



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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**Bilingual Learning Center (BLC) - PO Box 19034 - Minneapolis, MN 55419**

**[info@blcenter.org](mailto:info@blcenter.org) - (612) 249-3633**

**Visit our website: <http://blcenter.org/>**

## **Mission and Vision**

Bilingual Learning Center (BLC) is a nonprofit organization before and after school program that is uniquely designed to meet the needs of all students and parents, serving all students in PreK through 5th grade.

Our mission is to foster a welcoming, multicultural, nurturing and fun environment, promoting a love for languages, cultural experiences, successful academics and leadership opportunities for our students.

BLC's core values are a welcoming environment, equity, responsibility and caring. Our programs goals are to decrease the achievement gap within a dual language immersion setting, support the exploration of interests and the development of skills and creativity, and support the needs of working families and bring awareness and recognition to their many different cultural backgrounds and traditions.

Thank you for all your support; BLC would not be possible without our amazing community. We look forward to another great year full of learning and fun!

## **Key Dates**

BLC follows the Minneapolis Public School District calendar. Therefore, if MPS does not have school, BLC is also closed unless we announce otherwise. We follow their cancellations as well, so if school is canceled due to inclement weather, BLC will also be closed.

Our program is separated into three school year sessions: Fall (August-December), Winter (January-March) and Spring (April-June). Each session has a separate registration for classes. We also offer summer day camps in June-July. The summer camps have a separate registration form.

BLC (morning and after-school programs) will be closed on the following days:

- MEA Conferences
- Teacher Marking Days (unless announced otherwise)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Break
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day

- Spring Break

- Memorial Day

BLC may be open on the MEA teacher conference days and on individual teacher record keeping days, depending on expected attendance. We will send out information in advance of each of these release days to determine how many are interested in attending. BLC will not be open on the release days for parent-teacher conferences.

## **Program Information**

### **Before and After School Kids Care**

*Days:* Monday-Friday

*Ages:* 4-11

*More Information:* Bilingual and bicultural environment enriched with interactive, recreational and academic activities

**2 days minimum enrollment (including classes)**

#### **Windom - Before School Care**

\$16.00 per day

Mon-Fri, 7:30-9:30 AM

#### **Windom - After School Care**

\$17.00 per day

Mon-Fri, 4:00-6:00 PM

#### **Nokomis - After School Care**

\$24.00 per day

Mon-Fri, 2:30-6:00 PM

### **BLC Cultural Classes**

*Days:* Each class is offered once a week Monday-Friday

*Hours:* varies by class

*Ages:* 5-11

*Cost:* Pay for full session (not individual days) - cost per day includes snack and care during non-class hours on each class day

*More Information:* Instructors from around the community spend time with the students, teaching them about a specific theme. The classes combine academic, cultural and recreational learning in an interactive environment. Materials and snacks are provided.

### **Private Tutoring (during the school year) - online and in-person**

*Days:* Can choose any between Monday-Friday

*Hours:* 2-5pm, 40 minute sessions

*Ages:* 5-11

*Cost:* \$35.00 per session

*More information:* Our tutors work directly with teachers who work with your student during the school day in order to develop strategies that reinforce what the child is doing in their classroom. Please let us know if you have a desired area of focus and if you would like the tutoring sessions to be in English or Spanish. We will work with your family and the tutor to find a schedule that works.

### **Bilingual Summer Camp**

*Dates:* June and July, weeks vary

*Days:* Monday-Friday

*Hours:* 8:00 AM-5:30 PM

*Ages:* 4-11

*Cost:* Varies, please refer to the registration form

*More Information:* Students receive instruction in Spanish and English, which allows them to keep up with their Spanish throughout the summer: includes field trips, reading, arts & crafts, sports, dance, science & nature, and cultural activities.

### **Late Registration**

Students will not be allowed to begin BLC until we have their completed registration form and the annual registration fee has been paid - we must have this no later than the

student's first day of attendance.

### **Drop-In Care**

A drop-in fee of \$12 per hour will apply when a student comes to BLC on a day not indicated on the registration form; this includes students who miss the bus, parents who come very late to pick up their children from school, or students who have not filled out a BLC registration form for the current session. The payment is required the same day as the drop-in.

