



428 North Street
Chardon, Ohio 44024
Main Line: 440-285-4052

2023-2024

TOPPER CARE PROGRAM POLICIES: ELEMENTARY (GRADES 1-3) STUDENTS

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Chardon Local Schools Elementary Topper Care Program. This program is being initiated under the guidance of the Chardon Local School Board. Our goal is to provide dependable and economical child care for working parents/guardians, a pleasant informal atmosphere where children feel safe and accepted, and a setting where positive attitudes are emphasized for children in grades 1 through 3.

Our program is a self-supporting one which means program fees are used to cover all costs for staff, arts and craft supplies, snacks, equipment, games, and toys. Keep in mind that each A.M. and P.M. Topper Care sessions must sell enough hours to meet the financial needs. The number of staff is based on the number of children registered and hours sold. It is with these expenses in mind that program fees are set.

Our program offers more flexibility than most in that it is available on an "as needed basis" to families whose children attend Chardon Local Schools. Although this flexibility does not always guarantee predictable revenue, we will continue to offer this flexible service as long as we are able to cover our program costs.

Topper Care offers a diverse array of activities. We provide recreational games and activities for individual and group play. There are crafts, table games, puzzles, and a homework table. The Topper Care staff strives to provide ample time, space and materials for play, access to a variety of playmates, and permission to play within the limits of safety and courtesy. Children choose freely among activities that they can do successfully and independently. Many opportunities for learning exist, free from the pressures of performance requirements. The atmosphere of the program is relaxed and informal geared to the needs of the children outside the classroom.

Thank you for using the Chardon Schools Elementary Topper Care Program. Please read the remainder of the information contained in this handbook to familiarize yourself with other aspects of our program.

Sincerely,

Lauri Zampino
Topper Care Director
lauri.zampino@chardonschools.org
440.286.0407
216.402.8106

Chardon Local Schools Topper Care Mission Statement

We will strive to provide an informal, economical, and safe environment both before and after school for all Elementary School students. We will strive to promote and encourage physical, mental and social development. We will stress positive values, encouraging students to have a positive and enthusiastic outlook towards one's peers, school and community. We will offer various activities to stimulate all ages present.

Our goals are:

1. To offer planned activities that are centered around interaction between students through organized game time, table games, and crafts.
2. To offer physical activity to exercise muscles and establish rules of fair play.
3. To offer a designated homework/quiet time for all students.
4. To provide a setting where positive attitudes are emphasized for children.
5. To provide dependable and economical child care for working parents/guardians.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GRADES 1-3) Topper Care AT A GLANCE

Chardon Topper Care Elementary program is being implemented to provide families an affordable and safe childcare option. **We will serve children in Grades 1 through 3.** Topper Care is held every day Chardon Local Schools are in session. There is no program when schools are closed for holidays, breaks, calamity days/snow days, or emergency remote learning days. Our staff is trained in first aid, CPR and various in-service training throughout the year. **Any questions about Topper Care enrollment should be directed to the Topper Care Director.**

In the 2023-24 School Year, the Topper Care Program for Elementary School Students will operate as follows:

Munson Elementary Students (Grades 1-3)

- o a.m. program at Munson Elementary
- o p.m. program at Munson Elementary

- **Park Elementary Students (Grades 1-3)**

- o a.m. program at Park Elementary
- o p.m. program at Chardon Early Learning Center (308 Maple Avenue - Chardon, OH 44024)
[Park Elementary students are bussed at the end of the school day to CELC for Topper Care]

Topper Care Enrollment Directions for your Student: Grades 1-3

1. **Topper Care Registration/Emergency Form: Please complete one form per child and mail (or drop off) the form to ATTN: Lauri Zampino, Topper Care Director - Chardon Local Schools Board of Education 428 North Street - Chardon, OH 44024. There is a minimum of 24 hrs of receiving registration before any student can begin the program.**
2. **Prepayment of \$90.00 (20 hrs.) for Each Enrolled Child: Make Checks Payable to Chardon BOE. Childcare time is charged out on the ½ hour and 1 hour increments.
\$4.50 per hour per child (*rates subject to change)
\$2.25 per ½ hour per child**

Payment is due with the Topper Care Registration. Topper Care is considered a dropoff service in that children may use the program on an “as needed” basis. A Reminder Payment Slip is issued when the child has five (5) hours left of Topper Care time.

