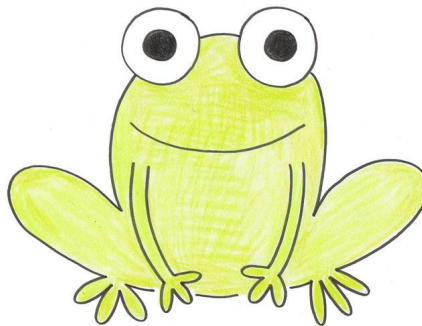


DeKalb County School System
LEAPs
Before/After School Programs

Family Handbook
2023-2024



Northside Elementary
Smithville Elementary

**The overall goal of Lottery for Education: Afterschool Programs (LEAPs) is to provide Tennessee students with academic and enrichment opportunities that reinforce and complement the regular academic program.*

Dear Families,

Welcome to the DeKalb County Schools LEAPs Before/After School Program! We are excited to have your child enrolled!

We believe that LEAPs plays an important role in helping students develop positive relationships between students and their teachers and peers outside of the regular school day. Participants also benefit from academic support and opportunities to engage in fun, enriching activities in a safe, supervised environment. Together, these opportunities help students develop positive attitudes about learning and school.

The LEAPs schedule includes time for homework and academic support, a healthy snack, physical activity, and socialization. Participants also have regular opportunities to engage in enrichment activities connected to science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics (STEAM). We believe these activities are important for developing curiosity, thinking, and fostering a love for learning.

Throughout the year, special activities are provided to participants through the local 4-H and Coordinated School Health department. Guest speakers and other community partners are also included in our programming.

Research indicates that consistent attendance is key to improving academics and behavior. Therefore, in order for participants to receive the greatest benefit from the LEAPs program, regular attendance is critical. We ask that students and parents make every effort to attend LEAPs on their scheduled days.

LEAPs funding is based on the number of students that participate in the program for a total of 90 hours over the course of the school year. If for some reason your child needs to withdraw, please check with the Site Coordinator to see how many hours your child needs to reach that 90 hour goal. As always, if you have any questions or concerns at any time throughout the school year, feel free to contact your child's teacher or the LEAPs Site Coordinator.

We are glad you have chosen to share your child with us this year!

Sincerely,

Your LEAPs After School Staff

Purpose:

The purpose of the LEAPs After School Program is twofold: to provide a safe space for students before and/or after school when they might not otherwise have adult supervision AND to support students academically, emotionally, physically, and socially in order to cultivate lifelong learners.

Philosophy:

Foundational to the purpose established for our LEAPs programs are the relationships and connections created during our before and after school programs. To that end, teachers are intentional about developing positive relationships with students and fostering positive peer relationships. Through these connections, we expect to see positive outcomes in academics, attendance, behavior, and the social-emotional well being of our participants.

Eligible Participants:

Site Coordinators work with Teachers and Administrators to identify at-risk students that meet the criteria for the LEAPs programs. Those at risk of failing or falling behind will be given priority. Other participant criteria include school, district, and state assessments, benchmark tests, socio-economic status, and teacher recommendations. Families may also request their children be considered for the program.

Site coordinators will establish a first and second priority list at each school. Services will not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Registration Forms Requirement Statement:

LEAPs is available at no charge to families. Sites operate under board approved policies and procedures in addition to State guidelines. Registration forms must be completed and on file for each participant of the LEAPs program.

Emergency and transportation information must be on file for each participant.

Each family will receive a handbook explaining the requirements of the program.

Transportation/Pick-Up Policy:

Transportation is parent pick-up. For the safety of all, participants must be signed out of the LEAPs program each day. This must be supervised by a LEAPs staff member or school employee.

Students will only be released to parents or authorized adults/family members listed on the registration form or in Skyward. Identification may be required for pick up.

Notify the Site Coordinator in writing if a person other than those authorized individuals will be picking up your student.

Students will not be released to anyone whose behavior may place them at immediate risk.

Students should be picked up on time. Notify the school office if you will be late.

Excessive late pick-ups will result in dismissal from the LEAPs program.

Attendance:

It is imperative that all students have regular attendance in order to receive the full benefit of the program. Students that miss 10 consecutive days without excused school absences will be dropped from the program. Students that consistently fail to attend with no explanation from parents/guardians will be dropped from the program.

Please notify the Teacher or Site Coordinator of any extenuating circumstances that would cause your child to miss.

Additionally, LEAPs funding is based on the number of students that participate in the program for a total of *90 hours* over the course of the school year. It is expected that students enrolled in the program attend for at least *90 hours*. If for some reason your child needs to withdraw, please check with the Site Coordinator to see how many hours your child needs to reach that 90 hour goal.

Students enrolled in the LEAPs program are required to stay on scheduled days unless they have a note from home.

Hours of Operation/Schedule:

LEAPs offers before and after school programming. Before school services begin 30 minutes prior to the official start time of school. The after school program runs for 2 ½ hours after school. Pick up times vary depending on the site and program your child attends. The pick up time for your child will be included in their acceptance letter.

Students are expected to be picked up on time. Consistent failure to pick up your child on time may result in dismissal from the program.

Holidays and School Closing:

If schools let out early due to severe weather, families will be notified and LEAPs will be canceled. Students will follow their early dismissal plan. Families will be notified of any changes to the LEAPs schedule through Skyward, Remind, and notes home.

A copy of the DeKalb County Schools calendar is available on the District website.

Discipline Policy:

The LEAPs program is an extension of the regular school day. Students are expected to follow established school-wide policies. Violations of school-wide policies could result in dismissal from the program. Our discipline policy works as follows:

1st behavior violation: Warning

2nd behavior violation: Notice home

3rd behavior violation: Dismissal from program

*Major violations are handled on a case by case basis and may result in automatic dismissal.

**It is never acceptable for a student to hit another student or adult.

Maintaining the safety and security of students and staff in the LEAPs program is critical to the success and continued operation of our program.

Safety:

There shall be a staff member present at all times who has current CPR and first aid training. A first aid kit is on the premises as well as first aid charts. Both sites maintain an Emergency Management plan, designed to protect students and staff in the event of disaster such as fire, tornado, earthquake, floods, etc.

Each site conducts regular safety drills per state requirements.

Nutritional Program:

Good nutrition and physical activity are important components of a healthy learning environment. Students will receive nutritious snacks according to guidelines of the Federal Child Nutrition Program provided by the DeKalb County School System Nutrition Department. Menus will be posted monthly.

Family Engagement:

Families are vital to a child's education and are encouraged to participate in parent meetings, read all program materials provided, and complete surveys. Opportunities for family engagement will be provided throughout the school year. Families will be notified of meeting dates and times through Skyward, Remind, and notes home.

We ask all families to follow security procedures to ensure the safety and protection of all. Families should keep the Site Coordinator informed of any changes in their child's emergency information or other factors concerning the welfare of their child.

Performance Goals:

Established by the TN Department of Education:

1. All students will reach high academic standards demonstrating growth in reading/language arts and mathematics.
2. All students will reach high academic standards demonstrating growth in all subjects.
3. The percentage of students who are chronically absent from school will decrease.
4. All students will exhibit positive behavior changes that support academic and social growth.
5. All students will continuously be engaged in their learning.
6. Family engagement will be embedded in the entirety of the program.
7. Early learners will reach high academic standards demonstrating growth in reading.