BLC, as well as the student's classroom teacher and the school office, must be informed of the schedule change at least a week in advance in writing (no exceptions). We reserve the right to decide whether to accept a drop-in student, depending on space and available staff. **BLC will not be responsible for any requests that are made less than a week in advance.**

### **Important Information**

- The family is responsible for arranging transportation between the student's home school and BLC location.
- BLC sites or locations may be closed due to low enrollment.
- Children must be able to use the bathroom independently.

### **Snacks and Meals**

BLC provides a healthy snack to every student each day in our program. If your child has food allergies, we will do our best to accommodate them, but you are also welcome to send a snack with your child to eat during care.

Students attending release day programs or summer camp should bring a cold bag lunch - we will not provide meals.

### **Drop-Off Procedure**

- Make sure your child has everything they need for the day with them.
- Check in with a staff member and on the computer program before you leave.

- Once your child is in the care of one of our staff and you have answered any questions that the staff member may have (is your child sick, please fill out a form or make a payment, etc.), you are free to go.

### **Pick-Up Procedure**

- As a courtesy to our staff and your child, please arrive at your scheduled time.
- When you arrive, check out on the computer and tell the BLC staff at reception who you are picking up. Our staff will radio to the child's group and have them sent to the door with their belongings.
- The adult picking up your child should be listed on your registration form. If you need to authorize another adult for pickup, please contact us ahead of time by email or phone.
- If you are running late for any reason, give us a call or text us (*Nokomis only*). We will not close the program until the last child is picked up.
- Please be willing to speak with BLC staff if they have any questions for you at pickup time or need to discuss an incident involving your child. We are happy to answer any questions you may have at this time as well.

### **Contact Us**

Please contact us regarding any changes to your child's schedule that will affect their BLC attendance, including illness, doctor's appointments, vacations, or other after school plans. It is important that we have this information so that your child will be safe and so that we can plan ahead. If we expect a child and they do not show up, we contact the school staff and, if necessary, the child's emergency contacts, until we confirm that the child is where they should be.

#### **Email the site coordinator for your program with attendance and time-sensitive updates**

- Email is the best method of communicating with us. Emails are reviewed during our hours of operation. Any emails intended for a specific member of our staff will be forwarded to the appropriate person. If you would like to discuss

something personal with one of them, leave your phone number and they will return your call as soon as possible.

**Windom site phone: 612-668-3384**

**Nokomis site phone: 612-249-3633 (text us!)**

- Office Hours: Monday-Friday 1-6 PM (during the school year). If no one responds, please leave a message. This is a good method of contacting us in case of an immediate emergency or to inform us if you will be arriving later than expected to pick up your child.
- **Email for general inquiries: [info@blcenter.org](mailto:info@blcenter.org)**
- Mailing Address: PO Box 19034, Minneapolis, MN 55419

## **Surveys**

We value your opinion! Parents will be asked to complete surveys about BLC programs from time to time, and we need responses from everyone in order to validate the information we receive. Surveys will be provided via email and on paper. We also regularly talk with our program parents to gain your feedback on how we're doing.

## **Weather Cancellation Policy**

In case of severe weather (snow closures):

- BLC will close on snow days, according to the guidance of Minneapolis Public Schools. We will not open before school care on late start days due to weather conditions.
- If after school activities are canceled on a day when students are already at school, we will contact parents and request that they pick up their children early. BLC will remain open until the last child has been picked up.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Can my child bring toys to BLC?**

Yes, as long as they are school appropriate. However, BLC is not responsible if the toy

is damaged, stolen, or lost. We remind students that if they are not using it at the moment to put it inside their backpack to prevent losing it.

**2. Can I visit the BLC program or my child's class?**

Of course! Just let us know in advance and we would love to have you! Also, we encourage parents to come in and share their talents with the students, so please let us know if you would like to come in to do a demonstration for the kids.

**3. Can someone else pick up my child?**

Yes, if the person is not listed on your registration form, please let us know ahead of time and give us that person's name and phone number.

**4. Is BLC open on holidays?**

BLC follows the Minneapolis Public School District calendar, as well as their cancellations. Therefore, if there is no school, there is no BLC program unless otherwise advertised.

BLC may be open on the MEA teacher conference days and on individual teacher record keeping days, depending on expected attendance. We will send out information in advance of each of these release days to determine how many are interested in attending. BLC will not be open on the release days for parent-teacher conferences.

