

ARLINGTON ENRICHMENT COLLABORATIVE

AEC Parent Handbook

Updated 3.25.2011

Diana Weisner

2012

63 ACTON ST, ARLINGTON, MA



The Arlington Enrichment Collaborative
at the Ottoson Middle School
63 Acton Street
Arlington, MA 02476

www.arlingtonenrichment.org
781 643-4794 office
781 859-7951 AEC mobile
info@arlingtonenrichment.org

Statement of Purpose, Goals and Objectives

The Arlington Enrichment Collaborative (AEC) is a program that is dedicated to the need for kids to have a safe, fun and enriching place to be after school.

AEC is located in the Ottoson Middle School at 63 Acton Street, Arlington MA, 02476. AEC's phone # is 781-643-4794. Email is info@arlingtonenrichment.org. The AEC website is at www.arlingtonenrichment.org.

AEC exists primarily to serve youth ages 9-14 years old from primarily the Arlington community. AEC provides after school from the end of the school day until 6:30 PM five days per week, during the school year.

The AEC philosophy is that all students should have a safe place to come after school where they can socialize, learn, be engaged, and have fun. AEC strives to assist students to successfully transition from childhood to young adulthood. AEC encourages the innate curiosity of students and assists them in exploring new ideas and experiences as they enter this new stage of development. We believe that all students deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential in a community of peers.

Students who develop resiliency consistently have 3 key factors in their lives:

- An adult, other than a parent, they can count on and they know is rooting for them
- A peer they truly can rely on
- An area of competency in something they enjoy and know they are good at

Through our work with students at AEC we are committed to enabling each student to find all three of these factors in their lives.

AEC was launched in the summer of 2006 in response to a community request for such a program. Multiple community-wide meetings were held in the design and development process of the program, and the open door philosophy of our Program Director continues to encourage responsiveness to community needs. Additionally, we plan to survey our parents every year about the program and its offerings and attend many community meetings and forums to keep in touch with the needs of the community we are serving. AEC's affiliates and program providers include a diverse group of local schools, parent organizations, community groups, and other organizations focused on serving our local community, as well as state and national groups focused on serving our population.

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AEC does not discriminate on the basis of religion, creed, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, disability, cultural heritage, marital status, political beliefs, nation of origin, or any other category protected by stat, local or federal law or regulation.

Services Provided

AEC hours of Operation are 2:25 to 6:30 pm, Monday thru Friday during the academic school year only.

We offer additional coverage for partial school days so long as the school is open.

We do not offer coverage for Snow Days, School Vacation or Holidays.

In the event that school is cancelled early for the day AEC will not be open.

Registration Information

A student is registered with AEC initially through a pre-registration form and \$50 nonrefundable fee and a \$50 deposit. Pre-registration and Registration forms are available on the AEC website or as hard copy from the program.

Once forms have been processed AEC will contact the family to indicate if space is available. Students enrolled previously will be taken first and then new applicants based on number of days requested and the date their pre-registration was received. If a space is not available we will place student on a waiting list. Wait list placements will be also be made based on number of days requested and the date the pre-registration was received. Parents will be notified by email or phone regarding placement.

Once a student is placed with AEC parents must complete a full set of registration documents (available on the AEC website or by mail). Completed registration forms must be sent to AEC within 2 weeks of the start of the school year in which they wish their student to be registered.

Parents should send a note to school with their child on the first day of school (or first day of attendance to AEC) informing the school of the student's schedule. Parents should also follow up with the school regarding any future changes in the student's schedule with AEC.

Parents will be given a copy of the Parent Handbook and AEC staff are available

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to answer any questions or clarify any concerns.

AEC is a Not For Profit Corporation, incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a 501© (3) agency. AEC's board of directors is the top line of authority

The Arlington Enrichment Collaborative is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to serve 70 students per day, ages 9 – 14, and admits students in grades 5 – 8 to our program.

AEC Staff

The AEC staff has the following roles filled throughout the academic year:

Executive Director/Program Administrator is Diana Weisner
Site Coordinator: Eric Love
Asst Coordinator: Jeana Paolino

Also Employed:

Bookkeeper/Accountant
Group Leaders
Assistant Group Leaders

AEC also employs student interns and volunteers.

