NOTE TO FAMILIES

Although we hope to return to our regular program as quickly as possible, modifications have been put in place this year due to the COVID pandemic. In this handbook you will see all changes added in **RED** to show the temporary changes that have been made to follow CDC guidelines relating to the health and safety of our staff and students.

PHILOSOPHY

The ASES program is designed around several key beliefs and principles. First and foremost, we believe that all children can reach high standards and that all children can profit from an expanded day program. We regard the health and safety of children as a major priority, and ASES provides a nurturing environment and a safe haven for children during critical non-school hours.

The purpose of our program is to expand learning beyond the school day and beyond classroom doors and walls. **The program is designed for students in grades K -8.** Our program compliments, supports and enhances daily classroom instruction. The program, while structured, provides staff and students with choices. Our program encourages creativity, imagination, and flexibility. Our program focuses on creating educational projects that make learning fun. Students participate in a balance of individual activities, small and large group activities, indoor and outdoor activities, and quiet as well as active play.

MISSION

The mission of the Wasco Union School District is to provide all students an education which promotes lifelong learning, an appreciation for diversity, and responsible citizenship. The **ASES** program will aid in this endeavor by providing quality after school activities for the students of Wasco.

**ASES** fosters the development of lifelong learners by integrating content areas through reading and literature; by providing lessons that accommodate multiple learning and teaching styles; and by supporting teaching and learning through the content areas. In support of this mission, **ASES** recognizes a child’s individual needs and attributes; understands the need for active involvement; promotes cultural sensitivity and awareness; encourages participation, cooperation, and creative expression, and strengthens academic skills.
**STUDENT COMPONENTS**

Currently the district is operating in a distant learning mode and is closed for in person instruction. Students in foster care or students that are homeless must be given priority access. As space allows, the EXL program needs to also serve other eligible students from the LEA area in addition to serving school-age children of critical infrastructure workers from outside of the LEA area.

**ASES** operates Monday through Friday from 7:45am-5:30pm, throughout the school year at the two district Learning Centers located at the middle school gymnasiums. ASES staff remain with the students throughout the entire program, which includes Breakfast, lunch, snacks, homework and/or tutoring assistance, enrichment activities linked to core academic curriculum, recreation, prevention/intervention activities, and clubs. ASES staff also helps students with distance learning in regards to technology and academic support during the morning hours of the program.

Student enrollment is based on the following priority criteria:

- District Essential Workers
- Homeless and/or Foster Families
- Students at risk for greatest learning loss
- Other critical infrastructure workers as space permits

Students will be enrolled in the ASES Program based on the above criteria until all vacancies are filled.

**HOMEWORK/RECREATION/ENRICHMENT/ACTIVITIES**

Students are provided with time to complete homework, participate in specific intervention in math and/or reading every day, physical education, and enrichment activities such as sports, drama, dance, and service learning.

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Special Events are designed to enhance the overall after school program. Events are designed to promote learning and/or self-esteem. Students will be included in planning these events when appropriate. Events may include:

- Gardening Projects
- Kite Making
- Parent Day
- Puppet Shows
- Story Telling
- Theme Weeks
- Field Trips
- STEM Competitions
- Track Meets

- Health Fair
- Festival
- Penny Carnival
- Scavenger Hunt
- Talent Show
- Walk-A-Thons
- K-9 Unit
- Nature Walks
- Library
Several adjustments have been to our attendance policy. At this time, space is very limited to allow for proper social distancing of students. Families were invited based on criteria outlined by the district. Students can participate in ASES from 7:45am-5:30pm. Students do not have to stay at the program the entire day. Parents are able to drop-off and pick-up students when they feel it best for their child.

ASES is NOT a drop-in program. Students are invited to participate; enrollment means attending five days per week for elementary students and a minimum of three days per week for Junior High students. Due to limited space, students with more than 3 absences may be removed from the program. The program will provide extended hours on minimum days, beginning the ASES program at the end of the school day.

Attendance will be taken each day by Activity Leaders. Attendance will be marked and turned in to the Site Supervisor. If a student is absent, the Site Supervisor will check to see if the student was in school during the school day. Immediate follow-up with parents/guardians will occur when students are not in attendance.

Students must be signed out of the program each day. At the end of the day, students will be signed out by either parent/guardian or their designee. Parents of Middle School Students have the option to sign a consent form to allow their student to sign themselves out of the program.

Funding for the ASES program is generated by attendance. It is critical that the students enrolled attend daily. The excessive absences or dismissal of students prior to the completion of a full program may result in the student being released from the program. Families with special situations need to discuss those situations with the ASES Coordinator prior to enrolling the student in the program. The Best Interest of the Child Early Release Policy is in place to meet the needs of individual students.

DISCIPLINE

It is our goal to be able to share something positive about your child with you each day that we have an opportunity for a conversation. However, some days we will need to share with you something about your child’s behavior that is inappropriate. Please support our after school program by providing input into ways to help your child.

