



# EXCELSIOR

VILLAGE ACADEMIES

# 2024–2025 Family Handbook

This handbook sets forth general guidance for parents and scholars enrolled in Excelsior Village Academies. Excelsior Village Academies is a public school of choice that operates under the terms of a charter, or contract, with its authorizer, the State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia. The charter school guidelines for Excelsior Village Academies and the Family Handbook are available for all stakeholders on our website: [www.excelsiorvillageacademies.org](http://www.excelsiorvillageacademies.org).

The Family Handbook may be amended at any time. Parents will be notified of changes by email. It is the responsibility of the Excelsior Village Academies community to maintain correct and updated contact information to be apprised of changes.

Dear Families:

On behalf of the founders, board of trustees, faculty, and staff of Excelsior Village Academies, I extend a warm welcome! We recognize that you had a choice in where to enroll your scholar – one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent or guardian – and we are honored that you have selected Excelsior Village Academies. Your choice represents your faith in us, and we are firmly committed to maintaining your trust.

We look forward to working with you to fulfill our vision of educational excellence for every scholar, understanding that your support is crucial to our success. Research has revealed a clear link between family involvement and scholars' academic performance, and we seek to leverage that power to realize each child's full potential.

As a first step to building a strong community of scholars, we have prepared this Family Handbook, which details our expectations, policies, and procedures. Herein you will find important information about school rules and routines, our discipline and behavior management policies, and our academic cycles.

Holding all families and Excelsior Village Academies accountable to the high expectations outlined in this handbook is essential to creating a safe and orderly learning environment, conducive to the highest academic standards. We ask you to read the Family Handbook and ask any questions you might have to us about our expectations for families, students, and Excelsior Village Academies staff.

Again, thank you for choosing Excelsior Village Academies . We have an exciting and productive year ahead of us!

Sincerely,



Michelle Flowers  
Head of School & CEO



## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Excelsior Village Academies does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, age, national origin, mental status, or disability. If scholars believe they have been discriminated against for any reason, they should report it to the Head of School's or Director of Operation's office immediately.

Excelsior Village Academies' Governing Board abides by the Georgia Department of Education policy and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in any of its programs, services, or activities. Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to, harassment, denial of opportunities or benefits for discriminatory reasons, and retaliation for complaints filed. The Board will implement a procedure for providing prompt and equitable resolution of any allegations of discrimination made by scholars, parents, employees, and the school community.

Notice: Programs for scholars with Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504/ADA defines a person with a disability as anyone who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. The school has the responsibility to provide adjustments, modifications, and provide necessary services to eligible individuals with disabilities. Excelsior Village Academies acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504/ADA to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and scholars. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the school.

## **RIGHT TO KNOW**

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

### 1) Whether the scholar's teacher –

- a. Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
- b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived; and
- c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

### 2) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Please know that our staff is committed to helping your child reach his or her highest academic potential throughout their school career. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled and are providing quality instruction to your child.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teachers' qualifications, please contact Ms. Flowers, Head of School, at [mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org](mailto:mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org).

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## Our mission

The mission of Excelsior Village Academies is to provide quality K-8 school choice by offering a rigorous academic program in a community centered learning environment. Students will develop the skills needed to thrive in college and careers.

## About Excelsior Village Academies

Excelsior Village Academies Inc., a non-profit organization based in Henry County, manages Excelsior Village Academies in McDonough. Excelsior Village Academies Inc.'s vision is to community co-design our network of charter schools to involve and amplify the voices of the students and families we serve. We are committed to service, impact, and equity in education.

## Core Values

1. **Service:** Our world and communities are interconnected; we approach one another with generosity of spirit and acts of service.
2. **Operate with Integrity:** Act well in situations that require an ethical response and honesty.
3. **Achieve with Excellence:** We grow our capacities with a relentless pursuit to learn and challenge ideas, while aiming to do all that we do with distinction.
4. **Respect:** Regard for the feelings, wishes, rights or traditions for each other, others and ourselves.

## Graduate Profile

Although the future may look like it is full of robots and artificial intelligence the reality is the most successful businesses, nonprofits and governments will be led by highly skilled individuals who can understand and accommodate the demands of an increasingly connected, informed and fast-moving world.

### Critical and Adaptive Thinking

At EVA, we will inspire and support the development of our future leaders' ability to be intuitive in their thinking and thrive under pressure exercising excellent problem-solving skills.

### Emotional Intelligence

At EVA, we support the development of our future leaders' ability to become skilled communicators who can empathize with others and synthesize collective knowledge to be able to make informed decisions and react appropriately to differences.

### Cultural Intelligence

At EVA, we support the development of our future leader's ability to work effectively across cultures, languages and borders as the world continues to become more interconnected than ever before.

### Cohesive Collaboration

At EVA, we will inspire and support the development of our future leaders' ability to work with and bring people together in order to shape a more just society.

## Technological Intelligence

At EVA, the focus is on creating global leaders, recognizing that this era of rapid technological disruption requires a new brand of leader that is agile, resilient, and equipped with a global digital mindset to drive innovation.

## **The Learning Contract**

Excelsior Village Academies' Learning Contract details some of the most important responsibilities of being a member of the Excelsior Village Academies community. For scholars, the contract provides an overview of what it means to be an Excelsior Village Academies scholar. For families, the contract outlines some of the specific expectations the school has for you to support your scholars' growth. The contract also details teachers' commitment to work diligently to provide scholars with a safe and orderly learning environment in which they can achieve academic success.

### **Parent/guardian commitment**

1. Attendance. I will make sure my scholar is at school every day.
2. Punctuality. I accept responsibility for getting my child to school no later than 8:00 a.m. every day.
3. Dismissal. I will ensure that a responsible designated adult is there to pick him or her up promptly at dismissal. If my child needs to stay after school for tutoring or detention or to go to school on a Saturday, it will be my responsibility to arrange transportation for my child to and from school.
4. Preparation. I will help my child demonstrate readiness to learn and respect for him or herself and the school community by sending my child to school in an Excelsior Village Academies uniform that is clean, complete, and in proper repair. If my child arrives at school without parts of his or her uniform, I understand that I will be expected to bring my child's uniform to school. I will make sure my child is properly rested for school by seeking to ensure nine full hours of sleep for my child every night.
5. Homework and quiet space. I understand that my child will have homework every night. I will check that my child has completed his or her homework to the best of his or her ability. I will provide a quiet, dedicated space for my child to study every night, with no television, video games, or distractions.
6. Daily reading. Every night, including weekends, I will insist that my child reads, or I will read to him or her, for at least 30 minutes.
7. Communication. I will return phone calls from the school as soon as possible. I will provide the school with a working phone number and email address and will inform the school immediately if my phone number, email address or mailing address has changed. If I am asked to attend a meeting at the school regarding my child, I will be there. I will read all notices sent to me from the school and act on them promptly. I will make myself available to my child and to his or her teachers and school leaders.
8. Parent meetings. I will attend all parent meetings at the school or, in the event of a scheduling conflict, notify the school and make arrangements to acquire the information through alternate means.
9. The school's values and rules. I understand the school's values and will ensure my child upholds them. I know that my child must follow the rules to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all members of the school community. I will always support the school in its efforts to enforce high standards for behavior, citizenship, and academic learning. I know that my child will lose privileges or face disciplinary consequences, including



suspension or expulsion, if he or she violates the school's rules or fails to uphold its values.

10. Respect and support. I will appreciate, respect, and support all scholars and faculty at Excelsior Village Academies. I will be a model for my child by respecting and supporting each individual in the school community at all times.
11. Best effort. I will do whatever it takes for my child to learn, and I will help him or her, in the best way I know, to succeed in school. I will not make excuses for my child's academic work or behavior.
12. Responsibility. I will share responsibility for the success of my child with the school.