**5. Can I change my child's class?**

Assuming your child started at the beginning of the session, the student can attend one class to see if they enjoy the program. If you let us know in writing before the child attends the second class, you will receive a reimbursement for the paid class cost. If the child is enrolled later on in the session, then you are committed to paying the rest of tuition starting with the day the child enrolled. This is described under *Cancellation Policy*.

**6. Can I combine BLC classes and care?**

Definitely! Your child can be in a class and still participate in enrichment care before or afterward. All BLC students come together for their snack.

**7. Can my student take a BLC class if he or she is enrolled in Minneapolis Kids?**

Yes, we work together with Minneapolis Kids to make sure there is a smooth transition from one program to the other. The student will be sent to BLC after school, eat snack

and attend their class, then the child will transition over to Minneapolis Kids.

### **8. Will my child play outside at BLC?**

Yes, your child will play outside every day at BLC, weather permitting. Please send your child to school with weather-appropriate clothing and footwear, especially in the winter. We will not send students outside in cold weather if they are not properly dressed: boots, snow pants, jacket, hat and gloves/mittens.

## **Behavior Incidents**

**Each student enrolled in Bilingual Learning Center programs is held to the following expectations:**

1. Show respect to all staff, teachers and students
2. Participate positively in all classes
3. Follow all directions given by the teachers and staff
4. Be responsible for the care of all the materials and the school environment
5. Ask an adult/ teacher/staff in the school for help when needed
6. Commit to participating every day of the program that I signed up for

## **Classes**

If your child consistently does not follow rules and/or listen to the teacher, they will receive three warnings before being suspended from class for 1 day. The child's behavior must improve when they return to the class, or BLC will remove the student from that class permanently.

## **Runaway Policy**

When a child runs away from their group and the supervising teacher, they not only put themselves in danger but also the other students in the group, since the teacher must pursue the child while ensuring the care and safety of their class.

If your child refuses to come when called and distances himself or herself from the group, we will first ensure their safety, then call and email to alert you to the incident.

We will arrange a meeting between parents and staff to discuss the situation and come up with a plan involving the child to prevent its happening again, and the supervising teacher will complete a Student Incident Report. In case of a repeat occurrence, we will discuss removing the child from the program.

**If a student does not follow program expectations, this is what will happen:**

1. The first consequence will be a warning and a time-out or loss of privilege given by BLC.
2. The second consequence will be a meeting with the program coordinator to make a behavior contract that must be signed by a parent and the student in order to return to BLC.
3. The third consequence will be a phone call home and time off from BLC - this may result in the the student not being allowed back in the program.

If there are any serious incidents of behavioral issues with your child, we will contact you and fill out a Student Incident Report describing what happened. If there are three serious behavior incidents that occur while your child is with us, the child will be out of the program. This includes any violence, harassment (verbally or physically), bullying, or demonstrating a lack of respect for our staff or materials. BLC reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment in our program.

**BLC, in its sole discretion, determines if it is unable to meet the needs of a student, or that it is not in the best interest of BLC or other students enrolled to have a child continue in attendance. BLC and its staff retain the sole right and responsibility to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of enrollment.**

### **Payment Policy**

**BLC is only able to adjust invoices for permanent schedule changes, and notice ahead of the month of the change(s) is required. There will be no refunds for absence**

**due to illness, no-show days, vacations, appointments, or school closings due to inclement weather or other unforeseen events.**

### **Registration Fees**

There is a non-refundable \$75.00 registration fee per family for the academic year (August/September – June). The registration fee must be included with the registration form in order to secure placement in BLC's programs.

### **Late Pick-Up Fees**

BLC charges for 2 or 3-hour blocks of care in advance (depending on AM/PM or program site). You will be expected to pay for the entire block on your child's scheduled attendance day regardless of drop-off or pick-up time. Punctual drop-off and pick-up are appreciated.

If you pick up your child after 6:00pm, a \$10.00 late pick-up fee will be added to your invoice. An additional \$10.00 will be added for every additional 10 minutes you are late.

### **Class Cancellation/Change Policy**

We encourage your child to try any classes they find interesting within the first week of classes. You are able to change or cancel within that week. Any changes or cancellations need to be in writing to BLC and you must inform the appropriate people (i.e. student's teacher) of any cancellations or changes. **After the first week of a class, we will no longer accept class changes or cancellations.** 'Permanent Schedule Change Fee' will be applied after the first week. There are no refunds for dropped classes after the first week.

