

21ST Century Community Learning Center's
CREATING RURAL OPPORTUNITIES PARTNERSHIP
"CROP"
POLICY AND PROCEDURE
MANUAL



In Partnership with:

***Andes Central School ~ Charlotte Valley Central School ~ Gilboa-Conesville Central School
Hunter-Tannersville Central School ~ Jefferson Central School ~ Laurens Central School
Margaretville Central School ~ Milford Central School ~ Morris Central School
Roxbury Central School ~ South Kortright Central School ~ Stamford Central School
Windham-Ashland-Jewett Central School ~ Worcester Central School
Otsego Northern Catskills BOCES***

***Delaware and Otsego County Cornell Cooperative Extension ~ Girls on the Run CNY
Hawk Circle Wilderness Education ~ Roxbury Arts Group ~ Community Arts Network of Oneonta
Hanford Mills Museum ~ The Farmers' Museum and Fenimore Art Museum
Leatherstocking Education on Alcoholism/Addictions Foundation (LEAF)
Schoharie County Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (SCCASA)
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County (ADAC)***

Dear Staff Member,

Welcome to the CROP after- school Program! The Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership (CROP) is a 21st Century Community Learning Center program funded through the Every Student Succeeds Act (formerly No Child Left Behind). CROP serves 1,130 students in K-8th grades in 14 school districts.

CROP's vision is to achieve excellence in the after school program so that all students can learn, achieve and have the confidence to succeed in our ever changing world.

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the information included in this manual as well as the CROP Parent Handbook, and to represent the CROP Program in a positive and energetic manner.

Sincerely,
Liz Congdon Forster
CROP Program Manager

CROP Mission Statement

The mission of the Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership (CROP) program is to grow citizens who contribute positively to their communities.

CROP provides an after school and summer environment that promotes student achievement through academic support and enrichment, fosters social and emotional growth through youth development activities, and engages families through shared experience.

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CROP Policy and Procedure Guide

1. Recruitment Plan:

All families will have an opportunity to learn about the program.

- a. In late August information about applying to the CROP program is put on school websites and write-ups are placed in school newsletters (if possible).
- b. In September, a letter is sent home to parents with an application. The letter indicates

2. Student Enrollment and Attendance:

All students will have a completed and signed application and consent form on file in order to be enrolled in the program.

- a. A signed and completed application must be on file for each child enrolled in the program. Students must sign the Student Memo of Understanding on the application.
- b. Priority for acceptance of students into the program will be based on those who are eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, and those students deemed behaviorally or academically “at risk” as determined by referral or recommendation of school day teachers, Principal or school counselor.
- c. In order to determine Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility, families must complete the Free/Reduced Lunch application. School administration or cafeteria manager determines eligibility for F/R lunch.
- d. Each site has a designated number of funded slots; 50% of those slots must be reserved for middle school students (5th-8th graders).
- e. If all funded slots are filled, students who do not meet the priority categories above will be placed on a waiting list.
- f. Students are expected to attend CROP at least 3 days per week, unless it is determined that fewer days are required to meet a student’s behavioral or developmental needs. Students who are absent on a regular basis will be asked to either withdraw from the program or have their number of days reduced in order for the program to accommodate students on the waiting list.
- g. Students must attend a minimum of 45 program days (90 program hours) in order to be considered “regular attendees” as defined by NYSED. Program Manager and Site Coordinators will monitor program attendance to ensure compliance.
- h. All students must comply with the program rules of conduct (as outlined in the parent handbook).

3. Parent Orientation and Consent:

All parents who would like their child(ren) enrolled in the CROP After-School Program must attend an orientation session, must complete and sign the CROP Application and Consent Form.

- a. A group orientation will be given at each CROP school prior to the beginning of each program year for all CROP families.
- b. Parents who are unable to attend the group orientation will be offered an individual orientation before their child can start in the program.
- c. CROP staff may meet with the family in their home or on school property at the family's earliest convenience in order to orient them to the CROP Program.
- d. All parents or guardians, as well as the child attending the program, must sign the Application and Consent form prior to entering the program.

4. Sign in/out Procedure:

There will be a system for signing children in and out of the after-school program.

