

Welcome to the Gus Bus



21st CCLC STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Tel. 540-568-5251

Welcome to the Gus Bus



21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC)

To better serve you and your family we have included detailed information in the following handbook about the Gus Bus 21st Century Community Learning Center serving Smithland and Waterman Elementary Schools. The below document outlines the objectives and elements of the program, behavior and attendance expectations, and several other policies and guidelines. Please review this information thoroughly and do not hesitate to contact the program with any additional questions or concerns.

Objectives

- # **1:** 74% of fourth and fifth grade students who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will pass or demonstrate growth on the Reading/Language Arts SOL assessment in Spring 2025; 78% in Spring 2026.
- # **2:** 74% of fourth and fifth grade students who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will pass or demonstrate growth on the Math SOL assessment by Spring 2025; 78% in Spring 2026.
- # **3:** 50% of adult family members of participants in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will attend at least two family engagement activities by Spring 2025; 55% by Summer 2026.
- # **4:** 65% of participants in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site who had a school-day attendance rate at or below 90% in the prior school year will demonstrate an improved attendance rate in the current school year by Spring 2025; 70% by Spring 2026.
- # **5:** 65% of participants in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site who have documented in-school suspensions in the prior school year will decrease in-school suspensions by Spring 2025; 70% by Spring 2026.
- # **6:** 65% of school-day teachers of participants in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will report an improvement or no improvement was needed in at least one of the 5 C's on the 21st CCLC Student Engagement Survey by Spring 2025; 70% by Spring 2026.
- # **7:** 55% of participants in kindergarten through third grades who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will perform on grade level or show improvement on the MAP Reading Fluency Test by Spring 2025; 60% by Spring 2026.
- # **8:** 42% of fifth grade students who attend for 60 or more hours at their program site will pass the Science SOL assessment in Spring 2025; 45% in Spring 2026.

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Learning Opportunities with The Gus Bus

Below are detailed summaries of each unique element of the Gus Bus program for the 2024-25 school year. Your child is encouraged to participate in learning opportunities that best fit your schedule. Participation in all activities is not required to register. Activities will begin September 15, 2025, and go through December 11, 2025. They will resume January 26, 2025 and end May 28, 2026.

Science Alliance: Through hands-on enrichment & emphasizing scientific language, Science Alliance will promote achievement in science, critical thinking & problem-solving skills. The Science Alliance sessions will take place: at WES Thursdays from 3:30-4:45pm (Grades 3-5); advanced registration is required for this club.

Also, each neighborhood is visited two times a week, according to the following schedule on page 4 and will partake in Science Alliance sessions on sessions one of the days.

LIT Lab: The LIT (Literacy, Inquiry & Technique) Lab sessions are hosted at our neighborhood stops and at the Gus Bus club at Waterman. Students read fiction & non-fiction texts, do creative writing, & engage in deep thinking. Instructors model fluency, make connections & build inquiry skills using interdisciplinary texts. Students hone their reading/writing skills using hands-on activities, challenges, movement-based games from research-based institutions. LIT Lab sessions will take place at WES on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:45pm (Grades 3-5); advanced registration is required for these clubs. (FALL ONLY)

Each neighborhood is visited two times a week, according to the following schedule on page 4 and will partake in LIT Lab sessions one of the days. (FALL ONLY)

Gus Bus Elevators (Homework help): Students will receive HW & core-subject assistance from CLC staff & JMU volunteers. Small group instruction and/or activities will be offered when HW has been completed or if students do not have HW, including independent reading, gamified sight-word or math facts activities, vocabulary building, and more.

Each neighborhood is visited two times a week, according to the following schedule on page 4 and will partake in Elevators sessions one or two of the days.

Radical Solvers: Students will practice math fluency, measurement, geometry, & probability skills with a focus on automaticity in math to promote success in math courses. The CLC will gamify concepts like time-telling and subtracting fractions & incorporates fluency, probability & statistics, to foster student engagement.

Sessions will take place at WES on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:45pm (Grades 3-5); advanced registration is required for these clubs.

Each neighborhood is visited two times a week, according to the following schedule on page 4 and will partake in Radical Solvers sessions on one of the days. (SPRING ONLY)

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Weekly Schedule

FALL: September 15-December 11, 2025

SPRING: January 26-May 28, 2026

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

	Science Alliance	LITLab-Fall Radical Solvers-Spring	LITLab-Fall Radical Solvers-Spring	Elevators
WES	Waterman Club 3:30-4:45pm		Waterman Club 3:30-4:45pm	
Bus Stops	901 N. Liberty St 5:00-6:00 Country Club Ct 6:00-7:00	1715 Country Club Rd 4:00-5:00 Madison Manor 5:00-6:00 Old Richmond Cir 6:00-7:00	901 N. Liberty St 5:00-6:00 Country Club Ct 6:00-7:00	1715 Country Club Rd 4:00-5:00 Madison Manor 5:00-6:00 Old Richmond Cir 6:00-7:00

*Students in grades Preschool-5th are welcome to attend Neighborhood Stops!

