



SOCC Afterschool Program – Woodman Park School Parent Handbook

Program Overview

Mission and Vision

The Seymour Osman Community Center and Youth Safe Haven (SOCC) is a private non-profit that is affiliated with the Dover Housing Authority. Its mission is to provide youth and families with a better chance through helping children and adults by providing educational skills, parental support and life experiences so children will be able to better compete in life. We do this by focusing on the development of grit & work ethic, conflict resolution skills, clear goals, and confidence.

Program Goals

1. Participating students will improve performance in core subjects of Math and Reading.
2. Parents/guardians of participating students will increase their level of involvement in their children's learning.
3. Participating students will increase leadership and responsibility.

Program Administration

Key staff roles and responsibilities:

Stacey Kearns, Director of Family Services – Oversees programs and staff at the SOCC

Krista Lomartire, 21st Century Project Coordinator – Coordinates SOCC Afterschool Program (grades 1-4) at Woodman Park School site

Homework Lab Leaders – Coordinate Homework Lab classrooms. Usually school-day staff

Youth Development Coordinators – Support Homework Lab and recreational activities. Usually UNH students

The Seymour Osman Community Center is managed by an eleven-member Board of Directors.

Location and Hours

The SOCC is headquartered at the Seymour Osman Community Center (40 Hampshire Circle). Programming (grades 1-4) takes place at Woodman Park Elementary School (11 Towle Avenue). Program hours are 3:00-6:00 Monday through Friday during the school year. The program follows the school district holiday calendar. The Summer Program schedule will be announced by the end of May.

Procedures

Registration and Program Fees (*Refer to Registration Form*)

Registration for the afterschool program year begins in June. When slots are filled, any additional potential enrollees are put on a wait list.

In order to help offset program costs, a nominal fee based on household Free & Reduced Lunch status is requested. Payment will be made for each 9-week session during the first week of the session. Bills will be delivered to parents each session with outstanding charges for the previous session. Scholarships and alternative payment plans can be available to those experiencing difficulty.

Schedule of Program Day

3:00	Children are dismissed from their school-day classroom and move to their Homework Lab classrooms, where they have snack and work on homework	Various classrooms
4:00	Children transition from Homework Lab to enrichment programs	Various classrooms
5:00	All children go to the gym	Gym
6:00	Parents pick up their children	Gym

The SOCC at Woodman Park strives to achieve adult-to-child ratios of 1:10 or smaller, but that ratio may vary according to the needs of specific programs.

Behavior Policy

Students are not allowed to swear, touch each other inappropriately, hurt, or threaten another person or be disrespectful to volunteers, staff, other students, bus drivers, or visitors. Students should know the rules (Be Safe, Be Caring, Be Respectful, Be Here and Ready), which are the same as the school's rules, and staff will frequently remind students of the rules.

When rules are broken, staff will use reminding or redirecting language to get the student to choose more appropriate behavior. If the behavior continues, staff will give consequences that may include (depending on the nature of the rule violation) a loss of a privilege, an apology to the person who was hurt, or cleaning up a mess that was made. The program's behavior management strategies align with the "1-2-3 Magic" curriculum used during the school day. Individualized behavior plans may be developed, with support of school day staff, to meet the unique needs of certain students and align with school day behavior plans.

At any time during the program day, staff may call to request that parents pick up their child early if the student's behavior is unmanageable. Any staff member or volunteer may issue a verbal/written warning for rules violations, but it is the Project Coordinator who is responsible for tracking behavior and ultimately issuing suspensions from field trips and/or programming. (No suspensions will occur without a discussion occurring between the Project Coordinator and

Director.) The Project Coordinator is responsible for communicating with parents about behavior issues.

Students who demonstrate that they cannot function appropriately in the Afterschool Program and/or who pose a threat to other students may be dismissed permanently if their behavior prevents the appropriate operation of the Afterschool Program. As well, unsafe behavior in the SOCC van may lead to suspension from the van or from the program. Staff will consult with the parents, school administration, police, case manager or others involved with the student's life before permanently dismissing. The reason for suspension will be documented in an incident report and the report will specify why the student is not appropriate for the program. Parents/guardians will be given a copy of the reason for dismissal and a copy of the report must be retained in the student's file.