The AEC Board of Directors is directly involved and meets on a quarterly basis and is available to the AEC staff for support.

Parent Conferences

All AEC Program Staff are available for Parent Conferences upon request. Formal requests should be made through the Program Director or Site Coordinator. Less formal conversations happen on a regular basis at pick-up time and are an excellent way to get good information on what is happening with your student on a day-to-day basis.

Parent Input

Parental input is welcomed and encouraged in the development of AEC policies and programs. This input is gathered in multiple ways: first, weekly parent emails go out and often they request feedback regarding a specific aspect of the program or the policies of AEC. Secondly, each parent is given the opportunity

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to give input about his/her student and that student's needs, goals, and priorities in writing at least twice a year, giving us important information from which to develop policies and programs. Third, a parent survey is distributed occasionally to get parent feedback. Finally, the Program Director is available at any time to talk to a parent or group of parents who have input for us about any aspect of the program or its policies.

Parent Visits

AEC encourages visits by parents, planned or unannounced, at any time when the student of the parent is present to see how the program runs and what their student is doing while they are at AEC.

Procedures for Ongoing Parent Communication

Most parents will find it convenient to talk to staff members when they pick up their students, but the Program Manager is available by phone and email to have a conversation at almost any time.

Weekly parent emails are sent out to keep parents informed of any and all things they may need/want to know about AEC happenings.

AEC Bullying Policy

As per Massachusetts' mandate on bullying, if AEC becomes aware of an instance of bullying at program or within our community, we are required to report it to the school district.

Child Guidance Policy

The goal of AEC's child guidance policy is to maximize the growth and development of the young people in the program while maintaining the physical and emotional safety of each individual student and the group as a whole. AEC shall use all child guidance strategies in a consistent, reasonable and appropriate way, and with an understanding of the individual needs and development of each student.

AEC shall use child guidance techniques such as setting reasonable and positive expectations and using positive reinforcements for appropriate behavior, and offering choices and providing students the opportunity to appropriately verbalize their feelings, all of which encourage students to develop self-control through understanding.



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AEC specifically prohibits the following:

- . Spanking or other corporal punishment of any kind;
- . Subjecting students to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment;
- . Depriving students of meals or snacks as a method of behavior management;
- . Force feeding students;
- . As required by EEC Policy, we would not discipline a student for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, nor force a student to remain in soiled clothing or to remain on the toilet, or use any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

. As it is appropriate and can be made feasible, students shall be included in the process of setting up the specific rules of the program each year.

Referral Services

AEC maintains a current list of community resources for referral to health, mental health, and social service needs that families or students in our program might need to access. AEC staff is responsible for reporting social, mental health, educational, medical, dental, vision, hearing concerns or observations to the Program Director who will then work with the staff to document the observations that and make a referral should AEC staff feel assessment for such services would benefit the student or family Observations will be documented either through incident report forms or Individual Student Report Forms.

A current list of referral resources in the community for a child in need of services is kept in the AEC office and is located in a binder above the desktop computer labeled licensing documents.

The Program Director will then set a meeting with the parents of any student for whom a referral for the student or the family is recommended and shall provide to the parent a written statement to the parent including the reasons for recommending a referral for additional services, a brief summary of AEC's observations related to the referral recommendation, and any efforts the program may have made to accommodate the student's needs. AEC shall offer assistance to the parent's in following up on the referral and shall receive written consent before making any direct referral for services. AEC will keep a written record of any referrals, including of the parent conference results.



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Termination and Suspension Policy

AEC seeks to help all students maintain their enrollment in the program in a manner consistent with our behavioral management policies, which include maintaining an environment that is emotionally and physically safe for all students in the program. Thus, there are potentially times when it could be necessary to temporarily or permanently remove a student from the program for the protection of other students. The types of behaviors that might incur a suspension or termination from the AEC program are physical fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, throwing things at others or into a group, harassment of another student, staff member, or a student's family member, consistent refusal to follow staff direction, repeated breakage of the rules which is not responsive to other behavioral management strategies, or any action which causes immediate danger to other students. Suspension would typically last 1-3 days but longer suspensions may be necessary if a student's behavior does not improve after initial suspensions.