Family Engagement Workshops: We will host eight family engagement workshops throughout the year, each focused on topics that are important and relevant to families. These workshops will be designed specifically for adults, offering meaningful opportunities to learn, connect, and gain tools to support their children's learning and development.

Skyline Literacy's English & Digital Literacy Classes: Provides needs-based instruction for adults in Harrisonburg in English and citizenship, using trained volunteers. If your child is enrolled and actively attending Gus Bus learning opportunities, Skyline Literacy classes can be taken for free.

Virginia
21st Century
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Learning Centers



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Gus Bus Afterschool Club Program Attendance Policy

Students are expected to follow all school rules while participating in learning activities. Given the unique type of learning, additional expectations for the Gus Bus program are outlined here.

Attendance is a very important part of our programs.

In order for your child to be successful and gain enrichment, they must attend regularly. It is important that each child attend the program offering they are registered for and participate for the entirety of the program each day they attend. When students are absent, funding is reduced, increasing the possibility of the loss of the program. There is a waiting list for the Gus Bus afterschool program, therefore, frequent absences may result in your child's removal from the program.

Gus Bus staff will contact families once the child has missed two days of programming within a month. If a child has 4 UNEXCUSED absences within a month, they could be dismissed from the program.

- EXCUSED ABSENCES:
 - Illness of student (especially symptoms of COVID-19)
 - Serious illness or death of family member
 - Head lice or nits
 - Doctor or dental appointments
 - Legal matters
 - Religious holiday or training
 - Unforeseen emergencies (i.e. natural disasters)
 - Prior commitment that has been documented by parent

Gus Bus Behavior Expectations & Management Plan

The Gus Bus staff believes in a positive approach to managing student behavior and is committed to creating a safe learning environment for all. Gus Bus staff and participants will work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. If students are not meeting expectations, the teacher will remind the student and family of the expectation. If the student continues to have difficulty, the teacher will contact the student's family to discuss ways to support the student. Additional concerns may be reported to school administrators. Administrators, teachers, and families will meet to discuss the concerns and steps to ensure the student is successfully participating in lessons. The safety of staff and students in the program is our number one priority. If the student is not able to abide by the behavior expectations of the program the following consequences may occur:

- Ø First offense; incident will be discussed in depth with both student and parent
- Ø Second offense; student will be suspended from Gus Bus programming for 2 days
- Ø Third offense; student may be removed from the program for the remainder of the school year

Relevant unacceptable behavior may include: Hitting, pushing, spitting, throwing materials at another child, shoving, or any other violent acts. (See next page for more detail).

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Gus Bus Behavior Expectations & Management Plan

Gus Bus participants will follow these rules while participating:

1. Abide by all current safety protocols
2. Raise your hand to talk during reading time and take turns listening to others.
3. Share and use with care all Gus Bus books and supplies.
4. Treat everyone within Gus Bus with respect.
5. Help clean up all supplies before you leave.

These guidelines revolve around concerns for the safety of all children, for the educational quality of the program, and the physical space of the Gus Bus program and learning materials within.

Gus Bus staff will work with children to address unacceptable behavior. First, staff will remind the student of the rules and expectations when on the Gus Bus. If the behavior persists, the staff will try to help the child further understand the gravity of the behavior through discussion. The third attempt to address a persistent, unacceptable behavior will involve the staff re-directing the student to other activities or tasks. If the behavior persists and a fourth intervention is required, the staff will ask the child to exit the Gus Bus for the day, and invite them to visit again the next time the bus is in their neighborhood. If unacceptable behavior is repeated during the child's next visit to the Gus Bus, staff will contact a family member to discuss strategies for addressing the behavior.

In certain instances, an unacceptable behavior may be severe enough to warrant immediate removal from the Gus Bus for the day. If at afterschool, a parent/guardian will be called to pick up the students. Those behaviors are:

- Hitting, pushing, spitting, throwing materials at another child, shoving, or any other violent acts
- Vandalizing the Gus Bus, books, or learning materials
- The use of volatile language that is disruptive or directed at another student or Gus Bus staff

To ensure that all children are safe on the Gus Bus, we also ask that any children age 4 or younger, are accompanied by an older, responsible, and capable family member. A child on the Gus Bus who is 4 or younger, may be asked to leave if they are not monitored by an older family member, or if they are unable to safely participate in the learning activity.