Sign-in / Sign-out Protocol

Staff will mark attendance sheets each day to note who is present. An adult or older sibling will sign out each student each day. Students may only be released from the SOCC Afterschool Program to their custodial parents or individuals listed under alternative pick-up on the registration form. Parents may add or delete alternative pick-up people at any time. Parents may also hand deliver a note to a staff member permitting someone who has not been listed as an alternative to pick up their student. This information must be signed, dated, and put in the student's file.

If a student attends school but is not planning to attend afterschool, the child's parent must contact the school or send a note to the school-day teacher **and** contact SOCC staff. SOCC works very closely with school day staff; if we do not receive written or verbal permission from a parent/guardian for an alternative plan, the student will stay at the afterschool program. If that communication does not occur and the student does not arrive at the afterschool program as staff expect, SOCC staff will call that child's parent.

All staff are required to check the identification (i.e., driver's license) of anyone who is unfamiliar to them if they come to pick up a student. If a person who has not been designated by the custodial parent comes to pick up a student, the student should not be released until the parent has been contacted and approves the pick-up person.

Transportation

The SOCC provides transportation after programming for those who need it. Transportation is also provided for all off-site activities. In such instances, students ride in a school bus or in the SOCC's 15-passenger van. Operation of the SOCC van is done in accordance with state standards and best practices, including:

- Proper use of age-appropriate safety restraints
- Child supervision during transport, including never leaving a child unattended in the vehicle
- Maintenance of First Aid kit and emergency supplies
- Employing regular preventive maintenance

- Refraining from playing loud music while children are in the vehicle
- Refraining from use of a cell phone while the vehicle is in motion

While in the vehicle, children are expected to stay seated, use their seatbelts, and maintain “indoor voices.”

Field Trips

The permission granted by parents on the registration form covers all field trips associated with the program. Unless required by the destination or by a program partner, no other permission slip needs to be signed by parents for field trips. Notices of field trips will be sent home to parents as the date of the trip approaches.

Cancellation Due to Weather or Other Emergency

When the school announces a snow day, the SOCC Afterschool Program will also close. If there is school but the afterschool program must close because of deteriorating weather conditions or because of some other emergency, the announcement will be posted on www.wmur.com and parents will be contacted.

Parent Responsibilities

Among the responsibilities of program parents:

- Providing accurate, up-to-date contact information for everyone on their child’s “pick-up list”
- Paying their bill on time
- Communicating with staff when issues arise that may affect their child’s participation in the afterschool program
- Communicating with staff when they are having difficulty paying the session fee
- Ensuring that their children are available to participate fully in the activities, programs, and performances
- Participating in fundraisers and volunteer service to support the afterschool program to the extent that they are able
- Attending family events and youth performances associated with the afterschool program

The SOCC views parents as essential partners in making their children’s time in the afterschool program a positive, productive experience. While staff recognize that parents have numerous priorities that demand attention, it is important that parents meet the obligations described above.

Parents will receive important program updates and other information in a variety of ways:

- Monthly announcements sent out by e-mail and distributed in hard copy
- Daily announcements posted at the spot where parents pick up their children
- Phone calls and face-to-face interactions
- Notices on the SOCC’s Facebook page

It is imperative that parents review the information presented to them.

Important Contact Information

Woodman Park School www.dover.k12.nh.us	516-6700	Dover Housing Authority	742-5804
Seymour Osman Community Center www.dhasocc.org	749-6692	Strafford County HeadStart	742-1732
<i>Director</i> skearns@doverhousingauthority.org		Dover Police Department	742-4646
<i>Project Coordinator</i> soccadmin@socclab.org		Goodwin Community Health Center	749-2346
Strafford County Community Action Program	516-8140	Child Care Resource and Referral Network	516-1191
Community Partners	516-9300	DHHS office - Rochester	332-9130
City of Dover Human Services	516-6500		