If AEC believes there is cause to suspend the parents will be called and student sent home. Parents will be notified of possibility of suspension. Staff will meet and document and discuss as a team (site manager, any staff involved in incident) to make a decision. The final decision regarding a suspension rests with the Executive Director who will notify the AEC Board.

Upon determination that a student is to be suspended or terminated from the program, the parent of the student will be called and informed of the situation and asked to come pick up his/her student. Written documentation of the reason for the suspension or termination will be provided to the parent, and the parent shall be informed of the availability of information and referral for other services. Anytime a student is to be terminated from the program, whether by parent choice or program initiation, the student shall be given space to prepare for the termination in an age-appropriate manner.

Any student who is suspended from the program will be expected to participate in a planning meeting and agree to an action plan in order to return to the program, and one component of this action plan may be following up on a referral recommendation AEC makes. Students may be required to receive outside services in order to maintain their enrollment if AEC determines that is necessary for the health and safety of all participants.

Snacks

Students are to bring a healthy and substantial snack with them to AEC each day they attend. AEC adheres to a strict no-nut policy so please be sure that there

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are no nuts in any of the products your student brings for snack. Suggestions for snack include whole pieces of fruit, crackers and cheese, yogurts, raisins, fruit & grain bars, pretzels, and other such items.

On the occasion that students are here at mealtime we request that you send a healthy nut free bag lunch for the meal. This would occur on an early release day when the cafeteria does not serve lunch.

AEC has a microwave so options in need of heating can be sent.

In the event the student has no snack, AEC has available a limited supply of juice and crackers.

Prevention of Abuse and Neglect

AEC will protect children from abuse and neglect while in the care and custody of our program.

All AEC staff is mandated reporters and will report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect. The report shall be made either to the Department of Families and Children pursuant to M.G.L c. 119, or to the licensee's program Administrator or designee. If a staff member feels there is cause to file a 51A and the Program Director does not, the staff member should file one on his/her own. The Program Director will immediately report any suspected abuse or neglect to DCF after filing a 51A report, or learning that a 51A report has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity.

AEC shall cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the program; providing consent for disclosure to EEC of information from, and allowing EEC to disclose information to, any person or agency that EEC may deem necessary to the prompt investigation of an allegation of abuse or neglect and the protection of students. Failure to cooperate may be grounds for a suspension, revocation, or failure to renew or reissue a license to operate.

Any staff member who is accused of abuse or neglect of a child will be immediately placed on an unpaid leave of absence until the investigation of DCF and EEC is complete, and will be entirely removed from any contact with students.

All staff will receive training about child abuse, child sexual abuse, and child neglect at the Fall Orientation & Training and at least once during the year, as well as in regular updates and reminders at staff meeting.

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Transportation Plan

AEC maintains a transportation plan form for each student enrolled in our program that identifies how they arrive at AEC (parent drop-off or walk from the school are the primary options) and how they are to leave the program (parent pick-up, pick up by authorized other adult, authorized unaccompanied walk). These transportation forms are maintained in the student files and are followed as the authorized ways for students to come and go from the AEC program.

Arrival Options are:

- Unsupervised walk from classroom: AEC is responsible for the child once they have signed into the program
- Parent Drop off: Parents may escort their child to AEC or drop off outside the school and child will walk to program. AEC is responsible for the child once they have signed into the program.
- Other Arranged Transportation: In rare cases students have arrived by Taxi or private bus Service. The cost for this is the responsibility of the parent. AEC is responsible for the child once they have signed into the program.
- Unsupervised walk from another school: On occasion AEC has had 5th graders from the elementary schools who will walk themselves to AEC. AEC can sometimes provide initial supervision of this walk until the child is accustomed to the route. This would be arranged in person by the parent with the Site Coordinator or Executive Director. This is not a service AEC can guarantee. AEC is responsible for the student once they have signed into the program.