### **Kids Care Cancellation/Change Policy**

Please note that we follow the registration form when billing. During the first 2 weeks of enrichment care, we will accept schedule changes in writing. After the second week, the 'Permanent Schedule Change Fee' will be applied. Additionally, all enrichment care changes or cancellations must be made at least a month in advance due to our billing

system. **We will not issue refunds for any changes in the current month.**

### **Schedule Adjustments for ALC, GOTR, and Other Programs**

If you plan to have your child participate in additional after school programs, such as ALC (GEMS/GISE) or Girls On The Run:

- Notify BLC of planned schedule changes as soon as possible
- Cost adjustments for reduced care hours will take effect in the following month, since our invoices are due in advance.

**BLC cannot guarantee space for your child to return to their prior care schedule after the conclusion of their other program.**

### **Permanent Schedule Changes**

There is a one-time fee for permanent schedule changes made after the second week of classes of \$20.00.

When you register for BLC, you register for the entire school year. If you decide at any time to have your child stop attending BLC, please notify us in advance so that we can make the necessary changes.

We follow the registration form and the days and times indicated for billing. We ask that you take your time when filling out the registration form to ensure that the days and times you have indicated are correct and accurate.

### **BLC After School Kids Care**

Invoices must be paid a month in advance by the 10th of each month. Care is charged in blocks of 2 or 3 hours, depending on AM/PM and program site. **We will not issue refunds for any changes or cancellations during the current month.**

### **BLC After School Cultural Classes**

Class tuition must be paid in total no later than one month before the end of the class. Reimbursements may be given if classes are changed by the end of the second week, but after the second class you are committed to paying for the entire cost of the class for

that session (fall, winter, or spring).

### **BLC Academic Tutoring**

Invoices must be paid a month in advance by the 10th of each month. If the student does not come to a scheduled session, we will still require payment for that session since the tutor is under contract to give that session. If the tutor is not able to come to a scheduled session, BLC is responsible for providing tutoring to the student. If the student is going on vacation, we need to know a month in advance in writing so that we can update the invoice.

### **Bilingual Summer Camp**

There is a non-refundable registration fee per child for the summer camp. The registration fee must be included with the registration form in order to secure placement in BLC's Bilingual Summer Camp.

**Option 1:** Pay full tuition, including registration fee, in one installment one month before the beginning of summer session.

**Option 2:** Pay 50% of tuition and registration fee in one installment and the second installment of remaining tuition one month before summer session.

**Late Payment:** If the full tuition is not paid by one month before summer session, the child will not be enrolled in camp (parents will be notified).

### **Refund Policy**

If you need to cancel your summer camp reservation:

Cancelation made between	Will receive
Registration - March 15th	Full refund (Full refund (minus non-refundable deposit)
April 1st- 30th	80% refund
May 1st – 31st	50% refund
June 1st until start the start of the camp	No refund unless we are able to fill the spot

If we fill your space before the start of camp, we will provide a full refund minus the non-refundable deposit. Families receiving financial assistance are eligible for a full refund regardless of the time of cancellation.

**Invoices are sent through email. On the registration form, please include the email address preferred for receiving the invoices. We will use the email from the registration form; therefore, you must include an email you are using and checking frequently, or let us know if you need us to print out an invoice for you. Parents are responsible for making their payments on time.**

*Please come speak to a member of the BLC staff if you need an alternative payment plan.*

## **Payment Options**

### **Automatic Withdrawal**

To enroll in our Automatic Withdrawal program you must fill out a form and hand it in to us with a void check. The payments will be automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. With this option you don't have to worry about any late fees! The form can be found on our website or front desk. BLC recommends this payment option for all families.

### **Cash/Check**

Please make all checks payable to BLC. Payment should be made by check or cash at BLC (during program hours, give to BLC staff; after hours, put it in the drop box), or sent via mail to: *PO Box 19034, Minneapolis, MN 55419*

### **Credit Card**

Payment may be made with a credit card upon receiving the invoice by email or in person at BLC.

