you may have concerning a child with a special need.

Our Program

► The Columbia Association curriculum 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. Other activities are planned throughout the school year. 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. Outdoor play is provided both in the morning and afternoon, weather permitting.

Each Program Director plans his or her own program calendar; therefore, activities may vary from site to site. The Program Director of your child’s school is required to post an activity calendar for your inspection.

Drop Off and Pick Up of Your Child

► When children are dropped off in the morning, parents must walk the child into the building and sign them in. Failure to do so could result in removal from the program. When parents arrive to pick up their child at the After School program, **they must come into the program space and sign out their child.** Failure to sign your child out could result in termination 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 contacts. Please be advised that any individuals with whom the Program Director is not familiar, will be required to show 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 16 years of age.

Mornings

► Our morning programs (elementary only) begin at 7:00 AM and end at the time school begins. Children may not be left at the school prior to 7:00 AM. For safety and licensing purposes, children arriving for the morning portion of the program **must be accompanied to the program and signed in by a parent or guardian.** Under no circumstances should a child enter the building alone. Children who arrive unattended and who are not signed in will be sent to wait outside until the school day begins. Failure to follow this procedure may result in termination of enrollment. There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the School Age Services.

We do not serve breakfast, but do provide a snack and a drink in the morning.

Afternoon

► Our after school programs begin upon school dismissal and end at 6:00 PM. When the children arrive, the Program Director immediately takes attendance. Since the children have been in an educational program all day, weather permitting, we take the children outside. Afternoon schedules vary from site to site. However, each Program Director will post his or her daily routine next to a calendar of scheduled activities. **Parents/guardians must enter the program and sign the parent log at pickup.**

A snack and a drink are also served during the afternoon program.

Please dress your child for outside play. Sandals and flip flops are not permitted in the gym.

Late Pick Up

► Our program ends at 6:00 PM. We understand that emergencies occur; however, our programs are not licensed to provide services beyond 6:00 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 person. Late Pick Up Fees will be assessed for picking up children after 6:00 PM. The fee will be \$20.00 for every 15 minutes or any portion thereof, per child. If a child is not picked up from the center within 30 minutes of closing, the late fees will be doubled, and the appropriate child welfare authorities may be contacted. Late Pick Up fees are not subject to Reduced Rate and are due within 3 business days.

Continuous late arrivals may result in a suspension of up to five days from the program or in termination of enrollment from the program. There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the School Age Services.

Discipline Guidelines

► 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 elicited in developing a plan to help the child control/eliminate the harmful behavior. In cases of excessively harmful or aggressive behavior, a child may be suspended from the program for up to five days. Inappropriate behavior which 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 contact. Any pushing, shoving or hitting may be grounds for immediate suspension. Aggressive or abusive behavior by a child toward a staff member, or another participant, may be grounds for immediate suspension. Continuation of this type of behavior toward a staff member or another participant could also result in permanent removal from the program. No credits or adjustments for unused time will be given.

Attendance Procedures

► Children come directly to the School Age Services at the end of the school day. Every effort is made to communicate with the school staff as to which children are enrolled in School Age Services. As mentioned before, attendance is taken before any activities begin. **Please contact the site director or program supervisor if your child will be absent from the after school program.**

If your child is absent and we have not been contacted, we will check with the school office. If the school does not have a record of your child leaving school early, we will make every effort to contact you at home or work to verify the whereabouts of your child.

Once attendance has been taken, your child may not leave our program without written permission. **A note is required for your child to leave the program to help a teacher after school or participate in extra-curricular activities.** The note must include specific dates and times the child will leave and return to the program. Once a parent has given written permission for a child to leave the program, the Columbia Association is not responsible for the child until a teacher or adult leader of the activity escorts him back to the program. This policy also applies to morning participants who wish to leave and/or return to the program.

Non-Custodial Parents

► In the absence of a court-order, non-custodial parents have full access to their child(ren). Non-custodial parents who fall within these parameters may elect to provide a list of emergency contacts for pick up of the child(ren).

Non-custodial parents with limited access to child(ren) 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

► Please be certain to inform the School Age Services office, in writing, of any changes in 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 contact, your child may be removed from the program.** Change forms are available on CA's website or at CA's main office.

Personal Items of children

► The Columbia Association staff is not responsible for toys, money and other personal items your child may bring to the program. Toy weapons cannot be brought to the program at any time. Walkman, gameboxes and other electronic toys cannot be brought to the program at any time.

Sharing Space in a public school

► 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.

Parent Feedback & Input

► Parent feedback and input is 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 e-mail us at SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.com 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 restrict your interactions to your own child.

Homework

► The staff will encourage the children to do their homework. Since our program is recreation based, we cannot force a child to do his or her homework. Please bear in mind that our programs are located in the school cafeteria. Our staff will do their best to control the noise level during homework time, but we cannot guarantee silence nor provide tutoring service.

Telephone

► Parents are discouraged from phoning the program to speak with their children. Such calls are disruptive to the program. Telephones must be kept free for emergencies.