- a. All students will sign in or be signed into the CROP Program each day.
- b. Parents or guardians who pick up their child from the program will sign the child out.
- c. Proper identification of adults is required in order to remove the child from the program.
- d. ONLY those individuals listed in writing on the Pick up Form may remove a child from the program.
- e. Staff will have a written system for checking children out of the program who go home on the bus. This will be done each day.

5. Locating Children:

Children will be accounted for at all times during the after-school program.

- a. Site Coordinators must insure a 1:10 staff to student ratio (up to 1:15 for grades 5-8th) is maintained throughout the programming day.
- b. Children will sign in each day and choose their activities for the day.
- c. Children will not be allowed to leave an activity unless signed out by a parent, or given permission by the Activity Leader or Site Coordinator.
- d. The Site Coordinator is responsible for overall coordination of locating children throughout the program.
- e. Staff must check attendance when leaving and before returning to school premises to ensure all students in the group are accounted for at all times. (this includes bus field trips as well as walking field trips).
- f. Activity Leaders will take attendance for each activity whenever there is a change in venue or change in student participants.

6. Notification of pick-up and drop-off routines:

Advanced notification of changes in pick-up and drop-off routines for children must be given.

- a. Changes in child pick-up and drop-off routine must be given in writing by the parent/guardian prior to the change when possible. In the event that the change

in routine is due to an emergency, the parent/guardian must call the school and follow up in writing the next day the child is in programming.

- b. If the child is picked up or dropped off by someone other than the parent or guardian, identification should be checked by staff, and the individual must be listed on the child's Pick Up Form.
- c. In the case when staff may be unsure of the change, he/she will call the parent or guardian for confirmation.
- d. Each Site Coordinator will formalize emergency dismissal plans with parents in the event of a school closing or unscheduled early dismissal.

7. Confidentiality:

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

- a. Confidentiality of information about each child and family in the CROP Program is the responsibility of each CROP staff member and team.
- b. Information concerning the child or family in the program which is requested by persons or agencies outside the CROP school and/or program will only be shared with the written permission of the parent or guardian. Release forms must be signed by the parent or guardian before any information is released outside the CROP school.
- c. Staff members may share significant information about the child or family that they feel will have an impact on the child's progress in the CROP Program.
- d. All child/family information/records will be kept in a locked file cabinet. All electronically stored information/records will be password secured.

8. Equipment Inspection:

Inspection of equipment by a certified safety professional will be done on a regular basis.

- a. Site Coordinator will insure that equipment is inspected on a regular basis in coordination with school safety inspections.
- b. The Site Coordinator will keep written record of all safety inspections completed.

9. First Aid:

Staff will be trained in first-aid procedures and practices.

- a. Prior to the beginning of programming each year staff will receive basic first aid training.
- b. Each Site Coordinator will keep accurate records regarding staff who have been trained in basic first aid.
- c. A minimum of two staff per site will be First Aid and CPR certified.
- d. Site Coordinators must develop an afterschool emergency plan in collaboration with the Site Manager and/or building crisis management team.
- e. Each Site Coordinator must conduct two fire drills during CROP hours each year.

10. Child Abuse and Maltreatment:

Cases of suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment will be reported. CROP staff are mandated reporters.

- a. The CROP Program Director will arrange for staff training in child abuse and maltreatment prior to the beginning of programming. All Site Coordinators will receive training at the beginning of their employment and Site Coordinators will receive refreshers as needed.
- b. If any staff has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or maltreated he/she will report suspicions to the Site Coordinator-
- c. As mandated reporters, any staff member who has direct knowledge of possible child abuse or maltreatment **must** personally make the initial report to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR).
- d. The Site Coordinator must immediately notify the Site Manager or his/her designee that a report has been made.
- e. Schools should not notify parents when a report has been filed.
- f. Staff will cooperate fully with Child Protective Services after a report has been made.
- g. Staff will continue to work with the child and family in a professional manner and will not investigate the case in any way.

11. Academic Support:

There will be a referral procedure in place for children in need of academic support.

