



# REACH FOR THE STARS PROGRAM

## 21st Century Community Learning Centers

### Parent and Student Handbook

#### A. Welcome

The staff of the Reach for the Stars Program is looking forward to a wonderful year. Our staff is dedicated to provide a safe, educational and fun environment for your student. We hope to work together with you to help your child have a successful school year.

**1. Reach for the Stars purpose is to provide**

- Homework help and academic and culturally enriched activities; and
- Opportunities for literacy and related educational development for families.

*RSP goals as measured by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center per our grant:*

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:</b>
<p><b>1)</b> To increase academic performance in core subject areas: math, reading/ language arts, science and social studies</p>	<p><b>1.1)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students (those attending 30 or more days) will meet or exceed GA Standardized Math (Elementary Schools)</p> <p><b>1.2)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students will meet or exceed GA Standardized Test- Math (Middle School)</p> <p><b>1.3)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students will meet or exceed GA Standardized Test- Reading/Language arts (Elementary and Middle Schools)</p> <p><b>1.4)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students will meet or exceed GA Standardized Test- Social Studies (Elementary and Middle Schools)</p> <p><b>1.5)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students will meet or exceed GA Standardized Test- Science (Elementary)</p> <p><b>1.6)</b> 70% of the program’s regularly participating students will meet or exceed GA Standardized Test- Science (Middle)</p>
<p><b>2)</b> To improve classroom behavior, homework completion, and to reduce inappropriate behavior by offering a broad array of services such as: youth development and social awareness</p>	<p><b>2.1)</b> 60% of regularly participating students will demonstrate improvement in classroom behavior and academic achievement (ie homework completion)</p> <p><b>2.2)</b> 70% of regularly participating students will demonstrate an improvement in the basic foundation areas such as emotional well-being, student engagement and improved social skills.</p>
<p><b>3)</b>To provide literacy and related educational development for students and parents/To enhance family involvement</p>	<p><b>3.1)</b> 50% of families of regularly participating students will attend at least two family involvement activities throughout the school year, as measured by sign in sheets.</p> <p><b>3.2)</b> 50% of families of regularly participating students will show an increased interest and involvement in student’s academics, as measured by surveys.</p>



## 2. Student Recruitment and Enrollment Guidelines:

- 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student
- Able to attend one of our sites: Barber Middle School, Baker Elementary or Acworth Elementary
- Students are referred based on free or reduced lunch, CRCT Scores (820 or less in any academic subject), social or enrichment needs, grades or school referral form
- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all Reach for the Stars program policies and procedures
- Be able to obtain parental/guardian permission and ongoing support for participation in the program
- Agree to a one-year commitment to the program
- Commit to spending a minimum of 12 hours a week in the program
- Be willing to communicate with the program staff as needed
- Complete screening procedure
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the program director and/or site specialists

### ***a. Students with Special Needs Policy***

It is the policy of the Reach for the Stars Program that the program director, site coordinators, teachers and administrators will follow the needs of the student to determine what activities are assigned to the student. The program is not a mandatory service that is provided for students. Therefore, at the discretion of the program director and administrators, students may not be eligible to attend the program if the special needs of a student can't be met to ensure quality and safety of the program

Also eligibility will be determined based on the following criteria:

- Preferences of the teacher, student and parent/guardian
- Special needs services recommendation and IEP implementation
- CRCT scores and report cards
- Behavior issues
- Life Experiences, social issues and/or academic issues
- Needs and Common interests
- Personality
- RSP staff member assign to student
- Logistics: best time to meet during the school week, transportation needs

### ***b. Private School Notification***

The Program Director will notify the administrators of each private school in the zoning area within the boundaries of the Reach for the Stars Program located at Baker, Acworth, and Barber. This notification letter will be mailed certified mail within 30 days of the start date of the program. Students who attend these private schools and meet 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC criteria will be offered



an opportunity to attend the Reach for the Stars Program. The private school administrators have 10 business days to notify the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC-RSP Program Director, if they are interested.

**Family Requirements:**

- Must attend at least three workshops per school year
- Complete Adult and Student Registration Forms
- Complete surveys upon request
- Support the student as according to the Adult and Student Registration forms
- Complete and adhere to the policies of the Cobb County School District and the Reach for the Stars Program and discuss student progress and activity information

**3. How 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Reach for the Stars Program is different from the student's school day:**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Reach for the Stars Program is different from the student's school day. Our program compliments what is taught during the school day. However, we are able to offer a variety of academic and enrichment activities. Our programs offer engaging and interactive projects and experiments. Our classes are set in small groups, usually a minimum of 12 students with one instructor and one assistant. Parents are always welcome to visit our classes.