#### **Teacher's commitment**

1. Attendance and punctuality. I will come to school every day on time. Every minute of instruction is precious.
2. Mission. I subscribe to the mission of the school and will work diligently to realize it. I am committed to preparing every scholar for a life of opportunity, service, and impact.
3. Best effort. I will always offer my scholars the best I have as a teacher and will do whatever it takes for them to learn. I will not make excuses for myself, my scholars, or my colleagues.
4. Preparation. I will always submit lesson plans and other documents on time and will be fully prepared every day for my scholars and colleagues.
5. Respect and support. I will appreciate, respect, and support every scholar. I will be a model for my scholars by respecting and supporting each individual in the school community at all times.
6. Communication. I will communicate regularly with parents or guardians about their children's progress and make myself available to my scholars and their parents or guardians in person, by email, and by telephone.
7. The school's values and rules. I will uphold the school's values and will enforce its rules consistently and fairly. I will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all scholars and members of the staff.
8. Responsibility. I am responsible for the success of all my scholars.

#### **Scholar's commitment**

1. Attendance and punctuality. I will come to school on time every day. If I must be tardy or absent, I will make-up all missed assignments. I will attend summer school, if provided and if requested by my teacher.
2. Best effort. My education is important to me. Learning is my job. I will always work, think, and behave in the best way I know. I will do whatever it takes to achieve. I will be the best "me" I can be at all times and will not make excuses for myself or my classmates.
3. Homework. I will finish all of my homework and reading every night to the best of my ability. I will not make excuses for failing to do so.
4. Uniform. I will wear my school uniform every day and make sure it is clean, complete, and in good repair.
5. Communication. I will participate in class discussions and communicate with my teachers, classmates, and school leaders clearly and appropriately, being sure to make eye contact. I will listen carefully and follow all

directions the first time they are given. I will raise my hand to ask for help when I do not understand something or seek the help of my peers as appropriate.

6. The school's values and rules. I will follow the school's expectations and respect the school's values. I will protect the safety, interests, and rights of all of my classmates. If I fail to honor these commitments, including if I break the school's rules, I understand that I will lose privileges at the school and face disciplinary consequences.
7. Respect and support. I will respect every scholar and adult in the school community by treating them the way I want to be treated.
8. Responsibility. I alone am responsible for my own behavior. If I make a mistake, I will take responsibility for my actions and tell the truth. I am responsible for my success.

## **The Excelsior Village Academies education**

### **A path to college**

At Excelsior Village Academies, we believe that every scholar embarks on a journey towards admission to a selective college from the moment they step through our doors. We see college as a pivotal milestone for achieving successful adulthood. While there are various pathways to success, for many, college is an essential step towards a fulfilling career and active citizenship. A college degree provides the solid foundation necessary to thrive in today's ever-evolving global marketplace.

College is not reserved for the privileged; it is accessible to all who are diligent and self-disciplined. Achieving college admission, particularly at a selective institution, demands hard work, full commitment from your child, your unwavering support, and the expert guidance of their teachers. Our program is meticulously designed to prepare every scholar for college, careers and beyond, and we hold the expectation that each one will achieve this goal.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS & INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) have mandated that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children with disabilities, from birth through age 21, who live within the district.

Excelsior Village Academies will make a concerted effort to identify, locate and evaluate children who have a suspected or confirmed disability, in accordance with all federal regulations and state standards as required by Child Find. In addition, it shall be the policy of Excelsior Village Academies that the child with a disability and his or her parents/ guardians shall be provided with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in conjunction with procedural safeguards, as required by law, throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process.

Students with disabilities can be found eligible for Special Education based on the following eligibility categories:

- Autism
- Deafblind
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Emotional & Behavioral Disorder
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment

- Other Health Impairment
- Significant Developmental Delay
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech-Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment & Blindness

Students with disabilities who qualify for Special Education Services can receive a free appropriate education (FAPE) based on the scholar's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Excelsior Village Academies delivers special education programming and related services in the least restrictive environment, as determined by the scholar's IEP team. Related Services, such as Speech Therapy, are determined through review of various data sources to include evaluations and progress monitoring data. Instruction and services delivered are provided at no cost to the parent, guardian, or scholar. Students can be served using regular education, additional supportive services, consultative, co-teaching, collaborative, and/or small group settings.

Progress monitoring of IEP goals is accomplished through a variety of data collection methods using a variety of instructional programs, as well as individualized assessments designed by special education and general education teachers. IEP mandated, specialized instructional services are provided, and progress data is collected.

All members of the Excelsior Village Academies' school community believe that varied instructional practices and learning environments benefit all children. In sum, Excelsior Village Academies is committed to the full implementation of IDEA. When scholars served through the Department of Special Education are provided with the appropriate supports, as outlined in their IEP and through the collaborative efforts of parents, scholars, teachers, therapists, and other faculty/ staff (as appropriate), we believe they will achieve.

Any additional information regarding Parent Rights, Special Education Records, and services offered should be directed to [mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org](mailto:mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org).

### **ADVANCED AND GIFTED PROGRAM**

The Advanced and Gifted Program (A&G) is a supplemental program designed to meet the needs of our advanced learners in a variety of ways including enriched sessions, curriculum compacting, topic enrichment and extension and/or accelerated course planning and placement; along with other activities which incorporate academics, multiple intelligences, and social interaction.

General Advanced & Gifted program qualifications are set forth by Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) guidelines and implemented in accordance with specific Excelsior Village Academies program criteria. These requirements are subject to change year to year; therefore, scholars may need to re-qualify annually to remain in the A&G program.

Participants in the Advanced & Gifted program are expected to maintain exemplary progress and achievement. If you feel your scholar qualifies for the program, please contact [mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org](mailto:mflowers@excelsiorvillageacademies.org) for additional information.

### **SECTION 504 PLANS**

Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria for Special Education services may be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities.

Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations when they have a documented disability that:

(1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or

(3) is regarded as having such an impairment. The determination of whether a scholar has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (and therefore has a disability) must be made on a case-by-case basis and is subject to review by the school 504 team. After all documentation of the disability and its academic impact for the scholar is collected, an eligibility meeting will be held with the teacher(s), parent/legal guardian, 504 coordinator, and administrator to determine plan eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

### **Response To Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)**

Excelsior Village Academies supports the academic achievement of all scholars, particularly those most at-risk. The Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS) team composed of parents, teachers, administrators, trained professionals, and the scholar (as appropriate), uses a tiered model incorporating problem-solving methods and research-based interventions to identify and serve scholars having academic, behavioral or emotional difficulties. The goal of the RTI/MTSS process is for the teacher and/or parent to work together so the scholar may achieve a satisfactory rate of progress in the regular educational setting, preventing the need for more intensive services at a later period. In accordance with the Georgia Department of Education, all scholars at Excelsior Village Academies participate in the RTI/MTSS process, which is embedded in the school's instructional model. This model includes standards-based curriculum, direct instruction from certified teachers, other supplemental programs, as well as all state mandated assessments. As a scholar identified as needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports, they would receive supplemental help from their teacher, such as small group or individual sessions and/ or other research-based interventions and may move up the tiered process for additional support. The teacher, intervention specialist, and the parent form a partnership to determine which additional interventions are required to further support the scholar's learning needs.

The teacher and learning coach/ parent carefully follow and document the scholar's response to those interventions over a course of six to eight weeks. During this period, data is collected and reviewed to determine whether the recommended interventions are effective. Once the data has been collected and reviewed, the Student Support Team (SST), made up of the classroom teacher, parent, and other intervention specialists, reviews the scholar's progress, assignments, assessment scores, educational and family learning history, medical history and the results of the interventional strategies previously attempted with the scholar. If the interventions have shown little to no effect on scholar progress, the SST may recommend a referral for further academic or behavioral screenings, a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation and/or a referral to participate in other supplemental programs designed for more intensive scholar support. Since RTI/MTSS is a process, not a program, scholars may move up and down through the tiers throughout their academic career. The goal of RTI/ MTSS is a proactive one, to provide scholars with the tools necessary to achieve academic success.

Note: Regardless of whether a scholar is struggling or typically does well academically, there may be times that extra support is required to master a skill or concept.

### **Counseling And Student Support Services**

Through a holistic approach, the Excelsior Village Academies' Student Support Services Department will empower all scholars to reach their highest potential by using a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes academic and personal/ social development. Our program will foster the growth of each scholar as a civic-minded contributor with their local communities and beyond.

