



## KidsBridge Summer Learning Program

### 2026 Family Handbook

#### About Inspiring Minds

KidsBridge is a program of Inspiring Minds, a non-profit education agency founded in 1963. We are a student-centered organization, ensuring our programs promote positive outcomes for the youth we serve.

**Inspiring Minds Mission:** Inspiring Minds empowers students to succeed and thrive in school and life by developing trusted relationships with community members who are knowledgeable of the culturally responsive, academic, and socio-emotional needs necessary for student success.

**Vision:** Inspiring Minds is an antiracist organization committed to closing equity gaps based on race, ethnicity, first language, and economic status that impact RI students and families.

**AntiRacism Definition:** We actively identify and challenge inequitable systems, offering educational opportunities that center and amplify historically marginalized student voices and lived experiences while nurturing positive relationships that strengthen the overall educational community.

Learn more about Inspiring Minds' work and our four programs at <https://inspiringmindsri.org>.

#### About KidsBridge

The KidsBridge Summer Learning Program is a proven, research-based summer kindergarten readiness program that accelerates the acquisition of academic and social skills of rising kindergarteners. The free six-week, full-day summer learning program engages incoming students in academics, recreation, and enrichment activities while building positive and meaningful relationships with adults. This will build and develop children's familiarity with classroom norms and school-wide expectations in order to ensure students are ready for the first day of kindergarten.

#### Developmental Goals for Students

At Inspiring Minds, we believe that for children to grow into happy, healthy adults, they must grow up feeling good about themselves and the world around them. In the KidsBridge program, the children's experience is focused on developing character and developmental skills through activities and enrichment programs that are fun, safe, and developmentally appropriate.

Our program's framework is rooted in the Search Institute's Developmental Relationships Model. The Search Institute has identified five elements that make relationships powerful in young people's lives. We refer to this as the Developmental Relationships Framework. These five elements are: Express Care, Challenge Growth, Provide Support, Share Power, and Expand Possibilities. For more information on the Developmental Relationship Framework, visit <https://www.search-institute.org>.

#### Program Goals

- Increase children's familiarity with the kindergarten setting and classroom norms and school-wide expectations.
- Engage students in academics, recreation and enrichment activities as well as focused activities based on building meaningful and positive relationships with adults and peers.
- Connect the community to the school, promote awareness and foster meaningful connections based on shared experiences and community strengths.

- Assess incoming kindergarten students for fall placement

#### Site Information

Location: Robert L. Bailey, IV Elementary School, 65 Gordon Ave., Providence, RI

Dates: July 6 - August 14, 2026

Times: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Email: [summer@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:summer@inspiringmindsri.org)

Phone: #401-316-4009

*Please note: Use only the phone number we provide. KidsBridge staff do not answer the main school phone.*

**It is the expectation that students are in school, on-time, every day, all day.**

#### Drop off and Pickup

Parents/guardians may drop off children between 8:30 am and 8:40 am and pick them up between 2:30 pm and 2:40 pm or choose for their children to take the bus (see below). Working families in need of child care will be referred to local child care agencies.

#### Bus Transportation

Inspiring Minds contracts with First Student to provide transportation to and from program from 5 locations around Providence. Transportation will be prioritized for families based on distance and need. Bus transportation will be provided by First Student. Students in need of transportation will be picked up and dropped off at their designated bus stop by an authorized adult.

Proposed Bus Stops- Please note these locations are proposed and may be subject to change based on family locations.

- Dr. Martin Luther King Elementary School, 35 Camp St.
- Webster Avenue Elementary School, 191 Webster Ave.
- Bucklin Park in front of basketball courts, 400 Dexter St. (near Alfred Lima Elementary School)
- Times2 Academy, 50 Fillmore St.
- Veazie St Elementary, 211 Veazie St
- George J West Elementary, 145 Beaufort St

Enrollment confirmation letters will be sent to families between May 8 and June 6 and will contain specific information about the bussing decision, including the assigned pick-up and drop-off location, bus arrival times, and bus policies.

#### *Releasing students at bus stops*

Students will only be released at their designated bus stop following the [Child Release Policies](#) outlined below. Students who do not have an authorized person to meet them at the bus stop will be transported back to Bailey Elementary School to wait for their parent or authorized pick-up person. A minimum of two KidsBridge paid staff members will wait with the child until they are released. Parents will be charged a late pick-up fee for bussed students who are not picked up at their designated stops.

