

Get on the smart track

# MELROSE EDUCATION STATIONS



## AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMING

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Welcome, and thank you for choosing to be a part of Education Stations, your neighborhood after school enrichment program. Profits from this program directly benefit your student's school and educational experience. The information in this handbook will help everyone know what to expect and allow more effective program operation. We look forward to serving Melrose students in a fun, safe and productive environment.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

The Melrose Education Stations provides balanced enrichment programming at the end of the school day. Each elementary school will house the Education Stations program in students' own elementary schools. Professional staff will engage students in a creative, motivating and cooperative atmosphere to further inquiry and development. Three scheduling options are available each day. Students may attend one to five days a week on a set schedule. Education Stations also offers enrichment programs during other non-school times including snow days, vacation days, professional development days, early release days and some holidays.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

- Enhance students' recreational, intellectual, social and physical skills through a variety of participatory enrichment choices in a supportive environment.
- Teach students how to be positive, responsible and contributing community members.
- Provide safe, reliable and caring supervision during non-school hours.

## **CHILDREN'S GROUPINGS:**

***Students are divided into age-appropriate groups each day during rotating stations. A maximum staff-to-student ratio of 1:12 is observed.*** While groupings vary each day based on enrollment schedules, students will always be with peers. Younger and older students participate separately in most activities, especially those involving interpersonal contact. Enrichment programming is provided at developmentally appropriate levels, with differentiated activities according to children's ages. Social, emotional and physical well-being of students are always top priority.

## **STAFF STANDARDS:**

Education Stations' staff is composed of MA certified teachers and supplemented with highly qualified paraprofessionals. Almost all staff works in the same elementary school that they will be leading after school enrichment programming in. Staff member responsibilities are outlined briefly in this handbook and reiterated thoroughly in a 1-day initial training prior to the start of school. Staff must be trained in CPR and First Aid before working with students. All staff cleared CORI background checks.

Staff is formally observed monthly and receives personalized feedback from the program coordinator. In addition, staff attends at least three trainings throughout the academic year to enhance job

performance and ensure they remain current with curriculum, policy and procedure. All staff signs a conduct statement, outlining expectations and required reporting of any suspected abuse or neglect. If staff fails to meet program standards despite coaching, or fails to follow policy and procedure they will be terminated.

Volunteers and mentor students/interns may be used as the year progresses to support existing staff. The people selected for these positions will be avidly seeking experience in an applied enrichment setting. A thorough selection process (targeted recruitment, two interviews, personal and professional reference checks, intent essay and CORI check) will be used to verify authentic interest in contributing to youth enrichment. Volunteers and mentor students/interns will not be relied upon to lead groups or replace staff. Rather, they will join with staff to augment student support and further reduce student-to-staff ratios. Volunteers and mentor students/interns will be 1) given daily supervision and feedback from the staff with whom they work; 2) be formally observed by the conductor or program coordinator at least monthly, and 3) be included in ongoing trainings.

### **SNACKS:**

Healthy snacks and drinks will be provided each day at 2:50 p.m. If parents prefer, students may bring their own peanut-free snacks instead of or in addition to those provided. The cost of snacks is included in tuition and not refundable if a student chooses not to eat the provided snack. Parents must be sure to note on the medical/health forms any food allergies or food restrictions that a student may have so appropriate arrangements can be made.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE:**

**Red Train:** Free Play (only) ~ 2:20 – 2:50

**Blue Train:** Free Play then Rotating Stations ~ 2:20 – 4:30

**Green Train:** Free Play, Rotating Stations, then Extended Day ~ 2:20 – 6:00

**Drop-in** basis only: No need to indicate set schedule days

Students are released directly from their teacher into the care of Education Stations' staff. Students are signed in and out, and times recorded. Attendance will be taken three times daily: upon check-in (2:20), at the beginning of rotating stations (2:50), and at the beginning of extended day (4:30). Parents will be notified immediately if students (not marked absent/signed out) are not present on a regularly scheduled day of attendance.

Students are on school grounds at all times, unless previous written permission has been granted for a special activity (i.e. field trips). Enrichment programming makes use of many school facilities including the library, art/music room, computer lab/cart, gym/multipurpose room, kitchen and playground.

After students are checked in, they enjoy a free play interval which is typically on the playground, weather permitting. By 2:50 all students on the red train need to be picked up, and at that time blue and green train students are brought inside to the cafeteria for a healthy snack provided. Choices for daily rotating stations are discussed, and students are grouped. Stations conclude at 4:20 and all students on the blue train must be picked up by 4:30. Extended day programming runs until 6:00, by which time all students need to be picked up.