**4. Communication with Day school Staff:**

21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Reach for the Stars Program supports and communicates with the school day staff to ensure students' success. Based on school staff input, email is the best form of communication. In addition, the Student Progress Reports/Updates will be copied to the teacher as needed.

**5. Program Duration:**

Each student will participate for 12 hours per week:

Elementary Schools operate Monday through Thursday 2:15-5:30

Middle School operates Monday through Thursday

Morning session: 7:00a.m.-9:00a.m. and Afternoon session: 4:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

**6. Schedules:**

The weekly schedules will be given to each student at the beginning of each session. Students will register for the classes they will like to take for each session. Certain classes can only be taken once throughout the program year. (ie: cooking) The Site Coordinator will assist the students in registering for classes.

**7. School Holidays, early release, and inclement weather procedures:**

The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC RSP will follow the CCSD hours of operation for school holidays, early release days and inclement weather. Please note the Cobb County School District announcements via email, text, website and WSBTV for school closings or delays. RSP will follow the Cobb County School District's calendar for holidays and early release.



## B. Student Health and Safety

### 1. Conduct of Conduct

- a. Behavior Policy: Students will follow the CCSD and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC RSP Policy and Procedures. Parents will be informed about areas of concern and successes on the Student Progress Report. Instances with bullying, fighting, profanity, etc. will be addressed on the Discipline Form. In addition, The Student Contract will be put in place based on the areas that need addressed.
- b. Behavior Procedure: Students who get three write-ups throughout the school year could face termination from RSP.
- c. Internet: Students have their day school password for the CCSD computers. The rules from the CCSD regarding internet safety will be **strictly enforced. Students must adhere to the policies of the Cobb County School District for internet and computer usage. Abuse of the internet, going to inappropriate websites, bullying online, going to websites not approved by the CCSD or RSP, and the like could result in termination from RSP and suspension from school as directed by the CCSD.**
- d. Dress Code: RSP follows the school's dress code. Tennis shoes are recommended for our activities.

### 2. Wellness

- a. Snacks are available daily and as well as access to water fountains throughout the school building. In addition, students are welcomed to bring a water bottle.
- b. Our program will provide several special events and activities that will discuss proper nutrition, physical activities, social issues, hygiene, bullying, and drug prevention programs.
- c. Parents must keep us informed about student's illness, medicine changes and any other health issues. Any medicine changes must be submitted in writing to the program director or site coordinator.

### 3. Transportation and Pick-Up Policy:

- a. RSP does not provide daily bus transportation. If transportation is needed for a particular activity, field trip permission forms will be completed. Transportation for these activities will be provided by approved staff.
- b. Parents must check out their child no later than 6:00 p.m. and sign out on the check- out list. Parents must ensure that the student registration form is up to date and include current pick-up contacts. Staff will check ID on anyone not known and confirm that this person is allowed to pick up your child. Registration forms are kept on file in the RSP office.



#### 4. **Emergency Procedures**

- a. All participating students will engage in fire drills, inclement weather drills and code red drills. A minimum of two drills will be conducted each school semester during the hours of the Reach for the Stars Program (2:30-6:00 p.m.) All RSP staff are trained on procedures and are given an emergency preparedness kit. In addition, our program will follow the closings and early dismissals of the Cobb County School District.

#### C. **Student Progress**

1. Goals: To ensure we meet our goals as well as our students' goals, the program director and site coordinators will monitor grades and teacher input so as to make the necessary changes in the student's schedule of activities to ensure academic success.
2. Homework: All students will be enrolled in homework assistance daily. Teachers will assist during homework to ensure that homework is successfully completed. For students who struggle in this area, the RSP staff will do their best to assist in this area by talking with the child's teacher and parent. **Parents are still required to review homework and agendas daily.** RSP, if able, will provide additional homework time to work on flashcards, worksheets, etc. Students will complete and sign-off on our homework log. It is the student's responsibility to get the homework daily and bring the worksheets, books, etc. that are needed to be successful in homework. RSP will provide paper, pencils, pens, glue, and project materials to assist with homework.
3. Student Progress Report: Parents and teachers will be updated about student's progress, behavior, areas of concern and other items that pertain to the student academic and social needs.
4. Grades and Test Scores: Parents of participating students will give permission to obtain grades, test scores, and teacher input by signing the registration form.
5. Evaluation: Parents, students and teachers will complete surveys to help us better serve our students. In addition, the Reach for the Stars Program will be evaluated by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center and an outside evaluator throughout the school year.