#### Special Dates

- \* July 1st, 3:00-4:00 Family Orientation
- \* July 23rd, 2:00-3:00 Family Math Night (Open House)
- \* August 10<sup>th</sup>, KidsBridge is closed (state holiday)
- \* August 14<sup>th</sup>, our End-Of-Summer Celebration. The program will be held from 9:00-11:00 and an adult must stay with the child for the entire program.

## KidsBridge Administration, Staffing, and Orientation

KidsBridge is overseen by the Director of Student Enrichment in consultation with the Director of Career Development and Education and Director of Mindfulness Education. On-site administrative and support staff include a bilingual (English/Spanish) Family Engagement Coordinator and an Early Childhood Special Educator.

Every classroom has

- a Certified Pre-K - 2 Teacher
- a Certified Early Childhood Teacher Assistant
- a Youth Development Worker
- Explorers- Providence youth between the ages of 15-24 who are enrolled as interns in our Workforce Development program to explore teaching careers. Explorers spend 15-20 hours per week in the classroom.
- Up to four trained volunteers from the community or Providence public high schools

Staff and volunteers are required to attend orientation in which all protocols and expectations are reviewed. Staff and volunteers are supervised by Inspiring Minds' Director of Student Enrichment. Explorers are supervised by Inspiring Minds' Director of Career Development and Education. A minimum of two paid Inspiring Minds staff are on-site for every hour of the program and whenever children are present. KidsBridge maintains a 1:8 staff to child ratio. Explorers and volunteers are never alone with groups of children.

### Primary Contact

[summer@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:summer@inspiringmindsri.org)

Family Engagement Coordinator (English/Spanish)

### Other Useful Contacts

Emily Markovitz, [emarkovitz@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:emarkovitz@inspiringmindsri.org)

Director of Student Enrichment (KidsBridge)

Kia Minor, [kminor@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:kminor@inspiringmindsri.org)

Director of Career Development and Education (Explorers)

Matt Buckley, [mbuckley@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:mbuckley@inspiringmindsri.org)

Manager of In School Tutoring and Mentoring (Volunteers)

Shannon Smith, [ssmith@inspiringmindsri.org](mailto:ssmith@inspiringmindsri.org)

Director of Mindfulness Education (ResilientKids)

### Daily Schedule

Below is the schedule for the day, subject to change based on special circumstances.

8:20-8:30	Arrive in Classroom
8:30-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:20	Transition: Clean-up, Bathrooms
9:20-11:30	Standards-Aligned Play Centers
11:30-11:45	Transition: Clean-up, Bathrooms
11:45-12:15	Outdoor Play Activities
12:15-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Transition: Clean-up, Bathrooms
1:05-2:05	Enrichment
2:05-2:15	Transition to dismissal
2:15-2:20	Bus Dismissal
2:20-2:30	General Dismissal

### Program Plan

Activities appropriate for students' age and development will be offered daily, and the children's interests will provide the direction for the program's curriculum. The schedule of activities will be posted for the children and parents to be able to review listing the activities scheduled and the time and duration of activities. Children will be provided choice

within these activities, both during structured and self-directed free play time. This should allow for flexibility to respond to the needs of individual children and to capitalize on unscheduled learning opportunities. At least one-half of the classroom time will be open for self-directed free play. Every child needs time to be themselves. During this time, children may choose to play alone or with peers in interest areas set up throughout the classroom offering building blocks, arts and crafts, puzzles, board games, and reading activities. Free play gives the child the opportunity to take advantage of the materials available, and to pursue whatever activity is of interest to them at the given time.

Accommodations will be made to allow children with disabilities to participate in regular program activities whenever possible. The KidsBridge Early Childhood Special Educator and Director of Student Enrichment will collaborate with families to support implementation of accommodations in IEPs and 504 Plans. Students who are eligible for IEP services during the summer months (Extended School Year) will receive their services at KidsBridge through the Providence School Department. Please note that Inspiring Minds does not contract with outside service providers to work on IEP goals.

The program will use the same spaces that are used during the school year. For example, children will eat in the cafeteria and use the same outdoor spaces used during the school year.

#### Enrichment Activities

Inspiring Minds contracts with high-quality enrichment providers to expand opportunities for hands-on learning and explore their community. Please look for the Enrichment schedule during orientation.

#### Meals and Snacks

Breakfast and lunch are provided by Sodexo through the Providence Schools. Menus are provided in advance. Water is available throughout the day. Parents that provide their own food: please be sure the food provided is consistent with healthy eating.

Please note, that children who bring food with nuts will be asked to sit at a table separate from other students who have allergies to nuts. See our health care policy for a detailed reason. We don't believe we should isolate children who have allergies, but instead, those who have a choice, are asked to sit separately from those who do not.