We believe in discipline, not punishment. The difference, we believe, is that discipline is proactive and punishment is reactive. There is a difference between inappropriate behavior that is unacceptable because it is annoying, irresponsible, or disrespectful, and behavior that is unsafe and causes harm to others. Therefore, our discipline procedure is two-fold. If your student is causing harm to him/herself or others, he/she will be
immediately sent to the Site Supervisor. The Site Supervisor will determine the appropriate course of action which could include a telephone conversation with you, asking that you pick the child up immediately, suspending the child from the program for 1-5 days, and communicating the incident to the principal. If your student is being disruptive, irresponsible, or disrespectful, our discipline procedure is different. Following are the steps to that procedure:

1. Inappropriate behavior is discussed with the student and the student is told that continued behavior will result in a time out. Activity Leader restates the program’s expectation of behavior.
2. Should inappropriate behavior continue, the student is given a time out. Behavior is discussed. Activity Leader restates the program’s expectation of behavior. Should the behavior continue, the student is advised that the parent will be contacted.
3. Should the behavior continue, the Site Supervisor contacts the parent and advises the parent of what has gone on. Parent and student are both advised that should the behavior continue, the student will be sent to the school site principal.
4. Site Principal conferences with the student and issues appropriate consequences and informs the parents that additional misbehavior will result in the removal of the student from the ASES Program.
5. Follow up with the parent, advising them of the need for positive changes or the student’s removal from the program.

Participation in the ASES program is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to behave appropriately at all times. School rules are applicable at each site. Although every effort is made to accommodate the children, our program is not designed for all children. When challenges manifest after enrollment, and it is determined that the needs of the child cannot be accommodated by reasonable measures, we reserve the right to require the parents to withdraw the child from the program. Acceptance into the program is always conditional upon the child’s ability to function within the structure and staffing of the program. Parents are a critical partner in the ASES program, and your support is essential. If you have questions or concerns, you should begin by discussing them with the Activity Leader and the Site Supervisor. Working together, we can make a difference in the lives of the children and youth we share.

CONSENT
If you do not want your student photographed or to participate in surveys you must sign a do not consent form that can be obtained from the Site Supervisor or ASES Coordinator.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

- **September 7**  
  Labor Day
- **October 12**  
  Program closed, Teacher Professional Development
- **November 11**  
  Veteran’s Day, school closed
- **November 23-27**  
  Program closed, Thanksgiving Holiday
- **December 21 - Jan 1**  
  Program closed, Winter break
- **January 4**  
  Program closed, Teacher Professional Development
- **January 18**  
  Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance, school closed
- **February 8**  
  Abraham Lincoln’s birthday Observance, school closed
- **February 15**  
  Presidents’ Day Observance, school closed
- **March 29th-April 5th**  
  Program closed, Spring break
After School Education and Safety

ASES

Best Interest of the Child / Early Release Policy

The After School Program runs daily from the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m. everyday that school is in session. Students are expected to attend everyday for the entire program. Parents may start the signing out process at 5:45 p.m.

The Best Interest of the Child Early Release Policy is designed to meet the needs of the child or family by making necessary modifications or accommodations in the After School Program. Accommodations will be made for occasional routine doctor or dentist appointments. However, a doctors note may be required if a student has extensive absences. Other than the provisions made for routine appointments, parents must submit an attendance modification request if their student cannot attend the scheduled hours. These adjustments are made on an individual basis after reviewing the attendance modification request.

The request should include the following information:

Student’s Name
Parent’s Name
Date or range of dates which are to be considered for early release or absence
Reason for making the request
Parent Signature and Date

The ASES Coordinator will review the request and determine if the request shall be granted. Parents will be notified when the determination is made.
After School Education and Safety

ASES

Thomas Jefferson Middle School
Best Interest of the Child / Early Release Policy

The After School Program runs daily from the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m. everyday that school is in session. It is our hope that students will attend everyday for the entire program. However, Middle school students must attend a minimum of three days per week to retain an active status in the program.

The Best Interest of the Child Early Release Policy is designed to meet the needs of the child or family by making necessary modifications or accommodations in the After School Program. Accommodations will be made for occasional routine doctor or dentist appointments. However, a doctors note may be required if a student has extensive absences. Other than the provisions made for routine appointments, parents must submit an attendance modification request if their student cannot attend the scheduled hours. These adjustments are made on an individual basis after reviewing the attendance modification request.

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- Student’s Name
- Parent’s Name
- Date or range of dates which are to be considered for early release or absence
- Reason for making the request
- Parent Signature and Date

The ASES Coordinator will review the request and determine if the request shall be granted. Parents will be notified when the determination is made.

Student sign out process: We recommend that parents sign students out in person each day. However, parents that are unable to sign students out each day may sign a consent form to allow their student to sign themselves out of the program. Students that have parent permission to sign themselves out and leave campus will be excused at 5:15 PM allowing them to arrive home before dark. Please see the School Office or After School Leaders to obtain the student sign out permission slip.