The mission of Excelsior Village Academies' School Student Support Services Department is to provide a data-driven comprehensive school support program that is proactive, developmentally appropriate and one that will assist all scholars in acquiring the mindsets and behaviors needed to become productive scholars, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners. The School Counselor at Excelsior Village Academies will collaborate with all stakeholders, including scholars, parents/guardians, staff, and community members to work towards meeting the needs of all scholars.

All stakeholders within Excelsior Village Academies share in the benefits of its comprehensive school Student Support Services Department.

### **Student Benefits**

- Access for all scholars to the comprehensive school counseling program.
- Monitors and interprets data to facilitate scholar improvement and school success.
- Provides strategies for closing the achievement gap.
- Advocates for scholars and promotes equitable access to educational opportunities.
- Offers career and social/ emotional development.

### **Parent/ Guardian Benefits**

- Supports active partnerships for scholar learning and career planning.
- Invites and coordinates access to school and community resources.
- Advocates for scholar academic and personal development.
- Provides training and informational workshops.
- Provides data for information on scholar progress.

### **Communication**

Frequent and open communication between the home and school helps bind the scholar, parents/guardians, teachers, and school leaders into an effective and strongly united team. For important updates the school will notify families through our parent communication application Parent Square, email, robo-calls, website and social media pages.

### **Phone Use**

Although Excelsior Village Academies aims to have as much communication as possible with its families, it would take an incredible amount of staffing and resources to provide message services, and we cannot guarantee that messages will actually reach scholars or teachers during the instructional day. Teachers will receive messages after 4:45 p.m. Scholars may not receive incoming phone calls during the school day unless it is an emergency that requires immediate attention. If it is an emergency, please call the front office number and leave a message. Scholars are prohibited from using school telephones unless approved by a staff member.

### **Teacher Contact**

Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher. Teachers will make themselves available as reasonably practicable for phone calls before and after school. Messages may be left for teachers with the Front Office. When leaving a voicemail message, please leave your name and your child's name, a phone number and time you may be reached, and a brief message regarding the reason for the call. Teachers will attempt to return a parent's call within 48 hours of receiving the message, though this will not always be possible. *Please remember that messages will not be received until after the instructional day ends.*

Teachers are also available through their Excelsior Village Academies email address. Parents should contact their child's teacher directly with questions about academic progress, including homework, as well as behavior (including Eagle's Reports).

Parents can contact the front office directly for any of the following issues:

- Information about your scholar's records (ex. updating contact information, etc.)
- Visits or volunteering
- Attendance issues
- Calendar and schedules
- Food concerns/needs

Teachers will list their contact information, including email addresses in the introductory letter to scholars' families during the first week of school, as well as on the cover page of the scholar's homework folder.

**Family conferences** with teachers are scheduled in the winter and spring. Parents and/or guardians are expected to attend all family conferences. Additional conferences may be held as needed at the request of the parent or guardian or the school.

### **Report Cards and Progress Reports**

All academic data that the school collects will be reported on report cards and progress reports. In grades K-3, most data is reported out as a percentage. Exceptions include reading level, enrichment grades, and writing grades. All report cards will also include comments on such topics as effort in enrichment classes, effort in displaying the Excelsior Village Academies Core Values, and homework completion.

**Progress reports** are sent to all families approximately twelve weeks into every term. These reports provide useful and timely information about scholars' progress. It is crucial that scholars who are failing to meet our standards and those on the borderline exert extra effort to catch up so they can do well for the remainder of the term. Interim academic reports are especially valuable in alerting families to any areas in which scholars are falling short of the school's academic standards – before problems take root. The interim reports also provide an excellent opportunity to acknowledge scholars who are doing outstanding work, such as a scholar who maintains an A average or a scholar who is demonstrating exceptional effort and making significant progress.

**Report cards** are published two times a year once in each semester. Starting in grade K, the report card includes the scholar's numerical grades for each subject, reading level, attendance records, and an accounting of the scholar's behavior in school. In addition, it includes a summative comment regarding the scholar's attitude, progress, and behavior.

# School calendar and hours for academic year 2024-2025

**Excelsior Village Academies Charter School Calendar 2024 - 2025**

<p>July 1 - 26: Summer Teacher Professional Development &amp; Pre-Planning</p> <p>July 16 KG-1 Parent Orientation</p> <p>July 18 Grade 2-3 Parent Orientation</p> <p>July 29 KG Small Success Academy July 30 KG-1 Small Success Academy July 31 KG-2 Small Success Academy</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">July 2024</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	July 2024							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">January 2025</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	January 2025							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		<p>Jan. 6: Professional Development Day #3/No Students</p> <p>Jan. 7: First Day of Second Semester Jan. 15: M.L. King Jr. Day/ School Closed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Instructional Days: 20</p>							
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<p>Oct. 10-11: Progress Reports Parent/Teachers Conferences (1:30 Dismissal for Scholars)</p> <p>Oct. 25: Professional Development Day #2/ No Students</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Instructional Days: 22</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">October 2024</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	October 2024							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">April 2025</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	April 2025							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				<p>Apr. 7 - 11: Spring Break/ School Closed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Instructional Days: 17</p>							
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<p>Nov. 11: Veterans Day/No School Nov. 18-22 IReady/IRLA Assessment Nov. 25- 26 Report Cards Parent /Teacher Conferences No Students</p> <p>Nov. 27 - 29: Holiday/School Closed Instructional Days: 15</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">November 2024</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	November 2024							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">May 2025</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	May 2025							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S				1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	<p>May 19-23 IReady/IRLA Assessment May 23: Last Day of School for Students May 26-27: Report Cards Parent/Teachers Conferences</p> <p>May 28: Last Day for Staff Instructional Days: 17 Semester 2: 90</p>							
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<p>Dec. 23- Jan.3: End of Semester 1 Break/ School Closed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Instructional Days: 15 Semester 1: 87</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">December 2024</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	December 2024							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr><th colspan="7">June 2025</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>TH</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	June 2025							S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						<p style="text-align: center;">Total Days is session with Scholars, 177 Total 186</p>							
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Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday dismissal for students starts at 4:30 p.m., except for students who are staying at school for additional enrichment or tutoring opportunities. On Fridays, dismissal for students starts at 1:15 p.m. **Please note: Dismissal is at 1:30 p.m. on parent-teacher conference days.**

The school divides the academic year into two semesters. For the 2024-2025 school year, Semester 1 is August 5 through December 20 and Semester 2 is January 7 through May 23.

## Arrival

The school day begins with a brief morning motivation, during which the head of school makes announcements and homeroom teachers communicate vital information about the day ahead. It is critically important that all scholars are in their seats and ready to learn no later than 8:00 a.m. as tardiness not only impacts their own preparedness but disrupts the classroom as well.

Scholars eating breakfast at school may arrive as early as 7:15 a.m., but no later than 7:45 a.m. The school doors are locked, and staff members are not available before 7:15 a.m., so dropping your child before that time poses a serious safety risk and is strictly prohibited.

### **Arrival Procedures**

Scholar arrival begins at 7:15 a.m. Scholars arrive in the car line and wait patiently for school staff to support unloading the car. The head of school arrives to greet scholars outside at 7:15 a.m. Scholars are expected to greet the head of school with a firm handshake and eye contact upon entering the building.

A scholar may not enter the building until he/she has acknowledged the head of school with eye contact and a firm handshake. If a scholar has a uniform violation that can be corrected (e.g., hats, un-tucked shirt) he/she will be asked to step to the side and correct the violation before entering the building.

### **Attendance and consequences for absences**

To remain firmly on the path to college, your scholar must maximize his or her opportunities to learn. Our academic program pushes scholars to master new material each day. Missing one day of school puts a scholar behind his or her peers. Families must work with the school to ensure that scholars attend school every day and arrive on time, except in the most extraordinary circumstances. Truancy (missing school without providing a proper excuse or excessive absenteeism) not only jeopardizes your child's progress, it is against the law.