#### Family Involvement

##### Family Commitments

Participating in your child's learning leads to greater outcomes for your child. It is important that each family participate in family activities. We have three family events in which we request your participation, see [Special Dates](#) section above. This year, we are also offering a Transition to Kindergarten workshop series for families facilitated by Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

1. RIPIN 101 Family Workshop, Wednesday, July 25, Time TBD, virtual
2. Skills for Effective Advocacy Family Workshop, Wednesday, July 22, Time TBD, virtual

Look out for more workshops and information sessions from partner organizations throughout the summer! Information will go out in newsletters and via the Remind app. Is there something you want to know about starting school? Ask and we'll find the resource to support you!

##### Family Communication

It is our responsibility to communicate with you in a timely and effective manner about general program information, program changes, and your child's experiences in our program. We communicate with families

- On the Remind app: Any family member who wishes to get the notifications may download the app and search for class code @kb2027. [Specific instructions on joining a class can be found here.](#) We use Remind for program-wide announcements, such as bus schedules, closures, and upcoming events.
- In writing: notes, reports, newsletters, posters, flyers, and emails.
- By phone: personal phone calls and/or text messages.
- In person: by meeting you at the site, a mutually convenient location, or at our office.

If you feel that we're not connecting with you in a way that is convenient, please contact us so that we can work on an individual communication plan for your family.

### Family Feedback

Inspiring Minds is a community-serving organization and we are very interested in your comments, concerns, questions, and feedback regarding our programs. Please talk to any site staff member.

Parents will be given the opportunity to complete a formal survey at the end of the KidsBridge program. In week 5, we will send the survey electronically and provide an opportunity for you to complete it at the program site. We strive for 100% of families to return the survey. This helps us improve our program.

When your child arrives at home each day, discuss their day with them. Ask about the staff, the activities, and the other children in the program. Ask about your child's likes and dislikes. As you receive feedback from your child, please keep us informed. We strive for open communication within our programs. With your and your child's feedback, we can develop our program to further families' needs and wants!

### Program Policies

#### Absence Policy

If your child does not attend the first three days of the program, their slot will be given to a waitlisted student.

It is our policy that every child is in school, on time, every day, all day. Therefore, we ask all families to create an attendance plan at enrollment. It is a parent or guardian's responsibility to notify Inspiring Minds if your child will not be attending the program for the day or an extended time due to illness.

If absences are excessive, we will work with you to revise your child's attendance plan. Your child may be dismissed from the program if absences continue beyond the revised attendance plan. Please talk to us if you are having challenges getting your child to school on time, every day. The early years build a foundation for later school success and attendance is very important, beginning in kindergarten.

We strongly discourage vacations during the summer learning program. We know that summers contain family fun, but find that a week away from a six-week program has a significant impact on learning the routines and getting ready for their Kindergarten experience. We ask that you please limit plans to the weeks before and after KidsBridge.

#### Supervision and Group Management

Two staff persons will always be present at the site. Children will be supervised during all aspects of the program including transitions, bathroom trips, and classroom times. Designated staff will be assigned to children for each enrichment period. The staff-to-child ratio is a minimum of one staff person for eight children. Inspiring Minds Explorers and volunteers are not counted in the staff-to-child ratio.

## Code of Conduct

Inspiring Minds defers to the Providence Public School's Code of Conduct for Students. The full policy can be viewed at <https://www.providenceschools.org/Page/320>

All students have the responsibility to

- 1) Arrive at school on time, prepared and ready to learn.
- 2) Be courteous and respectful in all environments and situations related to the school day– on the bus,
- 3) school grounds, and anywhere within the school building, as well as at before and after-school programs.
- 4) Solve problems in a peaceful way when they occur.
- 5) Respect themselves, others, and property.
- 6) Be accountable for their actions and decisions.
- 7) Follow school expectations and instructions given by teachers, principals, and other staff.
- 8) Tell school staff about bullying or any dangerous behavior that occurs.
- 9) Review the PPSD Student Code of Conduct.

Inspiring Minds provides KidsBridge students with a healthy and non-threatening environment that promotes safety, respect, equity, and responsibility. The classrooms' expectations are carried into the community when we travel off of school grounds.

It is important to note that resources for student support are limited in the summer program. Specialists from the school support staff team are not available for summer interventions. When issues arise, we will put forth all available resources to support the student. At certain times, intervention is necessary. We realize that not all children respond to the same redirection techniques and we will adjust as needed. In most cases, our plan will be as follows:

- 1) Talk to the child in the situation. This is a brief recognition that the incident occurred, and the child will be reminded of the rule.
- 2) If the behavior continues, the child will be pulled aside and again reminded of the rule.
- 3) If necessary, the child will be given a short break from an activity. The amount of time depends on the situation; however, the time will never be longer in minutes than the number of years of age. Parents will be notified of short breaks at the end of the day with a Parent Communication Form. If the behavior escalates, the child will be separated from the group and moved to a safe space and a parent/guardian will be called.