#### D. **Attendance Policy:**

##### 1. Transition from school day to RSP:

Participants of the Reach for the Stars Program will agree to attend 12 hours per week during the school year at the participant's designated site. After school dismissal, students will check in with the RSP staff. .

##### 2. Excessive Absences: Procedure:

To ensure students attend the program on a regular and consistent basis, the Site Coordinator will contact the student's day school teacher to discuss if there are any extenuating circumstances that have led to excessive absences. Depending on the circumstance, the Program Director or Site Coordinator will contact the parent to determine the cause of the absenteeism.



In addition, during parent and student orientations the Program Director will explain the importance of regular attendance, send parent letters home with students or email parents directly.

If a participant misses more than five consecutive days from the program, he/she must submit a doctor's excuse. After five days of consecutive unexcused absences, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The student will be made inactive in the Cayen A/Plus system
2. Excessive absences may lead to termination or suspension from the program and student will be placed on a waiting list.
3. Students may not receive their first choice of classes if their attendance is in jeopardy.

## **E. Parent Engagement**

Family Events: Parents/guardians will agree to attend a minimum of three (3) workshops or family activities throughout the school year. Parents will be notified via email, newsletters, the white board, website and flyers about special events and family nights. Our program will schedule events at least one time per month at one site.

Language Assistance: We have staff personnel who can assist families with translation and assistance with their child's academic and social needs. We have access to the Translation Department with the CCSD who will translate our documents from English to other languages as needed.

Parent Resources: Our program provides resources that are made available at the parent's request.

Parent Input: We would love to hear from you. We have an open door policy and welcome parents to visit our classes any time. If you would like tell us your concerns or suggestions in private, please feel free to speak with the Site Coordinator or Program Director. We also have a suggestion box at the check-out desk where parents and students can leave a note about concerns, likes, and suggestions.

Communication: The program director will inform parents at parent orientations, newsletters, and other events about our program funding, sustainability plan and program partnerships. In addition, program director will meet with the Advisory Council every 90 days to share program news. All stakeholders can view program evaluations, news, sustainability, and other program news and updates on the Reach for the Stars' website. Website:

[http://acworthelem.typepad.com/reach\\_for\\_the\\_stars\\_progr/](http://acworthelem.typepad.com/reach_for_the_stars_progr/)

## **F. Fiduciary Issues:**

**1. Reporting Fraud, Waste & Abuse:** The Reach for the Stars Program is in compliance of the CCSD policies and procedures for reporting fraud waste and abuse. Our objective is to provide 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC School employees and the general public a confidential means for reporting suspected



wrongdoing involving fraud, waste and abuse of school assets or resources. Reportable activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Neglect of duty – Noncompliance with applicable rules, laws and regulations; misuse or abuse of time during work hours.
- Misuse of Property – Negligence in the care and handling of property, unauthorized or inappropriate use of property or equipment, intentional abuse or destruction of property, theft of property, or of another employee's property.
- Falsification of Information – Falsification of personnel records, time records, or any other and employee record or report.

We define abuse, fraud and waste as:

- "Abuse" means the excessive or improper use of something, or the employment of something in a manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use; the intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment, or misuse of resources owned or operated by the locality; or extravagant or excessive use so as to abuse one's position or authority.
- "Fraud" means the intentional deception perpetrated by an individual or individuals, or an organization or organizations, either internal or external to local government that could result in a tangible or intangible benefit to themselves, others, or the locality or could cause detriment to others or the locality. Fraud includes a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, by false or misleading statements, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, which deceives and is intended to deceive.
- "Waste" means the intentional or unintentional, thoughtless or careless expenditure, consumption, mismanagement, use, or squandering of resources owned or operated by the locality to the detriment or potential detriment of the locality. Waste also includes incurring unnecessary costs because of inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.
- Fraud and Other Corrupt Illegal Conduct: This includes but is not limited to:
  1. Any crime defined in Title 16 in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.).
  2. Inappropriate conduct or the appearance of inappropriate conduct that does not rise to the level of criminal activity including but not limited to:
    - a. Conflict of Interest;
    - b. Omissions or the failure to provide information that could affect a financial decision or cause an undue loss or expense to the District;
- c. Other actions prohibited by the Code of Conduct for Educators.