### **Expectations**

- All families and scholars agree to strive for an attendance rate of 100 percent and to never be late.
- Parents and guardians will contact the school as early as possible but no later than 8:30 a.m., if their scholar will be late or absent email [absence@excelsiorvillageacademies.org](mailto:absence@excelsiorvillageacademies.org) include the following:
  - The date of the absence
  - The reason for the absence
  - A phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached
  - The parent's or guardian's name, relationship to the scholar, and signature
- Documentation should be provided within 48 hours of a scholar's return to school.

### **Reasons for being absent**

The following are the five valid reasons for missing school. Please note that these absences are not "excused," and will show on a scholar's attendance record.

- Death in the family (parents, guardian, grandparents, siblings)
- Illness or injury. For a medically related absence longer than two days, the parents or guardians should provide a doctor's note within 24 hours to the school.
- Medical appointments. Parents should schedule medical appointments outside of school time. The best times are during Friday early dismissal days, vacation days, and weekends. If an appointment must be scheduled during the school day the scholar should not be absent for the entire day. It is expected that the scholar will come to school before and/or after the appointment.
- Religious observance
- Educational opportunities with prior approval from the head of school.

Please note that students should never be absent for the following reasons:



- Family vacations
- Transportation delays or failures to make connections
- Instances where parents or guardians share custody, and the scholar is in the custody of the parent not normally responsible for ensuring the scholar attends school. It is the responsibility of parents and or guardians to ensure the scholar is in attendance each school day regardless of custody arrangements.

Scholars absent as a result of an out-of-school suspension are still considered absent if they do not report to school or other assigned location for at least two hours of alternative instruction.

### Attendance communication protocol

To help ensure that scholars do not accrue absences, the school has certain support policies in place, as detailed below. Please note:

- In cases of truancy, school staff may report the scholar and/or family to the appropriate public agencies or file an official complaint with the court.
- Scholars who are absent from school may not attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence.

Instance	Action and Purpose
<b>Each absence</b>	<p><b>Communication between the family and the school</b>            The parent/guardian must report any absence via an email to the school by 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence.            If a student is absent without explanation, the school will contact the parent/guardian via phone by 10:00 a.m.</p>
<b>Sixth consecutive undocumented absence</b>	<p><b>Report to the Georgia Department Family &amp; Children Services (DFCS)</b>            If the school is unable to contact the family after five days of undocumented absences, the head of school in conjunction with the school counselor will report excessive absences and the possibility of a missing child to the Georgia Department Family &amp; Children Services (DFCS).</p>
<b>Third absence</b>	<p><b>Letter home</b>            After three absences, the school will send a letter home detailing the scholar’s attendance record and the consequences of lost instructional time.</p>
<b>Sixth absence</b>	<p><b>Certified letter home/parent conference</b>            Excelsior Village Academies will schedule a meeting with the parent or guardian to discuss excessive absences and the school’s mandated reporting policy.</p>
<b>Ninth absence</b>	<p><b>Parent or guardian conference or certified letter home (signature required)</b>            Excelsior Village Academies will schedule a family meeting to discuss excessive absences and the school’s mandated reporting policy. During this meeting, a member of the school leadership team will ask the parent or guardian to sign a statement acknowledging the purpose and date of the meeting and confirming comprehension of the law regarding school attendance as well as the consequences of school absences for the scholar.</p>
<b>Fifteenth absence</b>	<p><b>Evaluation of readiness for promotion</b>            The school reserves the right to retain any scholar who exceeds 15 absences.</p>

	The school will also schedule a family meeting as above to discuss excessive absences and the school's mandated reporting policy. In the event that the school is unable to make contact with the parent or guardian, the school will send a certified letter to the last known address.
<b>Twentieth absence</b>	<b>Report to the Georgia Department Family &amp; Children Services (DFCS)</b> The head of in conjunction with the school counselor will report excessive absences to the Georgia Department Family & Children Services (DFCS) and file a case of educational neglect.

### Consequences for tardiness

Scholars are expected to be punctual, mindful of their responsibility to learn, and respectful of other people's time and their own learning time. Tardiness not only impacts the child's preparedness, it also disrupts and infringes upon the rights of the whole class. Habitual tardiness is not permitted.

Our doors open at 7:30 a.m. each morning; any scholar who eats breakfast at school should be in school no later than 7:45 a.m. By 8:00 a.m. each scholar should have arrived at his or her homeroom, unpacked, and taken a seat, prepared for instruction. Scholars who enter the building after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy.

Please note: Different clocks and watches vary. The determination of scholars' tardiness will be based on the clocks at the school to ensure consistency and fairness.

- Any scholar who arrives late (after 8:00 a.m.) will need to be escorted by a parent/guardian to the front desk to sign in scholar and provide an explanation for the tardiness, including any necessary doctor's notes. The parent/guardian should not accompany the scholar to his or her classroom. Scholars who arrive late may not be left unaccompanied at the school entrance.
- The school records the scholar's name in the Late Arrival Log. At the time of late drop-off, the parent/guardian signs the log indicating that he or she has read and understands the school's attendance and tardiness policy, which includes the consequences of future infractions.
- The school will schedule a parent/guardian meeting for any scholar who is tardy more than five times in a term.

**Please note:** Scholar's participation in school-wide events is contingent upon being prompt and present. If a scholar is absent or excessively tardy, he/she may not be able to participate in such events. All tardy and absences will be logged in the school's student information system.

### Homework policy

Homework is an independent activity designed for practice or maintaining mastery. Homework does not take the place of teachers' instruction, but rather serves as a valuable extension of scholars' efforts in the classroom. All homework must be fully completed. If a scholar is having difficulty with a concept, please note it for the teacher.

The parent's or guardian's responsibility regarding homework is to ensure that the scholar has a quiet workspace to complete his or her homework and that the scholar completes all assigned work. It is critical that family and friends support but refrain from completing homework assignments for the scholar; as such assistance makes it difficult for teachers to determine scholars' true mastery of skills and concepts.

## Daily reading and reading log

Scholars are accountable for reading or listening to books read aloud for 30 minutes every night, including weekends. Using the form provided by their teachers, scholars must maintain a daily log of their reading, and parents and guardians must sign the log as requested.

## Uniforms

Student uniforms are an important aspect of our school culture. Uniforms help create balance in the school and allow scholars to focus on what is most important: their learning. Scholars must be in uniform while on school grounds and may not change out of their uniform before dismissal.

Faculty or staff members call the parents or guardians of scholars who arrive at school out of uniform and ask them to bring to school the missing uniform item(s) before admitting the scholars to class.

Shirts must be tucked-in, shoelaces must be tied, and Velcro must be fastened at all times. If scholars cannot tie their shoes, please focus on developing this skill at home and try to provide shoes with Velcro or other non-lace fasteners for school while they are learning.

Please label clothing with your child's name, especially items that might be removed during the day. Labels ensure that lost items are returned to their owners.

### Boys' uniform

#### Top

- Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Coed Pique heather grey polo shirt (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) in Kindergarten or Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Coed Pique white polo shirt (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) in grades 1-3.
- Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Charcoal Heather Gray sweater, optional (cardigan, sweater vest, or V-neck long-sleeve pullover; no hoodies)
- All uniform tops need to be with the correct Excelsior Village Academies' logo.

#### Bottom

- Gray pants; Shorts (no extra pockets, snaps, or zippers; no wide-leg or baggy pants; no denim, corduroy, or cargo pants)
- Black belt (required grade 3)
- White, black, navy blue or gray socks

#### Shoes

- Black sneakers (all black only—no stripes, patterns, designs, or colored laces)
- Black rubber sole shoes

During inclement weather, students may wear boots, but they must change into their uniform shoes upon entering class.

## **Girls' uniform**

### **Top**

- Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Coed Pique heather grey polo shirt (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) in Kindergarten or Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Coed Pique white polo shirt (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) in grades 1-3.
- Excelsior Village Academies embroidered Charcoal Heather Gray sweater, optional (cardigan, sweater vest, or V-neck long-sleeve pullover, no hoodies)
- All uniform tops needs to be with the correct Excelsior Village Academies' logo.