- a. Each CROP Site will designate a school staff member as the CROP academic liaison.
- b. The CROP academic liaison and Site Coordinator will develop a procedure for referring and assisting CROP children who are in need of homework help and other academic support.
- c. Teachers will be made aware of which children are in the program, and have an opportunity to refer them for homework help as needed.
- d. Homework club, tutoring and other academic support will be offered each day.
- e. A procedure will be developed by each CROP School to keep teachers informed regarding any support given.
- f. Site Coordinators should have access to student's IEP to keep aware of any special needs.

12. Accommodations for Students with Special Needs:

Students with special needs will be welcome and accepted into the CROP program.

- a. Because CROP staff are not typically informed of a student having a special need, students are assessed in the first months of the program.
- b. Special needs are determined based on student behavior and academic performance.
- c. If a child appears to struggle, the CROP Site Coordinator will schedule a meeting the student's parent/guardian and the school CSE Chair or school psychologist to discuss the best way the CROP program can serve the child.
- d. A plan is developed for the child and all CROP staff are updated.

13. Student Discipline:

Students will be treated in accordance with each CROP school's general rules of discipline.

- a. Every child is expected to learn and follow CROP Program rules, which are in accordance with each school's general rules of conduct.
- b. Staff will treat all students with respect, and will praise and encourage positive behavior whenever possible.
- c. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed with a verbal warning, private reprimands, and/or temporary removal from an activity.
- d. Chronic inappropriate behavior should be brought to the attention of the Site Coordinator who will follow procedure for parent conferences, suspension or release of a child from the program.
- e. Procedures for suspension and release of a child from the program:
 - First Offense – verbal warning to child and parent
 - Second Offense – Conference with Site Coordinator and parent
 - Third Offense – Suspension or release of child from program

14. Record Keeping:

Records will be kept at each CROP school regarding attendance, daily activities, focus groups, volunteer and community service hours.

- a. The Program Manager will develop forms to track daily attendance, activities, focus groups, volunteer and community service hours.
- b. Each CROP Site Coordinator will be responsible for keeping accurate records for the purpose of safety, data collection, program management and evaluation. This may include, but not be limited to, program attendance, enrollment, sharing school profiles and all relevant data available within the public domain. Test scores, grades, attendance, etc. will be provided with full protection of the rights of the students and within the regulations of the school system.
- c. The Site Coordinator will maintain daily attendance records for the life of the grant.
- d. Records will be submitted to the Program Manager on a monthly basis for review and compilation of data.

15. Time Sheets:

All staff will keep track of their hours of work each week.

- a. All site staff will keep a time sheet in accordance with CROP hours worked each week.
- b. Each Site Manager or Site Coordinator will collect and approve time sheets before submitting them to the school's business office for payment to workers.
- c. Site Coordinators will be responsible for making sure staff is working the correct amount of hours each week in accordance with schools' Memorandum of Agreement, and that time sheets are submitted in a timely manner.

16. Staff Development:

CROP Staff will engage in Staff Development training throughout the program year.

- a. All CROP staff will be given a copy of the Parent Handbook and this Policy & Procedure manual when hired. It is the individual's responsibility to read the handbook and become familiar with CROP philosophy.
- b. Mandatory all staff trainings will be held a minimum of twice a year. Staff will receive in-service training in such areas as:
 - Child and adolescent development
 - Recognizing the range of children's abilities
 - Developing multiple activities for a wide range of age and skill levels
 - Basic first aid
 - Safety and security procedures
 - Managing group dynamics and maintaining classroom/group control
 - Leadership and Communication skills
 - Aligning program activities to the school day

17. Materials and Supplies:

Each CROP School will have a material and supply budget each year.

- a. The Site Coordinator will be responsible for submitting supply requests to their school's business manager for approval and purchasing.
- b. Requests for materials should be given to the Site Coordinator by staff as soon as possible to ensure timely arrival of supplies.
- c. Copies of receipts or supply invoices will be attached to the quarterly invoices.

18. Dress Code and Behavior of Staff:

All CROP Staff will follow the general rules for dress at their individual schools.