3. **PM Topper Care Usage requires Two (2) Notes: (One for Topper Care and One for the Office) The two (2) notes will state the Daily PM schedule for your child’s Topper Care attendance.** Good communication between home, Topper Care, and the school office is very important. If an “Emergency” should arise, and your child is “NOT” scheduled for Topper Care, the secretary WILL accept phone calls by 3:00PM to send the child to Topper Care for that particular PM session. **Please do not rely on your child to communicate this information verbally to his/her teacher, Topper Care staff, or the school office.** It is YOUR “WRITTEN COMMUNICATION” that verifies your wishes and YOUR responsibility to notify the school office and Topper Care of all schedule changes.

Please set your watch to the digital clock on the Sign-In/Out table. Our clock is set by the office clock and is checked regularly. All program charges are based on ESST (Eastern Standard “School” Time). Our charges begin when your child enters our care. Minimum charge for any day is one half hour of Topper Care time.

The Following Times May Help You Estimate Your Daily Charges: TENTATIVE TIMES

<u>AM</u>	<u>PM</u>
6:30-7:00 = 3 hr.	3:30-4:00 = 1 (min. charge)
7:01-7:30 = 2.5 hr.	4:01-4:30 = 1 hr.
7:31-8:00 = 2 hr	4:31-5:00 = 1 1/2 hr.
8:01-8:30 = 1.5 hr.	5:01-5:30 = 2 hr.
8:31- 9:15 = 1 hr	5:31-6:00 = 2 1/2 hr.

Topper Care closes at 6:00 pm Sharp! (Sorry No Exceptions!) The Late Pickup Fee is \$10.00 (per child) for each 10 minutes after 6:00 pm. We suggest that you network with other Topper Care parents/guardians to work out an emergency pickup arrangement if you are in a “jam” or an emergency should arise.

Topper Care BEHAVIOR/GUIDANCE POLICY

Staff instructors will provide a positive environment for children; listening, clarifying and supporting choice making. Positive language and manners will be used to communicate and provide simple, consistent explanations. An environment structured to help children remember the expectations will be provided. Children will be recognized with praise for respecting everyone.

By defining our expectations and limits we hope to achieve our program goals of providing a safe, dependable, and enjoyable environment where children feel secure, accepted and free to grow to their full potential.

1. Every child is responsible for his/her own language, manners, and behavior as we are all affected by them.
 - a) Talk politely to everyone. Say “please, thank you, excuse me, you're welcome.”
 - b) Act responsibly in the building and on the playground. Follow school and playground rules.
 - c) Follow directions given by staff members.
 - d) No swearing/cursing or demonstrating any type of obscene gestures.
 - e) Play fairly and demonstrate good sportsmanship skills.
 - f) Follow all bathroom rules: use the bathroom, wash hands, and exit promptly.

2. Every child has the right to private property and the right not to be threatened by anyone. Children cannot harm others or themselves.
 - a) Leave people's things alone—“Hands Off”- (includes book bags, purses, personal items, food, etc.).
 - b) **At all times keep hands, feet, and all body parts to self. No horse playing of any kind!**
 - c) Cannot cause bodily harm to self or another person. **(Includes siblings)**
 - d) Be respectful of adult caregivers and other children.
 - e) Solve disputes verbally...not physically. (At all times keeping hands, feet and all body parts to self.)
 - f) NO bullying, teasing, name-calling, pushing, and absolutely NO Spitting/ NO Raspberries.
 - g) Keep a respectful distance from other students so as to not invade their “Personal-Space”.
 - h) Play fairly and demonstrate good sportsmanship skills.