Departure Options are:

- Pick-up In Person: Parent (or designated pick-up person) will come into AEC in person to sign out their child. The child must sign out from AEC and once signed out, AEC is no longer responsible for the supervision of the child. The individual picking up the child assumes responsibility from that point on.
- Pick-up outside: Parent (or designated pick-up person) may call into AEC to have child meet them outside the school. The child must sign out from AEC and once signed out, AEC is no longer responsible for the supervision of the child. The individual picking up the child assumes responsibility from that point on.
- Unsupervised Walk Home: Only children with a signed permission to walk home alone may depart AEC in this way. The child must sign out from



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AEC and once signed out, AEC is no longer responsible for the supervision of the child.

Sign In/Out & Attendance Verification

Parents are expected to notify AEC by 1pm (9am on ½ days) on days their child is absent.

Each afternoon, students are expected to arrive at AEC by 2:45p (on early dismissal days within 10 minutes of school dismissal) and to sign in to verify their presence.

No later than 3:00 a staff member will review the sign-in sheet and verify the attendance of all students who are expected at the program that day.

By 3:00 each afternoon (or by 15 minutes after school dismissal, within 5 minutes of students required arrival at the program, on an early release afternoon) a list of any students expected that day who have not arrived will have been created and a staff member will take the list to the AEC office and call parents/guardians (caretakers) of students who are expected and not in attendance. All numbers for parents/guardians will be tried until someone is reached, and in the case that a parent/guardian is not reached messages will be left with clear instructions for how to reach AEC with a return phone call to verify the whereabouts of the missing student. AEC staff will continue to call the parent or guardian on afternoons the student has not signed in and was expected.

Results of phone calls to parents/guardians of students not in attendance will be noted in the “notes” section of the sign-in/attendance sheet for the day, as well as those students marked clearly as “Absent” for the day when/if that is determined to be their status for the day.

This procedure will be followed every day and will be documented on the sign-in attendance sheet through. If no students are absent/unaccounted for on a given day, “All accounted for” will be noted by the Program Administrator or the Site Coordinator at the top of the attendance/sign-in sheet with their initials in order to indicate that no parent calls were necessary at 3:05 that day.

Any instance of a student being absent and unaccounted for or of any irregularity with the implementation of this process/policy shall be documented with an incident report.



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This policy will be reviewed with all new staff during staff orientation and training and will be reviewed periodically with all staff at staff meetings to remind all staff of the importance of following this procedure each and every day.

Students or parents/guardians need to sign their student out when they leave. If at the end of the day there are sign-outs unaccounted for the Site Coordinator will follow up with other staff and then the parent/guardian to account for the students departure.

Emergency Transportation

In case of an emergency medical situation, 911 would be called and a student would be transported to the hospital emergency room by ambulance, accompanied by a staff member with the student's emergency medical consent and emergency information.

In case of the need to evacuate the space, students would exit the building, meet on the upper field, and then when all are accounted for if AEC was unable to re-occupy the Ottoson Middle School we would relocate to the 1st Floor of the Arlington Heights Nursery School, 10 Acton Street, by walking as a group to that location (approx. ½ block away) where phone calls would be made to ask parents to pick up students as soon as possible. If for some reason AHNS was unavailable, our secondary evacuation site is Arlington High School, and we would arrive there either by walking down Acton Street, right on Quincy Street, and then walking along Massachusetts Avenue to the High School or by catching the MBTA bus 77 or 79 at the Mass Avenue and Appleton Street intersection and taking the bus to the High School in groups. Again, once we arrived we would call and notify parents and ask them to pick up students as soon as possible.

Field Trip Transportation

If AEC arranges any field trips transportation will be by Public Bus or Train. AEC staff is not authorized to transport students in the personal vehicles. End of trip pick offsite can be according to the regular program pick-up options

Emergency Health Care & Illness Exclusion Policy

AEC maintains a complete Health Care Policy that is available to any parent upon request

In case of serious illness or injury during the program, the staff member present should take care of the ill/injured student and should perform any necessary first aid; other staff should, when possible, move other students to another room or to



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a different area of the room they are located in and engage them in an activity to keep their focus off of the ill or injured student.

In case of Minor injury, the student will be treated on site at AEC and rejoin ongoing activities. Attending staff will be responsible for any incident reports and informing the responsible adult picking up at the end of day.

In the case of a severe injury or Head Injury, a parent will be called and informed immediately. Decision for seeking treatment will be decided upon with the parent or Guardian. If Parent or guardian cannot be reached, staff will continue to try and contact during the afternoon.