**NOTE: There is a fee of 3.2% for credit and debit card payments. The charge will be added to the next invoice.**

**Return Check/Insufficient Funds Policy:** A \$35 processing fee will be charged for any returned checks or any automatic withdrawal that did not go through due to insufficient funds. If a check is returned a second time, all future payments will require cash or money order.

### **Scholarships**

Each academic year, BLC offers many student scholarships for tutoring, academic programming or enrichment to students who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunches. Please contact us regarding our scholarship application. We will consider your annual income and the number of adults and dependents in your household, then determine a scholarship to align with your individual situation. Our goal is to help all families who qualify for assistance. Depending on your situation and availability of funding, we can offer partial or full scholarships.

### **Late Payments**

#### **BLC After School Kids Care, Little Workers and Academic Tutoring**

If you have not paid the invoice by the 10th of the month, a \$15.00 late fee will be added to the invoice. This does not apply to payments via automatic withdrawal, check payments scheduled in advance, or any existing payment plan arranged through BLC. If invoices have not been paid for 2 months, then by the 10th of the following month, BLC reserves the right to not accept the student in our program until the payment and late fees have been made in full. Additionally, you will be automatically enrolled in our Automatic Withdrawal Program indefinitely.

**IMPORTANT:** If you leave the program and still have debts pending, BLC will send your account to a collection agency, and they will communicate with you regarding payments.

### **BLC Classes**

If you have not paid the full class tuition one month before the end of the class, your

student will not be allowed to continue in subsequent sessions of the class.

### **Waiver, Release, Indemnify, Hold Harmless and Permission to Secure Treatment Agreement**

BLC is committed to conducting its recreation programs and activities in the safest manner possible and holds the safety of its participants in the highest possible regard. Participants registering themselves or parents/guardians registering their child/ward in recreation programs must recognize, however, that there is an inherent risk of injury when choosing to participate in recreation activities. BLC continually strives to reduce such risks and insists that all participants follow safety rules and instructions which have been designed to protect the participants' safety.

Please recognize that BLC does not carry medical insurance for injuries sustained by participants. The cost of such insurance would make program fees prohibitive.

Therefore, parents/guardians registering their child/ward for Bilingual Learning Center activities should review their own health insurance policy for coverage. It must be noted that the absence of health insurance coverage does not make BLC responsible for payment of medical expenses.

Due to the difficulty and high cost of obtaining liability insurance, the agency providing liability coverage for BLC REQUIRES the execution of the following Waiver and Release. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please read this form carefully and be aware that by registering your minor child/ward for participation in the Bilingual Learning Center activities, you are waiving and releasing all claims for injuries you or your child/ward might sustain arising out of these programs. If the participant is a minor, this form must be signed by a parent or guardian.

#### **Waiver and Release of All Claims**

As a participant in the Bilingual Learning Center activities, I agree to assume the full risk of any injuries, including death, damages or loss regardless of severity, which I or my child/ward may sustain as a result of participating in any and all activities connected with or associated with such activities.

I agree to waive and relinquish all claims I or my child/ward may have as a result of participating in the activities against Bilingual Learning Center activities and its directors, officers, trustees, agents, servants and employees.

I do hereby fully release and discharge Bilingual Learning Center, and their respective directors, officers, trustees, agents, servants and employees from any and all claims from injuries, including death, damage or loss which I or my child/ward may have or which may accrue to me on account of my participation.

I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless and defend Bilingual Learning Center, and their respective directors, officers, trustees, agents, servants and employees from any and all claims from injuries, including death, damages and losses sustained by me or my child/ward or arising out of, connected with, or in any way associated with the activities of the programs.

#### **Permission to Secure Treatment**

In the event of an emergency, I authorize Bilingual Learning Center and their respective directors, officers, trustees, agents, servants and employees to secure treatment from any licensed hospital, physician, and/or medical personnel, and/or any treatment deemed necessary for my or my child's/ward's immediate care and I agree that I will be responsible for payment of any and all medical services required.

In the event I or my child requires use and administration of an epi-pen, prescription or over-the-counter medication, it is my responsibility to ensure that the epi-pen and/ or medications are on me or my child or within our personal belongings every day of the program. If BLC staff is required to administer and use the epi-pen/ or any medication, I agree to forever release and discharge BLC and its directors, officers, and employees from any and all liability arising out of or resulting from use or administration of the epi-pen and/ or medication.