3. Every child should help in keeping the building and grounds safe, clean, and attractive.
 - a) Use games and equipment as they are meant to be used. Do not throw objects of any kind.
 - b) Return all equipment to proper storage after use.
 - c) Put garbage in cans, and clean up your own area of paper scraps, etc.
 - d) Put coats and backpacks in designated areas.
 - e) NO toys/electronics from home (no cell phone/texting or communication devices) are permitted.

A child who is having problems playing within the guidelines of the program is removed from the group to a designated “time out” area until he/she is able to return and deal with the situation in an appropriate manner. The child is always within sight and hearing of the staff.

If unacceptable behavior continues, immediate consequences are established and a behavioral summary is issued. A behavioral summary acknowledges the unacceptable behavior and states the appropriate behavior for the Topper Care program. Parents/guardians are notified of recurrent problems.

If a child accumulates 2 or more behavioral summaries, a meeting between the parent/guardian, child and Topper Care staff will take place and a behavioral contract will be issued. Upon issuance of a behavioral contract, any violation of the contract will result in a 5-day suspension from the Topper Care program. Upon the child's return to the program, he or she will need to participate in the Topper Care program well within the program guidelines (stated above). If the child does not function within the guidelines of the behavior policy, the supervisor may request that the child be suspended from the program for the remainder of the school year.

Any behavior that threatens the physical well being of the child (self), children or staff will merit an immediate automatic suspension from the program for a period of 5 days. In order to return to the program, the child will need to re-enter on a **behavioral contract basis**. Upon issuance of a behavioral contract, any violation of the contract will result in an automatic suspension from the program for the remainder of the school year. *** A child who demonstrates any “**Extreme**” behavior threatening himself or a child/staff's well-being will receive an immediate **expulsion** from the Topper Care school program for the remainder of the school year.

Parent/Guardian and Child must sign the Behavioral Policy Guideline in the Registration packet.

FEE SCHEDULE

CHARGES:* (Subject to Change) **There is a 1 hour minimum for both A.M. and P.M. program.**

\$2.25 1/2 hour - Each child

\$4.50 One Hour - Each child

Time will be charged on the hour and one half hour time frame.

Late pickup fee: **Any time between 6:00 - 6:10 PM is \$10.00**, and \$10.00 for each additional quarter hour. Late fee is charged for each child in the family. Late fee is due the following day.

PAYMENT POLICY

Please read the following payment policy carefully

Prepayment for 20 hours (\$90.00) is due with the Topper Care registration.

Reminder slips will be issued prior to the completion of purchased hours. Topper Care will be terminated if the account has zero (0) hours of time used.

Fees are to be paid by the parent/guardian to the on-site Supervisor. Do NOT send payment in your child's backpack!

Make checks payable to "Chardon BOE". Record your child's name and write Topper Care on the MEMO line.

PAYMENT REFUNDS

Refunds in excess of \$10 will be given after withdrawal notification is received by the Topper Care staff. Balances of \$10 or more will be refunded at the end of each school year.

SELF SUPPORTED PROGRAM

Topper Care is a self-supporting program, which depends solely on program fees to cover all operational expenses. The program's payment policy and fees are set by the Board of Education and are subject to change. Failure to pay program fees will result in termination of childcare services. Parents/guardians should contact **Lauri Zampino, Topper Care Director, at 216.402.8106 or 440.286.0407** to discuss payment problems.

END OF YEAR STATEMENTS

***Please remember that Topper Care does “NOT” provide end of year statements. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping records of any Topper Care payments/receipts.**

TAX INFORMATION--Topper Care PAYMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE TAX CREDITS

Topper Care payment fees are eligible as tax credits. When filling out the Federal Income Tax Form please note:

**THE PROVIDER EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):
#34-6000583**

**PROVIDER ADDRESS
Chardon Local Board of Education
428 North Street
Chardon, Ohio 44024**

LOCATION AND HOURS

We offer both AM/PM Topper Care Elementary School (Grades 1-3) services during the 2023-24 school year.