## **SCHEDULING:**

In order to plan for appropriate staffing, quality activities, and to accommodate many families' schedules, students need to be pre-registered to attend on set days of the week. Parents may choose any combination of weekdays, but those weekdays must remain constant until a 30-day notice of change is provided. *For example, Sarah attends Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays each week. Tommy attends only Tuesdays. Matt and Kate come every day Monday through Friday. Each student maintains their own weekly schedule. **Space is guaranteed for students who are registered and pre-paid. Late registrations and drop-ins will be honored on a first come, space available basis.***

## **TUITION AND REGISTRATION:**

Student enrollment is for the entire 2009-2010 academic school year. Tuition is based on a 180 day school year, divided into 10 equal monthly payments. Tuition is due by the first day of each month, prior to attendance. ***For example, tuition for September is due by the last day of August. Reminders will be sent electronically; formal invoices will not be sent out. Students will not be permitted to attend after the 5th calendar day of the month if tuition is not paid.*** A non-refundable \$25 registration fee is due at the time of registration.

<b>Monthly Tuition Rates</b>	Monthly 1 day/week	Monthly 2 days/week	Monthly 3 days/week	Monthly 4 days/week	Monthly 5 days/week	<b>DAILY Ticket</b> (drop-in rates*)
Red Train (per student)	\$ 18.00	\$ 36.00	\$54.00	\$72.00	\$90.00	\$ 5.00/day
Blue Train (per student)	\$ 83.00	\$166.00	\$216.00	\$288.00	\$352.00	\$28.00/day
Green Train (1st child) (each additional child)	\$106.00 \$ 96.00	\$180.00 \$162.00	\$270.00 \$243.00	\$348.00 \$313.00	\$398.00 \$358.00	\$33.00/day

***\* Full payment for drop-in days is due by the end of the school week. Refer to "Early Release Days" and "Late Pick Up" information below.***

<b>Non-school Day Rates**</b>	
Snow day, school year vacations, professional development, holidays (per student)	\$60.00/day

***\*\* Pre-registration and pre-payment are required to guarantee placement in these programs. Drop-ins will be limited. Paperwork will be sent out via e-mail at appropriate intervals to prompt registration.***

Please make checks payable to "Melrose Public Schools" and reference "Education Stations" and your "child's name" on the memo line. **Send registration form and registration fee** to Melrose Public Schools, Attn: Education Stations, 360 Lynn Fells Parkway, Melrose, MA 02176

## **RETURNED CHECK AND LATE FEES:**

Parents will be charged \$25 for returned checks. If student tuition is not paid by the first day of the month, a late fee of \$25 will be assessed. ***Tuition and the returned check/late fee are both due within three business days. Students will be unable to attend programming after the 5th calendar day of the month unless tuition and fees are paid.***

## **REFUNDS:**

As tuition payment secures a placement for students and obligates staff, refunds for unused days cannot be given. Refunds of normal tuition payments will not be given for school closures, absent days or other missed days.

## **PICK-UP:**

Students may be picked up at any time during program hours. Parents of students on the blue line are asked to pick-up students from 4:20-4:30, if possible, to allow students to complete activity stations. Adults must park their car and sign out students. Staff reserves the right to ask for a license/ID to be presented. In order to deny release of a child to their parent, written legal documentation of any parental restrictions must be provided.

## **LATE PICK-UP:**

Parents may call to extend a student's stay on a regularly scheduled day, provided drop-in space is available. Each train line transfer costs \$15. For example, a student on the red line may stay until 4:30 p.m. for \$15 or until 6:00 p.m. for \$30. A student on the blue line may drop-in to the green line and stay until 6:00 p.m. for \$15. If students are not picked up by the end of their regularly scheduled time and remain present at the beginning of the next train color (2:50, 4:30), a drop-in fee of \$15 will be automatically assessed to cover each interval. This is a program policy, and site staff must charge parents when pick-up occurs even a few minutes late.

The program ends promptly at 6:00 p.m. If a student remains in staff care after that time, parents will be charged \$1.00 per minute until pick-up. Cash or check payment is due at the time of pick-up, payable at the time of pick-up. Please allow enough time for travel and plan for traffic and weather. Three late pick-ups within a calendar month may result in termination.