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 e-mail us at SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.com and your question will be directed to the appropriate person.

The Columbia Association phone system is equipped with voice mail. If an employee is on another line or away from his or her desk, voice mail 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.

Illness

► According to COMAR Regulations, children who show signs of a communicable disease cannot remain in our program. Should your child become ill during our program, the Program Director will contact you. If he or she cannot reach you, he/she will call the emergency contact person listed. It is expected that children who are ill will be picked up within 15 minutes once contact is made. After an absence due to illness of 3 days or more, a written statement from the doctor is required to readmit a child to the program. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in termination of care for your child. No credits or adjustments for unused time will be given.

Medication

► COMAR regulations permit childcare providers to give medication under certain conditions. In order to administer any medication, a medication form (available at the program site) must be completely filled out by the parent or legal guardian. Children may receive only one dose of non-prescription medication per illness. 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 a 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 epi-pen or rescue inhaler we must have those items in our program.** We will not be able to access those items in the schools health room. If we do not have them your child cannot attend our program.

Injury in the program

► The program staff will call you if your child sustains a serious injury while participating 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

► 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 Special Care plan as needed.

Early Closing Program

► Days on which the 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. For the 2011-2012 school year, we will not operate an afternoon program on February 15, 2012. 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 Closed Program

► For most scheduled school closings, SAS programs are provided at Clemens Crossing and/or Cradlerock Elementary schools. Whenever possible, a staff member from your child's home school will be scheduled to work the program. Field Trips are scheduled for most of the School's Closed day programs; however, children who do not wish to go on the field trips are invited to enroll in the Junior Club, held at Clemens Crossing Elementary School.

- Pre-registration is required for all school's closed programs, and an additional fee of \$48 per day is charged. **If you are enrolled in our Plus Payment Plan, you must still pre-register for field trips.**
- Program hours are 7AM-6PM.
- Snacks are provided in the AM and PM.
- Children must bring a bag lunch, including a drink, marked with his/her name (unless otherwise indicated in the field trip flier).

School's Closed dates for the 2011-2012 school year are:

September 29th	*December 26-30th	*April 2-6th
October 21st	January 23rd	*April 9th
November 4th	February 17th	April 26th
November 23rd	February 20th	May 18th

**Program held at Cradlerock only.*

PLEASE NOTE: WE DO NOT OFFER PROGRAMS ON:

September 5, Labor Day
November 24 and 25, Thanksgiving Holiday
January 16, Martin Luther King Day
February 15, Staff Development Day, No afternoon program
May 28, Memorial Day

Plus Payment Plan

► The PLUS Payment Plan is for the 20 School's Closed days. Instead of paying the regular \$48 fee per each School's Closed day, (total of \$960) the PLUS Payment Plan participants receive a discount and pay \$864. This can be done at the beginning of the year or in nine (9) monthly installments of \$96 each, which will be added to your regular September-May invoices. Children enrolled in the PLUS Payment Plan must complete a school's closed registration form indicating participation in a field trip or Jr. Club for each by the registration deadline. Withdrawal from the PLUS Plan can only be done upon full withdrawal from the School Age Services Program. No credits or adjustments for unused time will be given. **Note: Enrollment in the PLUS program is not a guarantee of service and does not automatically register your child for the field trip or Jr. Club. You must complete a registration form each time.**

Junior Club

► The Junior Club, for children who do not wish to attend the field trips, is housed at Clemens Crossing Elementary School. Although not limited to first and second graders, the Junior Club often offers on-site entertainers and activities geared toward younger students whose parents prefer they remain on site for the day. Entertainers invited to the program may include clowns, puppeteers, and storytellers.

Note: Enrollment in the PLUS program is not a guarantee of service and does not automatically register your child for the field trip or Jr. Club. You must complete a registration form each time.

Field Trips

► Pre-registration is required for all field trips, **including PLUS Plan participants**. We offer a variety of activities and a snack before the bus departs. As with all our programs, children must be escorted into the program and signed in. Occasionally, you may be asked to fill out additional information. A Program Director and/or Supervisor will be available to answer any of your questions. He or she will also be the person in charge for the day. When we return from the field trips, your child may choose from a variety of activities. When you pick your child up, you may be required to show identification. This is for the safety of your child. Participants will be assigned to either Clemens Crossing ES or Cradlerock ES depending on the field trip activity they choose. Exact locations will be communicated during the registration process.

Field Trip Transportation

► All field trips are scheduled and paid for in advance. In order to meet contracted obligations, busses must depart for the field trip in a timely manner. All field trip participants must arrive at the school 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time. If you are not at the school 15 minutes before departure your child will not be permitted to participate in the trip.

How to register for School's Closed Program

► School's Closed fliers will be available on the CA website approximately one month before the School's Closed date. In order to schedule staff, busses, etc., parents must register on or before the specified deadline. We cannot accept late registrations. Registrations and payment for School's Closed days will only be accepted by email or fax. No refunds will be given for cancellations made after the deadline. **PLUS Plan participants are required to complete a School's Closed registration form indicating participation in Junior Club or field trip.** Plus plan participants who register for a field trip and do not attend will be charged a \$25 cancellation fee. All participants for full day programs will be charged based upon registration not attendance.