- Morning hours for both Munson and Park Elementary students are between 6:30 AM and 9:15AM.
- Afternoon hours for both Munson and Park Elementary students are between 3:30PM and 6:00PM.
- For Munson students, AM dropoff and PM pickup occurs in the school’s cafeteria/gymnasium.
- For Park students, AM dropoff occurs in the school’s auditorium [westmost Park building].
- For Park students, **PM** pickup occurs in the Chardon Early Learning Center (308 Maple Avenue) gymnasium.

DAYS OF OPERATION/SCHOOL CLOSING

Topper Care operates every day the Chardon Local Schools are in session. There is **no program when schools close for holidays, breaks, snow/calamity days, and emergency remote learning days**. Topper Care will operate in the event of an early dismissal.

SCHOOL YEAR TOPPER CARE ENROLLMENT

Enrollment is open to any child who attends Chardon Local Schools grades 1-3. Enrollment is limited to ensure a reasonable and safe group size.

Enrollment is open throughout the school year and participation is on an “as needed basis”. However, if a child has not attended Topper Care for a three (3) week period and we have not received any communication from the parent/guardian, we cannot guarantee a space will be available. The Attendance section explains the importance of good communication between parents/guardians, the school office, and our staff in such a flexible program as ours.

A registration form must be completed before a child attends Topper Care. After all paperwork is completed, the parent/guardian must let the school office and Topper Care know the child’s attendance directives by ALWAYS writing TWO (2) Notes---One for the school office, and One for the Topper Care Staff. A Pre-Payment of Twenty (20) hours (\$90.00) is due with the registration. Checks should be made payable to Chardon BOE and record the child’s name and write Topper Care on the MEMO line.

REGISTRATION/EMERGENCY FORMS

Topper Care Registration/Emergency Forms are available online. In order for a child to attend the Topper Care Program, a Parent/Guardian must complete and Sign the Topper Care Emergency/Registration Form, and then mail (or drop off) the form to ATTN: Lauri Zampino, Topper Care Director Chardon Local Schools Board of Education 428 North Street - Chardon, OH 44024. If the child is attending the PM Session of Topper Care, the Parent/Guardian is also responsible to communicate the child's attendance directive in the form of TWO (2) notes—One for the school office, and One for the Topper Care Staff. (Note Forms are available in the Registration Packets).

****Please accurately and carefully complete the areas that pertain to any medical (allergies, bee stings, food, asthma), or child custodial alerts. **Topper Care does not have access to any school records (medical, court documents, etc.).****

ATTENDANCE

Good communication between the parent/guardian and Topper Care staff is essential for the safety of your children. The **PM** attendance directive of your child should always be in the form of **Two (2) notes--One for the school office and One for Topper Care Staff.** Parents/guardians may personally write "Two" notes or use the convenient **Topper Care PM Attendance Note Form** found in the back of the Topper Care Registration Packet. Topper Care Staff cannot accept phone calls or any requests to cancel a PM attendance note. **We will accept phone calls for emergency purposes to "SEND" the child to Topper Care.** Keep in mind that the elementary school secretary is not Topper Care a secretary. Failure to communicate properly in the form of two notes forces our staff to take time away from the children in attendance while they call you or the emergency numbers listed on your child's registration form. We are sure that since you are as concerned about your child's safety as we are, you can understand how important it is for each child to be accounted for each and every day. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep the school office and Topper Care informed of his or her child's Topper Care schedule.

**** All Notification must be received BEFORE the start of PM Topper Care.****

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND RELEASE

Parents/guardians must enter the building and Sign-In their child in the morning and Sign-Out in the afternoon. Parents/guardians may designate another responsible adult to pick up the child if previous authorization has been supplied to the Topper Care Supervisor. The Supervisor will require positive identification (ID card with Photo) before releasing a child to any person designated on the Registration/Emergency form. **NO** child will be released without proper picture identification (Picture I.D.). Parents/guardians who have a custodial situation or a restraining order in effect (which restricts a particular family member from contact with a child) must supply Topper Care with copies of the complete court document.