## **DROP-IN DAYS:**

Students who are already registered with the program will usually be able to attend on a day not regularly in their schedule on a drop-in basis. While the program is staffed to allow drop-in flexibility, space is not guaranteed. Drop-in days will be available if student-to-staff ratios can be maintained. Parents are highly encouraged to pre-establish a regular schedule to be sure desired days are available. Parents are to call their elementary site, at a phone number to be provided, and inquire if students will be able to stay on a day that is not regularly in their weekly schedule. Drop-in requests must be received by 12:00 p.m. for same day attendance. Parents are urged to call as soon as possible (even days in advance) to increase the chances their student can be accommodated. Drop-in rates vary, see above. ***Full payment for drop-in days is due by the end of the school week. Students will not be able to attend programming after a calendar week of non-payment.***

## **EARLY RELEASE DAYS:**

Programming runs until 6:00 p.m. on early release days. **Monthly tuition includes early release days if students are regularly scheduled to attend on the day of the week which an early release day occurs.** Parents are encouraged to pre-register for early release days and not anticipate that drop-in space will be available at the last minute. Daily drop-in rates for early release days (not falling on a student's regular attendance schedule) are as follows:

Red train	\$20	12:30 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Blue train	\$40	12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Green train	\$55	12:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

## **SNOW DAYS:**

On days when school is cancelled due to inclement winter weather, the Education Stations' program will be housed at the Lincoln School for all students beginning at 8:15 a.m. and concluding at 6:00 p.m. for an additional fee. Snow day attendance costs \$60/day per student. Parents should consider weather and traffic conditions as standard late fees apply on snow days as well. Students must be pre-registered and a deposit given to ensure a spot in the snow day program. Drop-in availability will be extremely limited and is not guaranteed. Enrollment information and registration form will be sent home in the fall, at which time families may secure a spot for their students.

When Melrose Public Schools are closed due to snow regularly scheduled after school services will not be available. The only program that is available to parents is the snow day program, and regularly scheduled train lines will not run. In order to attend programming on a snow day, students must be registered under the snow day option. ***In the event that the Governor declares a state of emergency, Education Stations programming will be cancelled and closed and snow day services will not be available.*** Parents will be notified as quickly as possible.

Refunds for the cancelled regularly scheduled after-school services will not be issued, as the school year will be extended to account for those days and services will be provided at that time.

If school is let out early due to inclement weather, there will be no programming available. Parents are to utilize established emergency contacts if they require assistance with pick-up on early release snow days.

## **HOLIDAYS, VACATION DAYS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS:**

Full day programming will be available during all school vacation days, all professional development days and some holidays. Programming will be available beginning at 8:15 a.m. and concluding at 6:00 p.m. Attendance costs \$60/day per student, and sibling rates do not apply. Pre-registration will be required 30-days in advance, and email reminders will be given. Education Stations may be consolidated into one building during holiday/vacation day/professional development day periods,

depending on enrollment patterns. Families will be notified where the program will take place well in advance. Education Stations' programs will be closed on the Friday prior to Labor Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Presidents' Day, Patriots' Day and Memorial Day.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Education Stations is designed to provide students with meaningful activity choices in a fun environment. Everyone has a part in making after school enrichment programming safe, interesting and enjoyable.

### **Coordinator Responsibilities:**

- ★ Structure and continually monitor program design and implementation.
- ★ Ensure quality programming is being carried out at each elementary site.
- ★ Provide meta-cognitive and resiliency skills training to all students through play-based activities.
- ★ Support staff through regular training, consultation and weekly on site visits at each school
- ★ Observe each staff member and provide individualized feedback on a monthly basis.
- ★ Follow up student, parent and staff concerns that have not been resolved at the building level.

### **Building Principal Responsibilities:**

- ★ Supervise student, staff and facility needs
- ★ Oversee staff scheduling
- ★ Address student, parent and staff concerns
- ★ Execute program policy

### **Daily Conductor (Lead Staff) Responsibilities:**

- ★ Maintain updated absence, attendance and group lists
- ★ Track students and pick-up times
- ★ Direct daily activities and supervise activity rotations
- ★ Carry out program policy
- ★ Respond to student and parent concerns

### **Teacher / Paraprofessional Responsibilities:**

- ★ Show respect and professionalism with students, parents and other team members at all times
- ★ Provide safe, positive and consistent interactions with students and manage behavior proactively
- ★ Be an active participant in the play and learning of students
- ★ Follow through on all program practices and policies (i.e. discipline, check-in/out, late fees)
- ★ Attend trainings, answer questionnaires and meet with coordinator monthly

### **Parent responsibilities:**

- ★ Read the entire handbook and contact the coordinator with any questions
- ★ Pay tuition, drop-ins and fees on time
- ★ Pick-up students on time

- ★ Follow program policies (i.e. behavior, pick-up) and work with staff in correcting any problems
- ★ Keep all information current (i.e. student health, contact numbers, days scheduled for attendance)
- ★ Fill out and return feedback questionnaires about every three months to help develop the program
- ★ Bring forward any concerns so staff may work with parents to improve the situation

### **Student responsibilities:**

- ★ Be safe, caring, respectful and responsible towards myself and others
- ★ Follow staff directions
- ★ Have fun and try new things
- ★ Stay with my group and ask before leaving
- ★ Tell a staff member if I feel hurt or unsafe in any way
- ★ Tell a staff member if I see other kids acting in an unkind or unsafe way
- ★ Answer questions so I can help the program get better and better

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY:**

Melrose Education Stations provides a positive and social learning environment where students feel safe both emotionally and physically. The following supports are in place to encourage positive behaviors.