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Gus Bus Program Arrival, Dismissal, and Snack Procedures

You will be required to complete the Registration Form for your child to participate at Waterman. If your child did not attend school that day, we will not expect to see them in the club. Your child will be provided with a "super" snack during the program and some recreation time.

Please complete the Transportation Agreement in the permission slip packet and refer to the program calendar for all dates when your child must be picked-up at the school by 4:45 p.m. **There is a late fee charge for late pick-ups.** After 4:55 p.m. there will be a \$10.00 charge for being 10 minutes late, and there will be an additional charge of \$10 for every 10 minutes after that. Gus Bus staff will only release your child to the responsible adults listed on the registration form. You will be required to sign your child out each day.

*In the event of an emergency, or if someone other than the guardians listed on the permission slip will be picking up your child, please list the names of any other adults or family members who are authorized to be contacted/ or to take them home on the Transportation Agreement page of the permission slip packet. We are very concerned about the safety of your child and will not allow anyone other than those people you list in the permission slip packet to pick up your child from the Gus Bus Afterschool Program.

Parent/Family Communication Procedures

Parents/guardians are welcomed and encouraged to reach out to program staff as regularly as needed to discuss your child's progress and participation in Gus Bus programming. Twice annually the Gus Bus staff will complete a progress report for regularly attending participants. Along with the progress report, your family will receive a program newsletter with updates. Event handouts, updated information, and additional program opportunities will be distributed to families as they occur throughout the year. Information for parents will be available in both English and Spanish. Additionally, updates are posted to the program's Facebook page and the program's website is maintained regularly.

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Gus Bus Security Plan

The Gus Bus Program abides by the school Crisis Management and Emergency Response plan. This plan has been shared with CLC staff and will be referred to in case of an emergency. If parents have questions regarding our security plan, please contact the Gus Bus.

This program is operating as a program exempt from licensure with basic health and safety requirements but has no direct oversight by the Department.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Gus Bus CLC is committed to taking the following steps to ensure equal access to and participation in the program for students, teachers and other program beneficiaries. The following steps will be implemented with the intent to reduce access barriers based on gender, race, national origin, color, disability, and age to maximize participation:

- Ensure accessibility of facilities and programs for all students, staff and other stakeholders by eliminating natural barriers for the enhancement of mobility and accessibility.
- Prioritize hiring & recruiting diverse program staff that are representative of program participants to plan, implement, and evaluate program services (follows JMU's equal opportunity policies: 1324, 1346, & 1340).
- Develop, acquire, and disseminate culturally relevant and sensitive books, curriculum and information materials.
- Post program information materials and schedules of events on the internet – to enable assistive computer devices to interpret the materials for users.
- Translate program materials and arrange for interpretation or assistive technology devices to translate conversations and/or materials for participants and their families in need of such services.
- Provide ongoing professional development and training for staff related to best practices in education. Required training at onboarding includes CPR/First Aid, Child Abuse & Neglect, Authorized Adult, JMU Everfi Harassment & Discrimination, and JMU's Kognito At-risk Mental Health trainings.
- Administer an annual survey to gather program input from stakeholders including, parents/caregivers, program staff, school-day teachers, school administrators and partners.
- Provide space on program registration materials for parents/caregivers to provide information about their student's additional or special needs for participation.
- When needed, consult school administrators, school-day teachers, behavioral support specialists and parents/caregivers to plan to address student needs during the program.
- Utilize JMU volunteers to enhance inclusionary practices in program settings and provide individual support to participants when available.
- Provide academic adjustments and modifications in curriculum and instruction.

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Gus Bus Emergency Contact Information

Emergency contact information for each program participant in the Gus Bus program is kept with the program staff at the site location. On the Gus Bus, emergency contact information can be accessed remotely on the Gus Bus site using a secure library data collection software. Emergency contact information includes:

Child's name & grade

Child's school

Parent's name

Parent's address

Parent's telephone number

Additional copies of emergency contact forms are kept in student files in a secure, locked cabinet in the Program Director's office.

Fire & Safety Drills are conducted twice yearly on the Gus Bus and during afterschool enrichment programming to ensure participants are prepared in case of an emergency and can safely respond to emergency situations.