If the student needs emergency medical treatment, 911/Arlington Fire Department will be called for an ambulance to transport the student, and as soon as possible the student's parent(s) will be called as well. All phone numbers for the student's parent(s) will be called, with a calm message left at each one, until a parent or guardian is reached. In the case that a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the student's emergency contacts will be called and asked to meet the student at the hospital. A staff member will accompany the student in the ambulance with the student's emergency consent form and entire file with all emergency contact information. An illness/injury report will be completed immediately and faxed to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) within 3 days. Staff will also call and leave a message with AEC's EEC representative that day. If a child is hospitalized overnight or in the case of the death of a student EEC will be contacted immediately (anyone at EEC can take this information).

AEC shall conform to all regulations and recommendations set by the Division of Communicable Disease Control, Department of Public Health, including for the exclusion of students from the program due to serious illness, contagious diseases, and reportable diseases. AEC's procedures will include notification of all parents in accordance with DPH recommendations when any communicable disease, such as measles or salmonella, has been introduced into the program, and also for procedures for when children who have been excluded from the program for illness may return.

Procedures for Administration of Medication

AEC will only administer medication (prescription or non-prescription) to a student if in possession of a written authorization, on an AEC medication form, to administer said medication to the individual student.

Prescription Medication may only be administered with a written order from the



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physician, which may include the pharmacy label on the prescription, but it must include the student's name, number of times of day medication is to be administered, and number of days the medication is to be administered.

No medication shall be administered in conflict with its labeled directions unless a specific physician's order is present.

All medications will be kept in their original containers, and non-emergency medications will be kept in a locked storage box in the AEC office.

Emergency medications, such as Epi-Pens, may be kept in an unlocked but secured location for rapid accessibility.

A record of each dosage of medication administered will be kept showing the student's name, the medication and dosage administered, the date and time of administration, and the name of the staff member who administered the medication.

Students who have asthma may be permitted to carry their own inhalers and use them as needed, with written parental consent and authorization from the physician without the direct supervision of a staff member. The Program Director shall ensure that all staff is aware of individual students that have asthma and use their own inhalers on an as-needed basis.

Any medication left over at the end of the academic year will be returned to the parent or guardian upon the students completion of the program.

tuition for the 2011-2012 academic year	
Billing is every two months which equals one session. There are five AEC sessions per year.	
Option 1: Full Day (until 6:30)	Price*
Registration fee	\$50.00
Nonrefundable deposit	\$50.00
One-time insurance fee	\$60.00
Session fee	
One day per week	\$200.00
Two days per week	\$395.00
Three days per week	\$590.00
Four days per week	\$785.00
Five days per week	\$980.00
*(Full day tuition includes enrichment classes.)	
Option 2: Enrichment Only	Price
One-time registration and insurance fee	\$25.00
Session fee	
One enrichment class	\$95.00
LARP class	\$125.00
LARP Games	\$155.00
Need-based financial aid is available. Please call for more information.	

Fee Schedule

Billing

Billing is done on a session basis and can be paid with cash or check. Stop payment fees and returned check fees will be the responsibility of the payee at the rate that the bank charges. We will not accept personal checks once a check has been returned to AEC.

Payment is expected within one week of receipt of invoice. Invoices will be sent at the end of each month for the following month.



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Payment may be made in person or by mail. A charge of \$10.00 will be made every week payment is late beginning two weeks after the date of invoice.

Full year or half year payment options are available.

Program Calendar & Design

AEC's calendar consists of 5 sessions typically Sept. – Oct; November-December; January – February; February – April; April – June. Enrichment courses run for a session.

Student Release Authorization

AEC has several student release authorizations that parents/guardians can choose to sign. All forms can be found on the AEC website. They need to be printed and signed and turned in to AEC. They include:

- Walking home unaccompanied
- Walking to local businesses within a specified distance from the school

Withdrawal from Program & Change in Schedule

If your student needs to withdraw from the program, your financial responsibility is to pay for the currently enrolled session and any enrichment classes they were signed up for in the current session.

Changes to a student's schedule need to be communicated via a change request form. The form will be filled in and submitted to the program administrator, who will review and communicate the availability of the changes to the parent/guardian.