- ★ Students review rules and consequences with parent(s) before attending and sign a contract
- ★ Daily, at the start of the program, rules/behavioral expectations are outlined and reviewed
- ★ Students are complimented by staff for demonstrating positive behaviors and social skills
- ★ Students are taught to self-reflect and assess their own behavior & choices at the end of each day
- ★ Students are encouraged to recognize others when good social & problem-solving skills are used
- ★ While support is always available, students are praised for working out issues independently
- ★ Students work together to demonstrate group cohesion/cooperation and are reinforced as a whole

Clear rules and expectations are communicated to students on a regular basis. All students are expected to abide by the rules, which are:

1. **Be safe** - use body in a controlled way to keep everyone protected
2. **Be caring** - say and do things that help others and encourage good feelings
3. **Be respectful** - follow directions, recognize everyone's rights, and be positive
4. **Be responsible** - do my personal best, think about my behavior, and be a good group member

### **Protocol:**

In order to protect the rights and dignity of all students, inappropriate behaviors will be addressed in a proactive and consistent manner. If a student violates a rule, the following protocol will be used. Students are allotted 3 chances each day, and every day starts anew. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, some or all steps may be skipped according to staff judgment. If steps are skipped, the incident will be documented and parents notified. All removals will be documented.

<b>“Warning”</b>	Student will be given a warning and redirected to perform a more appropriate behavior.
<b>“1<sup>st</sup> chance”</b>	Staff will talk with student privately, identify better choices and make a plan to correct the problem
<b>“Last chance”</b>	Student will have to leave the group to complete a check-in sheet, review (privately) responses with staff and agree on conditions of rejoining activities.
<b>“No more chances today”</b>	Student will have to complete a second check-in sheet and sit out the remaining time that day. Parents will be contacted, and a 1-3 day suspension will result.

Students may be immediately removed from programming (skipped to 3<sup>rd</sup> chance) for serious offenses including but not limited to:

- × Physically harming or endangering another person
- × Insubordination
- × Inappropriate language
- × Harassment, verbal abuse, intimidation or bullying
- × Abuse of school property

Parents will be contacted if their student is demonstrating behavioral difficulties. A joint home-school plan will be worked out to support the student going forward. The plan will be reviewed to assess effectiveness and/or take further steps. While the coordinator will work earnestly with parents to facilitate continued participation in the program, students may be removed from the program permanently for failure to follow the behavior policy or if their attendance causes others undue hardship.

Students may be immediately and permanently terminated from the program for serious offenses. Parent(s) will be contacted, and the student prepared for departure. Such serious offenses include but are not limited to:

- × Leaving the group or grounds without permission, intentionally going missing
- × Bringing drugs, alcohol or dangerous objects/weapons
- × Endangering his or her own safety or the safety of others in the program

## **STAFF CONDUCT:**

Staff model positive communication and behaviors. They are thoroughly trained in behavior management techniques and Education Stations’ behavioral policy. Staff respect and listen to students while setting appropriate limits and understanding personal situations that influence each student. Staff is to maintain confidentiality of students and their families. Staff is prohibited from using overtly negative or controlling forms of discipline including but not limited to:

- Physical punishment, spanking, or other corporal means
- Humiliation, intimidation, disparaging remarks/names or other forms of verbal abuse
- Neglect
- Depriving students of bodily necessities (access to snacks, drinks, and bathrooms)
- Disciplining a student for soiling or wetting themselves
- Using deceit or abusing their position of authority in any way

## **MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

If students have any special medical or dietary needs, please be sure appropriate documentation has been detailed on registration forms. Parents are responsible to alert the program coordinator in writing of any specific medical needs. All medications must be filed through the school with accompanying treatment/medication forms. No medication will be accepted or administered without going through these steps. Arrangements will then be made to administer medication on an as-needed basis.

## **EMERGENCIES:**

Emergency situations will be assessed and acted upon with the best interest of the student in mind. While staff is First Aide and CPR trained, in the event of a serious injury an ambulance will be called and the student transported to the nearest medical facility for treatment. The student's parents and pediatrician will immediately be notified.