## **2. How to report Fraud, Waste and Abuse Complaints**



- a. **Complaint Procedures regarding RSP/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC:** Please try to resolve complaints for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC with RSP or the school district before moving forward on a formal complaint. For complaints about 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC please call Karen Scarborough at 404-983-8183. To initiate a formal complaint, a person must submit in writing to the Cobb County School District at 460 Glover Street Marietta, GA 30066 or you may call Alice Broughton, Principal at Baker Elementary at 770-975-6629.
  
- b. You may contact the Cobb County School District during normal business hours at (770)426-3300 for guidance. The Cobb County School District (District) has a responsibility to uphold the public trust.

### 3. Notification:

#### 1. Procedures:

Internal Audit shall: Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function established to document financial integrity and to promote efficiency, effectiveness and economy in District operations. District employees are subject to the requirements of the Georgia Code of Conduct for Educators (Administrative Rule GBEA Staff Ethics). In addition to the professional requirements, the District sets forth the following actions which are prohibited and guidelines for reporting their occurrence or suspected occurrence

- a. Be notified of any occurrence or suspected occurrence of any of the above conduct:
  - b. Establish and publicize procedures for the reporting (including the ability to report anonymously) and investigating of any of the above conduct in the District.
2. Reprisals:  
No action shall be taken or threatened against any employee for reporting the occurrence or suspected occurrence of any of the above conduct unless the complaint was made with the knowledge the allegation was false.

- **In person or writing:** The Finance Department is located in the Cobb County Board Office at 514 Glover Street Marietta, GA 30066
- **By phone:** (770) 426-3300.

**4. Complaint Procedures regarding 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC:** Please try to resolve complaints for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC with RSP or the school district before moving forward on a formal complaint. For complaints about 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC please call Karen Scarborough at 404-983-8183. To initiate a formal complaint, a person must submit in writing to the Cobb County School District at 460 Glover Street Marietta, GA 30066 or you may call Shea Thomas, Principal at Baker Elementary at 770-975-6629.

Anyone suspecting fraud, waste, or abuse involving US ED funds or programs should call or write:  
LEA Administrator(s)

or

Georgia Department of Education  
Office of Legal Services





1852 Twin Tower East  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE Atlanta, GA 30334  
Telephone: (404) 232-1066  
Email: [sdrake@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:sdrake@doe.k12.ga.us)

or

Office of Inspector General's Hotline (choose the method of contact which best suits you):

Call the OIG Hotline's toll free number 1-800-MIS-USED. The Hotline's operating hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 am until 11:00 am, Eastern Time; Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm, Eastern Time except for holidays.

Complete and submit a Complaint Form (English, Española)

To ensure complete anonymity, download a hardcopy of the special complaint form, complete, and mail to:

Inspector General's Hotline  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-1500



## REACH FOR THE STARS PROGRAM

21st Century Community Learning Centers

### G. Signed Acknowledgement Page Parent/Guardian Agreement

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By allowing my son/daughter to participate in the Reach for the Stars Program, I agree to:

- Allow my child to participate in the Reach for the Stars Program and to be enrolled in activities that will benefit my child
- Complete and return student RSP registration forms, ASP form, interest form, and parent contract
- Provide any additional information or documentation that will be helpful in meeting the needs of my student
- Review homework and agendas daily
- Follow and encourage my child to follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the Cobb County School District and the Reach for the Stars 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program Handbook
- Attend a minimum of three (3) workshops, activities, or performances throughout the school year
- Agrees that more than three late pick-ups will result in suspension/termination from the program
- Support my child in this program by allowing him/her to attend a minimum of two days per school week.
- Attend a minimum of three workshops, activities or performances throughout the school year
- Inform the site coordinator and/or program director if my child is absent more than three consecutive days
- If my child is absent more than five days, I understand I must provide a doctor's excuse
- Inform the site coordinator and/or program director if I have any areas of concern
- Notify the site coordinator and/or program director if I have any changes in address, phone number and emergency contacts
- Provide the site coordinator and/or program director with any updated health information for my child

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



# REACH FOR THE STARS PROGRAM

21st Century Community Learning Centers

## Student Agreement

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By choosing to participate in the Reach for the Stars 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program, I agree to:

- Follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the Cobb County School District and the Reach for the Stars/21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program Handbook
- Have a positive attitude and be respectful
- Be on time for scheduled activities
- Inform instructors of homework needs and requirements
- Inform the program director and/or site coordinator of any difficulties or areas of concern that may arise

I agree to follow all the above stipulations of this program as well as any other conditions as instructed by the program director at this time or in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)