- a. Staff is expected to act as role models in appearance and behavior during CROP hours, and to abide by the same dress code as expected of school staff at each CROP school.
- b. CROP Staff is not be permitted to wear/use headphones/ear buds during CROP hours.
- c. The use of cell phones to make or receive calls and/or to send or receive text messages is NOT permitted during CROP work hours.

19. Grievance Procedure:

Staff concerns will be dealt with in a fair, reasonable, and timely manner.

- a. Each employee should first advise the Site Coordinator of any concern, question or complaint regarding the CROP program.
- b. If the Site Coordinator is unable to handle the situation, or the employee feels he/she is being treated unfairly, the employee may then meet with the Site Manager to discuss concerns.
- c. Any formal grievance should be put in writing and a copy given to the Site Manager, Site Coordinator and CROP Program Manager for review and response.
- d. Final decision for action will be made by the Site Manager in consultation with the Program Manager.

20. Warnings and Dismissal of Employees: Staff failure to abide by CROP Policies and Procedures may result in a formal warning and/or dismissal from the CROP Program.

- a. When a staff member is in violation of CROP policies and procedures, the Site Coordinator will talk with him/her and develop a plan that will enable the staff member to correct the deficiency. This will be considered a verbal warning.
- b. If the deficiency is not corrected, the Site Coordinator, Staff member and Site Manager will meet to come up with an agreed upon plan of action. This will be considered a written warning.
- c. If the problem continues the Site Coordinator will discuss the issue with the Site Manager who will make the final decision to either terminate the staff member or secure another plan of action.
- d. Breach of confidentiality, inability or unwillingness to work with other staff members, disrespect to other staff members, volunteers, day school staff or students may result in immediate written warning and/or dismissal.
- e. Possession, use or distribution of any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia or alcohol will result in immediate dismissal.

21. Communication within the CROP program:

There will be a system in place for structuring and facilitating meaningful communication among school staff, CROP staff, parents and partners.

- a. Each Site Coordinator will attend the mandatory monthly Site Coordinators meeting.
- b. Each Site Coordinator will hold a monthly staff meeting with the staff at their site.
- c. CROP staff will encourage students and parents or guardians of a child in the CROP program to serve on the Advisory Council.
- d. All CROP staff will recruit and encourage enrollment of student participants in the CROP program.
- e. Each Site Coordinator will implement a system for communicating with parents such as newsletters, calendars, bulletin boards, etc.

22. Evaluation and Data Collection

The program will comply with all federal and state mandates in order to meet the required criteria for reporting information on a federal, state and local level.

- a. The Program Manager will implement a timeline of program activities.
- b. The evaluation team will meet at least twice per year to review program information, observations and data.
- c. A minimum of two site observations will be completed each program year at each site. A copy of the completed report will be submitted to the Program Manager, Site Manager (Principal or Superintendent) and Site Coordinator.
- d. Any deficits in programming will be addressed and corrected prior to the next site observation.

- e. Parents of students enrolled in the program will complete the application and consent form indicating whether they consent to the program having access to their child's records.
- f. Parents will sign the application and consent form giving or denying permission for their child (4th -8th graders only) to participate in student surveys, interviews and focus groups.
- g. Site Coordinators will collect student first and fourth quarter grades, demographic information, NYS 3rd -8th grade State ELA and Math levels at the end of the school year for those students for whom parent consent has been given, and record the data on the enrollment profiles.
- h. Site Coordinators will distribute teacher surveys to the designated school day teacher annually for each child who has a signed consent form. Completed teacher surveys will be collected and given to the CROP Program Manager.
- i. The Program Manager will compile all the required data in aggregate form and input the data into the PPICS system as part of the federally mandated Annual Progress Report. Individual students will not be identified.
- j. Only compiled aggregate data will be given to the program evaluator for the purpose of program outcome evaluation.
- k. Student Surveys will be conducted annually for 4th -8th grade students who have a signed consent form.
- l. Peer Tutor Surveys will be conducted annually for all Peer Tutors.
- m. Parent Surveys will be conducted annually.
- n. Student Focus groups and/or interviews will be conducted as determined by the evaluation team and only with students for whom parental consent has been secured.
- o. Staff evaluations will be conducted annually.