Parents will be notified of the child's behaviors and may be called to pick up the child immediately. Parents will be provided with an incident report and will be scheduled to meet with the teacher. Staff will support families by affording all available resources, providing referrals, and working with the family to ensure the child's success. Inspiring Minds reserves the right to terminate the enrollment immediately of any child that endangers the health and safety of another person or property or if the child leaves the premises (runs away). At no time will any child be subject to corporal punishment, spanking, abuse (verbal or physical), deprived of meals or snacks, force-fed, or disciplined for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

## Adult Behavior

Inspiring Minds aims to foster an environment that is safe and healthy for children. It is important that adults (staff and parents) demonstrate behavior that is consistent with the Code of Conduct, especially in the program space. When arriving at the site, please put away your cell phone and be available to hear about your child's day. Be respectful in your communication with program staff, students, and other parents. Adults must follow the same rules as the children and are highly regarded as role models for the children in their lives.

## Child Release Policies

### *Sign In/Out*

It is required that parents sign in and sign out their students each day. The authorized person dropping off and picking up children must sign in and out each day in the sign-out book. It is imperative that parents/guardians ensure the update to the pickup section of the enrollment form includes all individuals that may pick up your child.

Children's safety comes first at Inspiring Minds. If you have a concern that someone may show up to pick up or visit with your child that you specifically do not wish to have contact with, please notify the teacher. Any restraining orders or custody orders relating to your child must be on file at the site.

Inspiring Minds will only release children to those persons listed as parents, emergency contacts, or alternate pick up. Please make sure every possible person who could be sent to pick up a child is on the list. Parents and others with permission to pick up must bring photo identification every time they pick up a child. Your cooperation is necessary so that children are released to the proper person.

Any changes in persons with permission to pick up must be sent in writing to the Teacher.

### *Under the Influence*

If any person picking up a child is suspected of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, it is at the discretion of the staff in charge as to whether the authorized person is capable of safely caring for the child. If the authorized adult is believed to be incapable of caring for the child, then another authorized adult will be contacted. If the person suspected of being under the influence becomes abusive or refuses assistance, staff will notify the proper authorities.

### *Late Pick Up*

Please call us if you suspect that you will be late. It helps us reassure your child that you are ok and on your way. If an adult fails to pick up a child, the following steps will be taken:

- Within reason, the provider will continue to try to locate a parent or emergency contact.
- Upon failure to reach any of these contacts after one hour, the provider will contact the Department for Children, Youth and Families (1-800-RI-Child) and the local police (Rhode Island).

## Child Abuse Policies

### *Strategies to help prevent Child Abuse*

Inspiring Minds advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, prevention, and development of self-control. At no time will any of the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment, striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaming, withholding food or restroom privileges, confining children in small locked rooms, verbal or emotional abuse.

Affectionate touch is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. However, staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space (i.e., not everyone wants to be hugged). Inspiring Minds encourages appropriate touch while prohibiting inappropriate touch or any other means of sexually exploiting children. The following preventive strategies are designed to protect the children in Inspiring Minds' programs and to protect Inspiring Minds staff and volunteers from being accused of child abuse:

- Inspiring Minds has a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure to screen out staff and volunteers not suited for working with children.
- Inspiring Minds will take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse or neglect seriously and follow the Providence Public Schools Mandatory Reporting Protocols.
- Staff and volunteers understand their legal obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect.

- Policies, procedures, and training are available relating to discipline, supervision, staff/child interaction, staff and volunteer code of conduct, etc.
- The Staff understands what practices may be considered abusive, and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Defense strategies have been identified for avoiding unfounded allegations.

#### *Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect*

To ensure the well-being of the children in our care, our staff are mandated under state law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse within 24 hours to the Department of Children Youth and Families in Rhode Island and to cooperate in any investigation.

We do not have discretion in this matter and must make reports whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been harmed by anyone, including non-family members, staff, or volunteers. Should we fail to report such incidents, we may be subject to criminal penalties. Moreover, in grievous cases, we may refer the matter directly to the police.