Health and Medical Needs

Agreement found in after-school program permission slip packet:

- I agree that in case of an illness or injury, emergency medical care may be given to the child listed above, in the event I, or the person(s) designated above cannot be reached. I agree to pay for any medical expense that occurs.
- I will provide special information below to assist the Gus Bus Program staff in the care of my child and will update this as needed.
- In the event that I/we cannot be reached in an emergency, I hereby give my permission to the physician/hospital selected by the Gus Bus Program staff to secure proper medical treatment for my child.

* *Please note that Gus Bus Program staff will NOT administer medications to your child. If there are any medications that need to be administered to your child please administer them before the child comes to the program.**

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School Closings

Afterschool and neighborhood enrichment will NOT take place on regularly scheduled Harrisonburg City School (HCPS) closures, such as teacher workdays. Afterschool enrichment, neighborhood enrichment and in-school tutoring will NOT take place on HCPS & James Madison University holidays and inclement weather/snow days. Please see your program calendar for details.

Inclement Weather Policy

The Gus Bus will follow Harrisonburg City School's schedule and cancellation policy. If Harrisonburg City Schools closes schools due to inclement weather, Gus Bus Afterschool programs will be canceled as well.

Gus Bus Temperature Policy:

If temperatures are forecasted to drop below 25 degrees between the hours of 4:00-8:00 PM, the Gus Bus mobile literacy vehicles will not visit neighborhood stops. Neighborhood enrichment cancellations will also be posted on the program's social media pages.

Educational Data

In order to track and report to the Virginia Department of Education regarding the programs grant objectives, grade, SOL, and behavioral data will be confidentially collected from Harrisonburg City Public Schools, our partner for this grant.

Additionally, program staff will collect attendance data throughout the school year and summer program to monitor the frequency of your child's attendance. Attendance data is critical to understanding the success of the program.

Lastly, program specialists will administer student surveys during program hours in the Fall and Spring semester to gauge program satisfaction and effectiveness. Parent surveys will also be sent home at this time to gather parent input on the Gus Bus program.

Video/Picture Consent Release

On the Gus Bus registration form, you have been given a Release of Video/Picture Consent for promotional use.

Volunteers

In addition to regular program staff, employed by James Madison University (JMU), the Gus Bus works with JMU students who undergo training and background checks to become volunteers and tutors with the IIHHS-Gus Bus.

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Instructional Technology Policy

Originally Installed Software

- The software originally installed must remain on the tablet and it must be easily accessible at all times.
- From time to time the school may add software applications for use in a particular course. Periodic checks of tablets will be made to ensure that only appropriate software is installed on student's computers.

Virus Protection

- The tablet has virus protection software.
- This software will scan the hard drive for known viruses on boot up.
- The virus software will be periodically upgraded from the network.

Additional Software

- It is the responsibility of individual students to ensure that no additional software or files are installed on their tablets without the 21st CCLC program staff's permission.

- Any software installed, but not approved by the district will require a system re-image and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Inspection

- Students may be selected at random to provide their tablet for inspection.

Policies on Internet Use

General Guidelines

- Students will have access to all available forms of electronic media and communication that support the educational goals and objectives of the Gus Bus.
- Students are responsible for the ethical and educational use of the technology resources of the Gus Bus.
- Access to the Gus Bus technology resources is a privilege and not a right. Each employee, volunteer, and student will be required to take proper care of tablets.
- Transmission of any material that is in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following: confidential information, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, and computer viruses.
- Any attempt to alter data, the configuration of a tablet, or the files of another user, without the consent of the individual, or Gus Bus staff will be considered an act of vandalism and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the discipline procedures.

Privacy and Safety

- Do not access chat rooms or send chain letters without permission.
- Do not access, use, or change tablet files that do not belong to you.
- Do not reveal your full name, phone number, home address, social security number, credit card numbers, password, or passwords of other people.
- Remember that storage is not guaranteed to be private or confidential; the Gus Bus director may access anything on your tablet at any time.
- If you inadvertently access a web site that contains obscene, pornographic or otherwise offensive material, notify a teacher, principal, or Gus Bus director immediately so that such sites can be blocked from further access. This is not merely a request; it is a responsibility.

Legal Propriety

- Comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If you are unsure, ask a teacher or parent.
- Plagiarism is a violation of the Harrisonburg City Schools' disciplinary procedures. Give credit to all sources used, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all forms of media on the Internet, such as graphics, movies, music, and text.
- Use or possession of hacking software is strictly prohibited and violators will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Violation of applicable state or federal law, including the Virginia Penal Code, Computer Crimes, will result in criminal prosecution or disciplinary action by the District.