Inclement Weather

► When school is closed due to inclement weather, our programs will not operate. When school closes early due to an emergency, inclement weather or mechanical failure, the after school program will not operate.

When 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.

Fee Structure

► Program fees for the 2011–2012 school year are as follows:

Monday–Friday AM
 Monthly Payment (Sep–May): \$148
 June Payment: TBD

Monday–Friday PM
 Monthly Payment (Sept–May): \$200
 June Payment: TBD

Plus Program
 Monthly Payment (Sep–May): \$96
 June Payment: None

Transportation (Middle School only)
 Monthly Payment: None

Registration fee: \$50

School’s Closed fee: \$48 per day

Space Deposit: A deposit of \$100 for PM Care, \$74 for AM Care or \$174 for both will be due at registration. This amount will be applied to the June 2012 tuition payment. Should you need to remove your child from the program before the end of the school year, this deposit will be refunded provided 2 weeks notice is given. If no notice of removal is given, these monies will be forfeited.

- The monthly fee is due the first of each month.
- Late fees of \$25.00 will be assessed if payments are made after the 1st of the month. Late payment fees are not subject to Reduced Rate.
- A \$35 fee will be charged for any check returned by the bank. Returned check fees are not subject to Reduced Rate. Repayment for returned checks must be done by cash, credit card or money order.
- You will be billed for the full amount each month, whether your child does or does not attend. Unpaid monthly bills, even for those children no longer attending, will be turned over to a collection agency for payment. Outstanding or past due balances could cause your child to be suspended from the program, and could prevent registration for the following school year. Withdrawal from the program requires 2 weeks written notice and will be effective on the 1st or 15th of the month only.

If you wish to retain a space in the program, the monthly fee must be paid whether or not your child attends. We cannot hold spaces for children, as it prevents another child/family from attending our program. Payment will be prorated for half the month only with proper notification.

There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the School Age Service.

There are three payment plans available: monthly, biannual and annual.

Two or more late/skipped payments will require full payment for the balance of the year in order to remain in the program. Two or more returned checks will result in denial of payment by check for the remainder of the school year.

How to Make Payments

► Payments can be made by:

Mail:

Columbia Association School Age Services
 P.O. Box 981, Columbia, Maryland 21044

In person:

Payments are accepted at the Columbia Association Headquarters
 10221 Wincopin Circle (Above Clyde’s Restaurant)
 Monday–Friday, 9:00AM–5:00PM

Payments can be placed in the payment box at Member Service Center:

10221 Wincopin Circle (Above Clyde’s Restaurant)
 Monday–Saturday 10:00AM–7:00PM

Automated Payments: At this time we do not have the ability to do automated debits from your credit card or a checking account. You may set up payments with your bank.

By fax: Credit card payments can be faxed to 410-715-0845. Credit card payments must be made each month. Credit card payment forms are not retained from month to month.

PAYMENTS CANNOT BE MADE AT THE PROGRAM SITES

In order to assure accuracy in processing your payments please remember to:

- Return a copy of the invoice with your payment
- Put your child’s customer number on your check
- Please DO NOT staple checks
- Cash payments may be made from 9 AM to 4 PM Monday through Friday only. Cash cannot be left in the drop box or with the front desk receptionist.

Tax Flexible Spending Account Information

► Your monthly invoices contain a record of payments made, as well as our address and Federal Tax ID# 52-0823992. **Please save a copy of your invoice for tax and flexible spending account, as we do not send end of year statements.**

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.

Reduced Rate Information

► The Columbia Association offers a Reduced Rate program for income qualifying families. All information in the reduced rate packet must be re-submitted every year for approval. Incomplete packets will not be processed and reduced rates will not be retroactive.

For more information or to learn if you qualify, please call 410-715-3164. CA also accepts vouchers from Howard County Department of Social Services. For more information or to learn if you qualify, please call 410-872-4200.

Withdrawing from the Program

► Cancellation or changes in the program require a two week written notice to the SAS administrative offices and will be effective on the 1st or 15th of the month. Withdrawal from the program will result in a forfeiture of your child(ren)'s space in the program. Re-registration will be required for all children previously withdrawn or for whom registration is cancelled. Re-registration may require the completion of a new registration packet and a registration fee of \$50, and will be accepted on a space available basis. There are no credits or adjustments for time not used in the SAS program

The space deposit paid at registration will be refunded if a child is withdrawn and the proper 2 week's notice is provided. Failure to provide written notice will result in forfeiture of the space deposit. Should a child remain in the program for a full year, the space deposit will be applied to the June amount due.

Changes in program status are subject to availability and will require a \$25 administrative fee for each change. Please call the administrative office at 410-715-3164 or e-mail us at SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.com if you wish to increase your child's participation in our programs. If space is available you must submit the change request, in writing, to the School Age Services administrative offices. Change forms are available on the Columbia Association website or at the main Columbia Association office.