### **Bottom**

- Gray pants; Bermuda shorts (no extra pockets, snaps, or zippers; no wide-leg or baggy pants; no denim, corduroy, or cargo pants)
- Gray round neck jumper dress (no extra pockets or extra buckles)
- Gray pleated skirt or skort (no miniskirts)
- Black belt (required grade 3, if there are belt loops)
- White, black, navy blue, or gray socks (no lace, no stripes, no designs)
- White, black navy blue, or gray tights (no lace, no stripes, no designs)

Please note: Girls may not wear jumpers or skirts on days when they have physical education (gym). We strongly recommend that girls always wear tights under their skirts or jumpers.

### **Shoes**

- Black sneakers (all black only – no stripes, patterns, designs, or colored laces)
- Black dress shoes (flats only; no high heels, princess heels, or wedges)

During inclement weather, students may wear boots, but they must change into their uniform shoes upon entering class.

## **Girl's and Boy's physical education uniform**

- Heather gray embroidered crew neck tee
- Heather gray embroidered crewneck sweatshirt
- Heather gray fleece jogger
- Black sneakers (all black only – no stripes, patterns, designs, or colored laces)

### **Head coverings and hair**

Hats, caps or other head coverings may not be worn unless they are worn in observance of one's faith. Dyed hair or a hairstyle that serves as a distraction – as determined by the school – is not permitted.

### **Prohibited clothing and accessories**

- Hooded sweatshirts, zippered jackets, or non-sweater vests
- Makeup (including nail polish, lip gloss, and glitter)
- Jewelry (bracelets, necklaces, rings, no hoops/large earrings, etc.) Conservative religious jewelry (such as a necklace with a religious symbol) may be worn under clothing and stud earrings are permitted.

### **Uniform specifics**

Clothing must be sized appropriately to fit the scholar. Clothes may not be too big or too small. Scholars should not wear clothing with significant stains (*e.g.*, large ink blots, food stains, etc.) or in poor condition (*e.g.*, frayed pant cuffs.)

During inclement weather, scholars who wish to layer clothing underneath their uniforms must wear only a white or gray shirt under the white or gray uniform shirt. Clothing worn under the uniform may not hang out or be visible. If a scholar comes to school with a non-uniform shirt showing under his/her uniform, it will be treated as a uniform violation and the scholar would be asked to remove the non-uniform item.

Scholars may not alter their uniforms in any way (*e.g.*, by writing/drawing, cutting, etc.). Items that are in disrepair will be treated as a uniform violation and the scholar will be asked to remove the non-uniform item.

### **Transportation**

Excelsior Village Academies does not currently offer bussing.

### **Dismissal**

Scholars who are not enrolled in the after-school tutoring or enrichment program will be dismissed at 4:30 p.m. to parents. Students enrolled in the after-school tutoring or enrichment program (Monday – Thursday) will be dismissed to parents or guardians at 5:45 p.m.

On Friday, scholars will be dismissed at 1:30 p.m. to parents.

### **Picking up scholars**

All scholars are designated car riders. Every family will establish an account with PikMyKid. This application will allow parents or guardians to “announce” pickup, so teachers and dismissal support staff can prepare the scholars to dismiss. Please have your car rider number that corresponds to your scholar(s) in the PikMyKid app displayed visibly for dismissal support staff to confirm proper release of your scholar.

For the safety of your child, the school releases scholars only to those people identified on the scholars’ designated pick-up list as authorized for pickup in the app or to those otherwise authorized in writing by the parent/guardian prior to pick-up time. There are no exceptions to this rule.

If you would like to add to the list of individuals approved to pick-up your child, please complete the Authorized Pick-up Form, sign it and return it to the main office. Please note that scholars are not permitted to depart campus with an individual who does not meet the minimal age requirement of 13. Individuals may be required to show identification or proof of age.

### **Scholars walking home alone**

Scholars in grades kindergarten to third grade are not allowed to walk home alone.

## Late pickups

At 4:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday or at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, the teacher records the names of scholars who have not been picked-up in the Late Pick-up Log. These students are escorted to the late pick-up holding area. Parents are required to sign the Late Pick-up Log in recognition of their tardiness.

Late pick-ups are unacceptable. Three late pick-ups will require a conference with the parent/guardian to address the issue.

## Early pick-ups

Early pick-ups are disruptive to the learning environment and are therefore strongly discouraged.

To ensure necessary order at the end of the school day, early pick-ups are not permitted during the hour before dismissal. Monday to Thursday the cut-off is at 3:15 p.m.; Friday the cut-off is at 12:30 p.m.

If the parent/guardian needs to pick up their scholar he/she must call the main office and state the name of the scholar, expected time, and reason for early pick-up. The main office will then notify the scholar's classroom teacher.

## Before and After Care

### Before Care

- **Drop-off Time:** Begins at 6:30 am.
- **Cutoff Time:** No drop-offs allowed after 7:00 am.
- **Drop-off Procedure:** Parents are required to park and walk scholars to the front entrance.
- **Breakfast Transition:** At 7:30 am, all students will transition to breakfast.

### After Care

- **Start Time:** Begins at 4:45 pm.
- **Pick-up Time:** Parents can pick up scholars between 5:00 pm and 5:45 pm.
- **Pick-up Procedure:** Use the carpool line for pick-up and utilize the PikMyKid app for efficient pick-up processes.
- **Late Pick-up Calls:** Phone calls for pick-up will begin at 5:55 pm for any remaining scholars.
- **Closing Time:** The building closes at 6:00 pm. Parents will be charged \$5.00 for every 10 minutes they are late after 6:00 pm.
- **Expectations for Scholars:** Scholars are expected to follow all school expectations during before and after care.

## Breakfast, lunch, and snack

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. Scholars who bring lunch from home may sign-up to receive milk at school.

To protect the health of scholars with allergies, some of which are life-threatening, Excelsior Village Academies is a **nut-free school**, which means that we permit no nut products in school at any time. When packing lunches for your child, please be aware that many processed foods contain nut products; read the labels of such foods carefully to ensure that your choices do not endanger a scholar with an acute allergy. If your scholar has a food allergy, please contact the school director and your child's teacher immediately so they can take the necessary precautions.

### **Foods not permitted at school**

Scholars are not permitted to bring the following foods to school, and any such items if found will be confiscated and possibly discarded:

- Fast food (e.g. McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's)
- Chewing gum, candy, marshmallows
- Nuts/nut products (including processed foods that contain nuts)
- Potato chips or cheese popcorn
- Soda, energy drinks, hot chocolate, beverages in glass bottles
- Cookies, donuts, cakes
- Artificial fruit snacks
- Other snacks with high sugar content

### **Healthy lunch or snack suggestions**

- Yogurt
- Dried fruit
- Breakfast bars
- Baked potato chips
- Whole-grain chips (e.g., Sun Chips)
- Vegetable chips
- Plain or buttered popcorn
- Pretzels
- Apples, sliced oranges, grapes, other fruit
- Carrots, celery sticks, other vegetables
- Rice cakes

Please do not send your scholar with food that requires warming.

### **School Reward Opportunities**

Scholars who choose to follow expectations outlined in our Code of Conduct choose academic success, privileges, and rewards. Excelsior Village Academies fully understands and believes that scholars respond best to positive reinforcement and our school strives to reward scholars when they do the right thing.

### **Daily Eagle's Report**

The Eagle's Report is a daily behavior log that summarizes the scholar's behavior each day across all settings and teachers and serves as a means of communication between home and school. Classroom teachers will use the Eagle's Report in addition to class dojo to indicate to parents whether or not their child met behavioral expectations on a daily basis.

The Eagle's Report is inserted in the back pocket of the scholar's homework folder. Families must sign the Eagle's Report every night and return it to school the following day. If an Eagle's Report is not signed, then a scholar's homework is considered incomplete.

## **Other Rewards**

### **Scholar Of The Month**

Scholars who demonstrate the Eagle's Core Values have the opportunity to earn "Soaring Eagle Scholar" of the month. This privilege comes with school wide recognition and the opportunity to wear the "Eagle Scholar" of the month pin.