If there is an accusation or suspicion of child abuse, Inspiring Minds will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

- When there is suspicion of child abuse, the staff or volunteer to whom it has been reported will immediately notify the Program Director who will inform the Executive Director and the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Providence School Department.
- The staff person receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child with the Program Director.
- The Program Director in collaboration with the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Providence School Department will report the incident to the appropriate state agency (RI: Department of Children, Youth and Families, 1-800-RI-Child).

#### Health and Wellness Policies

Inspiring Minds takes many precautions to avoid injury in our programs. For your child's safety, please send them each day with sneakers for active play indoors and outdoors.

First Aid Kits are in the classroom and are inventoried and restocked monthly. Student files and First Aid Kits are taken on all field trips. Our full Health Care Policy is available upon request. Please speak to any staff member for a copy of this policy.

#### *Infection Control Policy*

All efforts are made to prevent incidences of infectious disease from the program. Children are required to wash their hands before meals and snacks and after toileting. All tables and toys are disinfected regularly. Soft toys and blankets are washed regularly.

If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, please let the teacher know. It is important to notify other parents of the disease outbreak so that they can watch for signs and symptoms. We will never use the child's name in communicating with other families.

Children diagnosed with a bacterial infection may not return to the program until twenty-four (24) hours after the first dose of antibiotics was given and are feeling well enough to participate in activities. Children who have had a viral infection must have been feeling better for at least twenty-four hours. For contagious skin diseases, all scabs must be dry for nine days before returning to the program or have a note from the child's physician stating that the child is well enough to attend child care and poses no threat to others.

### *Children that become mildly ill while in the program*

Children that become mildly ill while in our program will be isolated from the other children and given a quiet space to rest. Children that exhibit any of the following symptoms, a fever of 100 degrees, are lethargic, vomiting or diarrhea, pink or drainage from the eye, abdominal pain, or are unable to keep up with the pace of the day, a parent will be contacted and required to pick up their child immediately.

### Special Needs, Disabilities, and Allergies

There is space provided on the enrollment form to note any special needs or allergies. Please do not hesitate to discuss with the teacher or staff any special needs that your child may have.

If your child has an IEP, we will request a copy. If your child is eligible for services through Providence School Department, they will receive them during KidsBrige.

We will train all staff in how to respond to an allergic reaction or emergency. Parents must complete a FACE form to ensure we follow the doctor's instructions on how to respond to the child's individual needs. Allergies will be posted on the site's bulletin board to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the allergy.

### Medications

If your child needs emergency medication at our program it is imperative that the proper forms and procedures are followed. Please contact the teacher for a medication form. All medications, prescription, and non-prescription must come in the original packaging. Do not send in medications in a plastic bag or expired bottle. Parents must fill out the form completely including the directions for administration and possible side effects. We cannot administer medication contrary to the directions on the packaging without written notification from a physician. The teachers will keep all prescription and non-prescription medication in a locked box except for oral inhalers, epi-pens, and sunscreen. They may be in the child's possession always and may be administered with staff assistance.

### Cancellations

Inspiring Minds will notify families via the Remind app at the contact number provided if the program must be closed due to severe weather or unanticipated building emergency. Any family member who wishes to get the notifications may download the app and search for class code @kb2027. [Specific instructions on joining a class can be found here.](#)

### Emergency Procedures

#### *Emergency Drills*

Students will participate in emergency drills over the summer. This includes evacuation drills and lockdown drills. Lockdowns require that the building is secured and no one except for responding emergency personnel be allowed to enter or exit the building.

#### *Injury and Accident Procedures*

In the event of a minor injury:

- 1) A First Aid Certified staff member will provide first aid.
- 2) An injury report will be completed and sent to sign out for parent notification.
- 3) Parents will be contacted immediately in the event there is an injury to the head or face, or in the event, the staff feels the child should see a physician for the injury.
- 4) Parents must notify the Inspiring Minds if their child is taken to a medical facility related to an injury at our program.

In the event of a medical emergency:

- 1) A First Aid Certified staff member will provide immediate first aid.

- 2) A second staff person will assess the situation and activate emergency services by calling 911, if necessary. Staff will accompany the child to the hospital.
- 3) Another staff or volunteer will notify the Executive Director.
- 4) Parents will be contacted immediately.
- 5) If the emergency requires ambulance transportation, a staff member will accompany the child and remain at the hospital until a family member arrives.

#### Grievance Procedure

Should difficulties or differences arise between staff and family members, every attempt will be made to find a situation to each party's satisfaction. Please talk to the lead teacher if you have any concerns. Meetings will be arranged upon request, first with the teaching staff and the parent. If necessary, the Executive Director may be brought in for a consultation.

Thank you for participating in the Inspiring Minds KidsBridge Summer Learning Program. We look forward to a great summer!