## **SICKNESS:**

Students who have gone home sick will not be allowed back the same day for the after school enrichment program. Parents will be notified if their student is demonstrating mild discomfort (headache, lethargy). Students feeling slightly unwell will be provided quiet rest time if parents and conductor agree remaining on-site is appropriate. To support the safety and health of all students, parents will be contacted and asked to provide transportation home as soon as possible if their student has a temperature, a contagious disease or is vomiting. Parents are asked to notify the building nurse if their student has a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox) to allow staff and parents to be aware of any signs of illness.

## **ALLERGIES:**

Due to the growing number and severity of peanut allergies, *parents are asked to be sure all food their student brings from home is peanut-free.* Provided snacks will be peanut free as well. Certainly, students have allergies to a host of other foods and substances. If students have allergic conditions, clear and current information is essential. Be sure appropriate documentation has been noted on registration forms. Treatment/medication forms must be filed through the school and instructions provided. Students with known significant allergies will not be allowed to attend until appropriate medication forms are submitted and EpiPen/reaction medication provided. Staff will all be apprised of student allergies and take appropriate precautions. Feel free to contact the program coordinator at any time to ensure student needs are being met preventatively.

## **PROGRAM MONITORING:**

Students, parents, teachers and staff will be asked to report their perceptions and opinions of the program via questionnaires or other measures periodically throughout the year. This information will assist in program development and may help secure grant funding in the future, which may reduce

tuition costs. The program coordinator will be at each elementary school weekly to observe staff and provide training. The program coordinator will work with the building principals to monitor student to staff ratios on a daily basis and oversee the program in their building. Each site has a designated staff lead or “conductor” present until 6:00 p.m.

## **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:**

Education Stations welcomes community members to share areas of expertise or interest with students. Presentations are scheduled throughout each month to provide a range of topics and presenters. Consider sharing a personal hobby or passion with students on a weekly, monthly or one-time basis. Presentations are facilitated at each presenter’s convenience. Contact the program coordinator with any questions.

## **NEWSLETTERS, E-MAIL AND RELEASE:**

Parents and teachers will receive a monthly newsletter to keep them apprised of program happenings. Suggestions and feedback are welcomed. E-mail notifications will be sent regularly with relevant registration and program information. Student accomplishments are celebrated, and often photos may be taken. Please understand that students may be video recorded, tape recorded or photographed as a part of on-going activities or special occasions. Student images/voice may be recorded and released via newspapers and other public venues in accordance with parental permission on the media release forms.

## **SCHOOL-BASED POLICIES:**

After checking in with the lead conductor, students who have enrolled/signed-up for after school help and/or activities (Brownies, Global Child, et al.) will be able to attend the aforesaid activities and then check back in to the after school program to finish their train ride for the day.

After checking in with the lead conductor, students who have detention must serve the assigned detention prior to rejoining their after school program. Those students who have been suspended from school are ineligible to attend the after school program until the suspension period has been served.

## **WITHDRAWAL:**

Parents are required to give a 30-day written notice of their intent to withdraw a student from programming. Refunds will not be issued for unused days.

## **TERMINATION:**

Enrollment of a student may be terminated at any time if, in the judgment of program coordinator and/or the building principal, further participation in the program is not in the best interest of the student or the program. While the program coordinator and building principal will work with families

and students to navigate difficult situations within reason, the general safety and well-being of all students must be the prevailing consideration.

Students may be terminated or suspended for the following reasons including, but not limited to:

- Repeated failure by parents to pay tuition/fees on time or unpaid balances.
- Student's behavior and discipline issues affect the health, welfare or safety of themselves or others.
- Parent/guardian's maltreatment of staff.
- Continued late pick-ups.
- Lack of program policy support or follow through by parents/guardians (i.e. sickness).
- Inappropriateness of program to meet the needs of the student.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY AND DRESS:**

Students are responsible for all of their personal property. Parents are encouraged to label student belongings. Staff help students get organized but will not be responsible for lost/damaged property. Unclaimed items will be deposited in the lost and found. Students should not bring items of personal value such as toys, money, or electronics without previous permission from a staff member and parents. In cold weather, students without adequately warm clothing may not be permitted to go outside.

### **HOMEWORK AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT:**

In order to encourage students to complete their homework, they will be provided with a quiet area, time and access to help. Staff is intended to facilitate the homework process and support students in completing assignments.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

The Education Stations encourages involvement from parents, teachers, and students. Open and frequent communication will improve the program's ability to successfully serve the Melrose community. As always, please feel free to ask us any questions concerning the program or your child's participation in it.