### **Shine of The Week**

Scholars who demonstrate the Eagle's Core Values have the opportunity to earn "Shine" of the week. This privilege comes with class wide recognition and the opportunity to highlight areas of improvement including but not limited to grades, behaviors, attendance, uniforms, and various EVA expectations.

### **Classroom Jobs**

Assigning classroom jobs helps ensure a clean school. Having a classroom job is a privilege and recognizes scholars who meet or exceed expectations. Classroom jobs include but are not limited to: sharpening pencils, putting away materials, cleaning off desks, distributing papers, distributing snacks and/or lunches. Scholars are selected for jobs on a rotating basis at the classroom teacher's discretion. Some jobs may become positive rewards if they are in "high demand."

### **Classroom Rewards**

Excelsior Village Academies will extend a number of opportunities throughout the school year for entire classrooms to earn rewards. Classrooms that meet each benchmark or highest participation at Parent Teacher Conferences and/or after-school events will earn rewards including, but not limited to: Pajama Day, Free Dress Day, Pizza and/or popsicle parties, etc.

### **Field Trips**

At Excelsior Village Academies field trips are a privilege and will be treated as such, scholars are not entitled to attend. At the discretion of the leadership team, scholars may not be permitted to attend the field trip. Excelsior Village Academies staff takes pride in the meaningful partnerships that we create with families and welcome parents to volunteer as chaperones. Deadlines to volunteer as chaperones will be communicated in the school's newsletter. Parents must sign up to chaperone field trips by the designated deadline and volunteer clearance must be granted.

## **Family Onboarding**

Families are required to attend Family Orientation each year. Families will receive a written communication via email in addition to individualized and robo-calls with the exact times of the orientation meetings. Families will be able to get their questions answered by the school's knowledgeable staff.

## **Family Nights, Breakfasts, And Weekend Events**

Excelsior Village Academies will offer morning/evening/weekend events throughout the school year. These events are not required; however, we encourage and welcome family participation. We will send exact dates and times for these events monthly. These events might include:

- Coffee with a member of our leadership team
- Content Night and Scholastic Book Fair
- Black History Month Classroom Celebrations

## **Meeting With Teachers**



If you would like to meet with your child's teacher outside of the regularly scheduled conferences at the end of each semester, you must make an appointment. An appointment can be made by calling the school and speaking with or leaving a message for the teacher directly, as well as by emailing the teacher. Parents should not expect to meet with a teacher without a prior appointment. Because our teachers are teaching your child from 7:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., meetings should take place before or after school.

## **Grade Level School Newsletter**

Each month, the school's leadership in collaboration with grade level team sends home a newsletter to summarize content taught, to highlight upcoming school programs or closings, as well as to make parents aware of volunteer opportunities. The newsletter will be sent home via email and homework folders.

## **Volunteer On Campus**

We encourage families to volunteer time on campus. To ensure that we make the best use of time and efforts - and that we limit disruption to our instructional program - all classroom volunteers must abide by the set of guidelines below.

1. *Complete Mandated Training.* O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 requires all school personnel — including school volunteers — who have contact with scholars to receive training to assist in the identification of child abuse and neglect. In order to volunteer on campus, all volunteers must submit verification of completion of mandated reporter training. A free, online training can be completed [prosolutionstraining.com](http://prosolutionstraining.com). Further, any volunteer who will have access to scholars' education records will be required to complete training under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

2. *Schedule your volunteer time in advance.* School leaders and teachers are responsible for preparing and also delegating work to family volunteers. In order for school staff to prepare for a volunteer's time and productivity on campus, all family volunteers must be scheduled in advance by signing up on Parent Square. Please make sure to check in with the Front Office when you arrive for your scheduled volunteer time so that you can receive a visitor's pass. Visitors are expected to wear their visitor's pass throughout the entire duration of their visit to Excelsior Village Academies. All visitors must be escorted during their visit unless they are volunteering after/before school.

3. *Refrain from talking to, engaging with, or disciplining scholars – including your own – in classrooms, as well as talking to or engaging with school staff.* Scholars are expected to remain focused on their learning while in school. Families should not engage with scholars or instructional staff during instructional time by talking with them, observing their work, etc. We strive every minute of every day for 100% scholar and staff engagement in learning and ask that you respect our efforts by disrupting our natural school day as little as possible. Our staff has been extensively trained on specific teaching methods and behavior management techniques. Volunteers should allow the teacher to lead all aspects of the instructional program, and not discipline scholars, including their own.

## **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

Parent Teacher Association is a committed action-oriented group of families with a focus on strengthening the school program through school events, fundraisers, community outreach, and other initiatives. It is open to any parent, guardian or adult family member who wants to work collaboratively with other parents and school staff and make measurable additions to the school program.

While we encourage families to be as involved as possible, at a minimum, we expect the following from every family:

- Attend Family Orientation sessions to review school expectations, the Family Handbook, and double-check any logistical items
- Reinforce Excelsior Village Academies' academic expectations at home
- Ensure your child is on time and in full uniform every day
- Read to and/or with your child for at least 30 minutes every day, including weekends
- Ensure your child completes the nightly homework, sign the Eagle's Report, and return Independent Reading bags daily
- Attend all parent conferences with your child's teacher to discuss progress and pick up your child's report card and progress reports.

## **Electronic Devices**

Scholars are not permitted to have electronic devices in school. Electronic devices include but are not limited to games (Nintendo DS, *etc.*), tablets, CD-players, portable music devices (*iPads*), and cell phones. None of these devices are needed and often represent a distraction from successful academics and a serious atmosphere. In addition, these items can cause conflict and lead to grief when lost or stolen. While Excelsior Village Academies obviously strives to prevent theft of any item, the school will not spend extra energy tracking down electronic devices that should not be at school. In the event that a scholar disobeys this rule and is seen with an electronic device or uses a prohibited electronic device in school, a staff member will confiscate it. It will be returned only after a parent/guardian has come to school to pick it up.

## **Toys**

Scholars are not permitted to bring toys to school unless they are instructed to do so by their teacher. Teachers will correspond with parents via written communication at appropriate times when scholars are allowed to bring toys to school.

## **Celebrations**

### **Birthdays**

Scholars are permitted to bring store-bought treats to be shared with classmates when the teacher is notified at least 72 hours in advance. Families can notify the teacher by sending an email. We recommend families bring cupcakes or cookies that are already prepared in individual servings. Celebrations can include a treat, party favors, or special snack. Please ensure that all treats are nut free.

Parents are not required to send birthday treats to school. The Excelsior Village Academies community will sing "Happy Birthday" regardless of whether families have sent anything to school. Birthday treats should be in individual servings and easy and quick to serve.

Large productions like pizza parties, for example, are not permitted for birthdays. We will distribute the individual snacks to each scholar be taken home. Please do NOT bring ice cream, as this is difficult to serve and clean. Individual goodie bags are permitted as long as every scholar in the scholar's class receives one. Invitations for individual birthday parties are not to be distributed at school unless there is an invitation included for every child in the scholar's class.

### **Other Celebrations**

We know holidays can be exciting times of year for children. The many celebrations that take place at Excelsior Village Academies center on school traditions, academics, or celebrate our scholars as individuals and a whole.

These include things such as the 100th Day of School, Holidays Around the World, Black History month celebration, End of Year celebration and others.

## **Gifts For School Staff**

Excelsior Village Academies truly appreciates the generosity of our school's families. We know that some families show their appreciation for the hard work of school staff by giving gifts. This is not required or expected but can be gifted directly to the teacher.

## **General School Policies**

### **Homeless Scholars' Educational Procedures**

In accordance with the Education for Homeless Children and Youths: Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) Excelsior Village Academies adheres to the principle that all eligible children and youth, including the homeless, are entitled to a free, appropriate public education.

Scholars identified as homeless or "in transition" will be given full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards and will be included in state and district wide assessments and accountability systems. Our school will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment. Homeless scholars will be provided all district services for which they are eligible, including limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and after school programs where applicable.