CHILD CUSTODIAL/COURT ISSUES

Parents/guardians who have a custody situation or a restraining order in effect (which restricts a particular family member from contact with a child) **must supply Topper Care with copies of the complete court document.**

****Topper Care does not have access to school records, therefore all communication/court documents/etc. must be personally provided by the parent/guardian to Topper Care Staff.****

ACCIDENT/ILLNESS

The following procedure will be followed if your child is injured at Topper Care:

- Call 911 (if necessary),
- Call the parent/guardian or person listed on the registration form.
- Ensure the child is as comfortable as possible until medical help and/or the parent/guardian arrives.

Should a child feel ill during Topper Care, the child will be moved to a safe place to rest away from the other children until the parent/guardian arrives. **Parents/Guardians or designated persons from the Registration/Emergency form are required to pick up the injured/ill child within 60 minutes.**

BREAKFAST

The morning Topper Care students may purchase breakfast from the cafeteria or bring their own. **(NO Microwavable Items— Breakfast/Cleanup should be completed by 9:00 am.). Breakfast is not included in the hourly cost of Topper Care.**

FOOD/SNACKS

The afternoon Topper Care session provides a light snack for **children staying after 4:00 pm**. The snack cost is included in the Topper Care Fee. Snacks such as applesauce, cereal, pudding, cookies, pretzels, popcorn, or chips are served. Children with special dietary needs should pack a snack for Topper Care. **Please immediately alert Topper Care Staff members if your child has special dietary needs.**

HOMEWORK

A homework table is always available at Topper Care both AM/PM. **It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to communicate their homework directives to their children.** Staff will encourage children to do homework, but because of staff responsibility, it is not possible to monitor the children's homework progress. A designated ½ hour homework/quiet time will be allotted during the PM Program. Please be sure your child has the necessary supplies for homework assignments.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Children will play outdoors as much as possible. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather (coat, hat, gloves and boots). Your child is welcome to change into play clothes. However, since storage space is very limited, we are unable to keep a change of clothes at Topper Care.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of an Evacuation Emergency, Grades 1-3 Topper Care children will be transported from their Topper Care site to Chardon Middle School (424 North Street - Chardon, OH 44024).

Participation of Children with Special Needs in Extended Child Care Programs

The Chardon Local Schools Topper Care Program provides childcare in a group setting. The Program will make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs. For parents/guardians who wish to enroll their children and believe that reasonable accommodation will be necessary for their child's participation, the parents/guardians should contact the Director so that this policy may be followed and the child's participation in the Program is not delayed. Enrollment of children who require intense supervision, or one-on-one care may be denied if such supervision would result in a fundamental alteration of the nature of the services provided or create an undue hardship on the Program.

When Additional Services are Required

If the child enrolls, but the Program staff or the child's parents/guardians observe that the child's behavior or physical needs put him/her at risk of physical injury to self or others, the child exhibits signs of extreme emotional stress, or that the child's physical/emotional needs cannot be accommodated within the Program without substantial modifications, the Topper Care Director will immediately meet with the child's parents/guardians to discuss whether further modifications are possible within the stated mission and goals of the Program. If the child's enrollment continues, the staff and parent/guardian will establish a plan for periodic review of the effectiveness of the Program modifications and staff will keep the parent/guardian advised of the program.

When the Program Cannot Accommodate A Special Needs Child

If reasonable accommodation is not feasible and/or modifications would require a fundamental alteration of the Program, and the staff, including the Topper Care Director agree that, in their best professional judgment it is not in the best interests of the child or the Program to continue providing services for that child, the parents/guardians will be notified of the child's withdrawal from the Program and the reasons for withdrawal. Withdrawal will be effective within seven (7) calendar days of the date the Topper Care Director informs the parent/guardian that the Program cannot accommodate the child.

Thank you for reading your Parent/Guardian Handbook. Please address any questions you may have to your Topper Care Onsite Supervisor. You may also contact Lauri Zampino, Topper Care Director, at 440.286.0407 or 216.402.8106 or via email at lauri.zampino@chardonschools.org. Your input and questions are always welcome.