**Definition:** In accordance with the Act and State Board Rule 160-5-1-.28, the term "homeless child and youth" is defined as individual who lack a fixed, adequate, and regular nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Who are living in emergency shelters.
4. Who are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement.
5. Whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation.
6. Who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
7. Migratory scholars who qualify as homeless because the children are living in any of the above-described circumstances.
8. Unaccompanied and are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Definitions:

- A child or youth shall be considered to be experiencing homelessness for as long as he or she is in a living situation as described above.
- Unaccompanied youth mean a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is in transition as defined above.
- Immediate means without delay

- School of origin means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

**Identification:** In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the school’s homeless liaison (School Counselor) will identify children and youth experiencing homelessness within our school. The liaison will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as experiencing homelessness, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison. The liaison will also instruct school registrars and secretaries to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every scholar and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison. Community partners in identification may include family and youth shelters, soup kitchens, motels, campgrounds, drop-in centers, welfare departments and other local social services agencies, faith-based organizations, truancy and attendance officers, local homeless coalitions, and legal services.

**Admission of Homeless Scholars:** Scholars are immediately admitted to Excelsior Village Academies even if the scholar is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. Excelsior Village Academies will make all efforts to update and keep these records current. Unaccompanied youth must also be immediately enrolled in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, or Excelsior Village Academies’ homeless liaison.

**Education of Homeless Scholars:** All scholars, including those scholars who are homeless or in transition have a full and equal opportunity at Excelsior Village Academies. Parents and guardians of homeless scholars are informed of the educationally related opportunities available to their children and are provided with the opportunities to participate in the education of their children. Homeless families and scholars will receive educational services for which all scholars are eligible. Referrals to health care and immunization services, dental services, health services, and other appropriate services will be made available to all families and scholars.

**Disputes and Resolution of Complaints:** Any complaints will be submitted in writing to the Governing Board who will resolve the issue. The parent and the scholar will be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. The district liaison will keep records of all disputes in order to determine whether particular issues are delaying or denying the enrollment of homeless children and youth repeatedly.

**Program Procedures:**

1. Excelsior Village Academies is responsible for identifying a homeless liaison (School Counselor).
2. Homeless scholars will be identified based on the definition prescribed by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and via a numeric code in the school’s scholar information system. All staff in the school will be trained in the identification and recruitment of homeless scholars.
3. The homeless liaison will provide annual training for all school staff having contact with homeless scholars.
4. School leadership will receive annual training on the identification and needs of homeless scholars.
5. The school will display flyers, brochures, and posters that identify the Homeless Liaison contact information.
6. Services for homeless scholars will be evaluated based on scholar academic achievement.

**Enrollment/Withdrawal**

Enrollment of Homeless scholars occurs at the appropriate grade level. The School Operations team is trained and attentive to the identification of homeless scholars during the enrollment process. Any identification of a homeless scholar/ family will be immediately identified to the Homeless Liaison for investigation. If Excelsior Village

Academies is contacted by another school for a homeless scholar's records, requested information will be provided and sent to the requesting school district within 10 days of receiving the request.

### **Program Training and Information Dissemination**

The Homeless Liaison or designee annually conducts training and sensitivity/awareness activities each fall to heighten the awareness of the following personnel of the specific needs of unaccompanied and homeless youth: School Leadership, teachers, and support personnel. Homeless liaison will lead and coordinate the schools' compliance with this policy and will receive training annually. Meeting documentation includes the PowerPoint presentation, agenda, and sign-in sheets. The Homeless Liaison or designee distributes posters and brochures throughout the school and in the Family Resources center in the lobby. Posters and brochures are also distributed to the community throughout the year at various locations including but not limited to the following: Department of Family and Children Services, Community Centers, Local Churches, Health Department, Fire Department, Hospital, Soup Kitchen, Local Law Enforcement, Safe Haven, and Local Doctor Offices.

### **Transportation**

Excelsior Village Academies will put into place a transportation plan for any identified homeless scholars.

### **Academic Credit**

A scholar's homeless status shall not be a barrier to receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

### **Disputes (Complaint Procedures)**

Any individual, organization, or agency ("complainant") may file a complaint with Excelsior Village Academies if that individual, organization, or agency believes and alleges that Excelsior Village Academies is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

All complaints should be directed to the Head of School.

### **"Protect Students First Act" Complaint Resolution Policy**

*As required by law*

Excelsior Village Academies shall not be required to respond to a complaint made pursuant to this policy unless it is made by:

- A parent or legal guardian of a scholar currently enrolled at Excelsior Village Academies;
- A scholar who has reached the age of majority or is a lawfully emancipated minor who is currently enrolled at Excelsior Village Academies; or
- An individual currently employed as school administrator, teacher, or other personnel at Excelsior Village Academies.
  1. The complaint shall first be submitted in writing to the Head of School.
  2. The complaint shall provide a reasonably detailed description of the alleged violation; (see guidance)
  3. Within five (5) school days of receiving the complaint; the Head of School or designee shall review the complaint and take reasonable steps to investigate the allegations contained in the complaint;

4. Within ten (10) school days of receiving the complaint, the Head of School or designee shall confer with the complainant;
  - Head of School or designee shall inform the complainant whether a violation occurred, in whole or in part;
  - If a violation occurred, in whole or in part, the Head of School or designee shall inform the complainant of what remedial steps have been taken or will be taken;
  - provided that the confidentiality of scholar or personnel information shall not be violated;
  - Another schedule may be mutually agreed upon by the complainant and the Head of School or designee regarding these ten (10) days response limit.
5. Following such conference, within three (3) school days of a request by the complainant, the Head of School or designee shall provide to the complainant
  - A written summary of the findings of the investigation, and
  - A statement of remedial measures if any
6. Provided, however, that such written response shall not disclose any confidential scholar or personnel information.
7. If Complainant disagrees with the Head of School or designee's determination, Complainant may, within 5 business days of receipt of the written findings, submit a request in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors to review the Head of School's or designee's decision. The determinations shall be reviewed by the Board of Directors within ten (10) school days of receiving a written request for such review by the complainant provided; however, that confidential scholar or personnel information shall not be subject to review pursuant to this paragraph.
8. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be subject to review within in a reasonable length of time by the State Charter Schools Commission, whereupon the State Charter Schools Commission shall take appropriate remedial measures, including, but not limited to, revocation of a state charter school's charter; provided, however that confidential scholar or personnel information shall not be subject to review pursuant to this subparagraph.
9. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit any cause of action available at law or in equity to a complainant who is aggrieved by a decision of a local board of education, the governing body of a charter school, or the State Charter Schools Commission.

### **Records Request**

Any individual described in this policy shall have the right at any time, including prior to filing a complaint, to request, in writing, from the Head of School nonconfidential records which he or she reasonably believes may substantiate a complaint under this policy. The Head of School shall produce such records for inspection within a reasonable amount of time not to exceed three business days of receipt of a request.

In those instances where some, but not all, of the records requested are available for inspection within three (3) business days, the Head of School shall make available within that period such records that are available for inspection. In any instance where some or all of such records are unavailable within three (3) business days of receipt of the request, and such information exists, the Head of School shall, within such time period, provide the requester with a description of such records and a timeline for when the records will be available for inspection and shall provide the records or access thereto as soon as practicable but in no case later than 30 days after receipt of the request.

If the Head of School denies a parent's request for records or does not provide existing responsive records within 30 days, the parent may appeal such denial or failure to respond to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors must place such appeal on the agenda for its next public meeting. If it is too late for such an appeal to appear on the next meeting's agenda, the appeal must be included on the agenda for the subsequent meeting.

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit any cause of action available at law or in equity to a parent who is aggrieved by a decision of a local board of education, or the governing body of a charter school made pursuant to this policy.

### **Parents' Bill of Rights Policy**

In accordance with the requirements found in Georgia House Bill 1178, Excelsior Village Academies maintains the following Parents' Bill of Rights Policy to promote and facilitate parental involvement in the School.

#### **SECTION 1. Right to Access the Following Information**

Parents/guardians may request access to the following information under this Policy, by submitting a request in writing to the Head of School

1. **Instructional Materials:** Parents/guardians shall have the right to learn about their child's course of study, which includes the right to access instructional materials intended for use in their child's classroom. Such instructional materials shall be made available for review during the first two weeks of each grading period. Your child's teacher(s) will provide you information on where and how to access these materials.
2. **Records Relating to Your Child:** Parents/guardians shall have the right to review records relating to their child, including, but not limited to, current grade reports and attendance records. A request for this information should be made in writing and delivered to the Head of School.
3. **Promotion and Retention Policies and Requirements:** Parents/guardians shall also have the right to access information relating to promotion and retention policies.

Information requested under this policy shall be made available for inspection within a reasonable amount of time not to exceed three school days of receipt of a request. In those instances where some, but not all, of the information requested is available for inspection within three school days, the Principal shall make available within that time period such information as is available. In any instance where some or all of the information is unavailable within three school days of receipt of the request, and such information exists, the Principal shall, within such time period, provide the requester with a description of such information and a timeline for when the information will be available for inspection and shall provide the information or access thereto as soon as practicable but in no case later than 30 days of receipt of the request.

#### **SECTION 2. Right to Object to Instructional Materials**

If a parent/guardian objects to any instructional materials intended for use in their child's classroom or recommended by their minor child's teacher, the parent/guardian shall first, as soon as possible after becoming aware of the objection, raise the objection with the child's teacher in which classroom the material is intended for use and/or who recommended the material. The teacher shall respond to the objection within five school days of its receipt, or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable.

If the parent/guardian is unsatisfied with the teacher's response, then within five school days of receiving the response, the parent/guardian shall submit a written objection to the Head of School. Such objection should include a description of the allegedly objectionable material, the course in which the material is intended or recommended to be used, why the parent/guardian believes the material is objectionable, and, where possible, should attach a copy of the objectionable material.

The Head of School will review the objection and within five school days of receiving the written objection, or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable, respond in writing to the parent/guardian to offer a resolution to the objection.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the Head of School's proposed resolution, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors or its designee will review the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable, and notify the parent/guardian, relevant teacher, and Principal of its decision on the matter in writing.

### **SECTION 3. Right to Withdraw Child from Sex Education**

To the extent that any sex education is proposed as part of your child's course of study, you will be notified in advance by your child's teacher. Upon notification, you have the right to withdraw your child from the School's prescribed course of study in sex education by providing written objection to your child's teacher of your child's participation.

### **SECTION 4. Right to Opt-Out of Photographs, Videos, and Voice Recordings of Your Child**

Parents/guardians shall have the right to provide written notice that photographs, videos, or video recordings of their child(ren) are not permitted. This opt-out is subject to applicable public safety and security exceptions. For example, all students at the School will be subject to being recorded by the School's surveillance cameras.

### **SECTION 5. Review Procedures**

If the Head of School denies a request for information or does not provide existing responsive information within 30 days, the parent/guardian may appeal such denial or failure to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors must place the appeal on the agenda for its next public meeting. If it is too late for such an appeal to appear on the next meeting's agenda, the appeal must be included on the agenda for the subsequent meeting.

A parent aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Directors may appeal to the State Board of Education, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160(b).

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

Computers are used to support learning and enhance instruction. Students will use computers frequently in their regular classrooms. However, computer privileges depend on a student using the technology in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. A student may not:

- Use the Internet for any illegal purpose;
  - Use any social networking site;
  - Use profane, obscene, impolite or abusive language;
  - Change computer files that do not belong to the user;
  - Violate someone else's privacy;
  - Share his/her password with anyone except adults at the school.
- Unacceptable use of the Internet will result in immediate revocation of access privileges.

Access to the Internet for Excelsior Village Academies is provided for the sole purpose of academic instruction. The use of the Internet must be in support of education and consistent with the educational objectives of Excelsior Village Academies. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state law or regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening, abusive, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Illegal activities and privacy and safety violations of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) are strictly prohibited.



## **Suicide Awareness And Mental Health Support**

Excelsior Village Academies is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its scholars. Information will be provided to scholars about suicide prevention and positive attitudes about mental health. This will increase scholars' ability to recognize the warning signs of suicide and how to seek help for the individual.

Many of the indicators of abuse are common to multiple categories of abuse. Indicators like running away, school problems, aggression, depression, anxiety, withdrawal, excessive worries, substance abuse, self-injury, and suicidal thoughts or actions could be a response to any type of abuse.

Deciding why a child needs help is less important than acting on your concern that a child is in harm's way. If the child you are concerned about has attempted suicide in the past or your concern is about the danger that the child represents to him or herself, you may want to contact the Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800- 273-TALK (8255) to learn more.

Some of the warning signs that someone is at high risk include:

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having a reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself

If you are concerned about your child or you are having thoughts of suicide, please access or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area. For access to services and immediate crisis help, call the Georgia Crisis & Access Line (GCAL) at 1-800- 715-4225, available 24/7. You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

## **Prevent Child Abuse**

It takes parents, caregivers, and supportive resources to help children thrive. Parents and children are often in complex situations and need professional and community support.

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia provides the 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline whose bilingual staff are trained to listen to parents and help connect them with programs and services in their neighborhood.

**Here's how you can help:**

1. Call the 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) Helpline to talk to trained professionals to connect them with supportive programs in their area.
2. Go online to use the 1-800-CHILDREN Resource Map, which contains over 3,000 local and statewide programs designed to assist and support families. See what services are available in your area.
3. Use the FREE helpline 1-855-GA-CHILD (1-855-422-4453).
4. Additional information about 1-800-CHILDREN is located at [PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org](http://PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org).

The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline can connect caregivers with:

- Parenting support
- After school and other child programs
- Counseling and support groups
- Referrals for legal needs
- Grandparent raising grandchildren
- Concerns about well-being of a child or family member
- Family violence concerns
- Community resources for emergency assistance

The Helpline is toll free, bilingual, available Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and a good place to discuss options.

#### How to Report Child Abuse

Reports are taken 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-855-GACHILD / 1-855-422-4453

#### **Monique Burr Child Safety Matters Program**

In accordance with Senate Bill 401, which requires all public schools to implement age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education for scholars in grades K-5, Excelsior Village Academies uses the Monique Burr Child Safety Matters program from the Monique Burr Foundation for Children. The goal of the Program is to help keep our scholars safe. The Program empowers children to spot and respond to bullying, cyberbullying, child abuse, and digital dangers. Most importantly, it teaches that adults are responsible for children's safety. The Program is based on the latest research. It has been reviewed and endorsed by national experts.

Why does your child need a safety program?

- 10% of children are abused before their 18th birthday
- 14% of children have been solicited online
- 28% of scholars have been bullied
- 90% of children between 8 and 16 years have viewed explicit material online

The School Counselor facilitates the lessons with scholars during the Fall and/or Spring semesters. Families are provided information before the program starts and parents have an opportunity to opt their scholars out of the program. You can download the "Child Safety Matters" app at no cost from the App Store or Google Play.

#### **Reporting Acts Of Sexual Abuse Or Misconduct Policy**

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.7.(a) provides that: "The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state-mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such a state-

mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.”

The following is the reporting process:

1. Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator, or other School District employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor, or administrator at his/her school.
2. Any teacher, counselor, volunteer, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal’s designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal’s designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to both the governing board and the State Charter School Commission.
3. The Head of School or Head of School’s designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately to the , but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The ‘ Child Protection Report may be submitted via telephone, fax, or in written form to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Services, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall be investigated immediately by the School. To protect the integrity of the process and to limit repeated interviews with the student, the designated system personnel is required to take a written statement from the student prior to any other person. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal’s designee shall make an immediate written report to the governing board of the school, the highest member of authority at the school (the Head of School), and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

#### **Procedural Safeguards For Students With Disabilities**

Federal and state law provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of scholars who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards can be found in the Director of Scholar and Family Supports’ office.

Excelsior Village Academies campus officials may suspend scholars with disabilities and cease educational services for a total of up to 10 consecutive or 10 cumulative school days in one school year without providing special education procedural safeguards. Detentions do not count toward the 10-day limit, so long as the student is afforded the opportunity to continue to appropriately participate in the general curriculum and continues to receive the services specified in his or her IEP. The Head of School has discretionary flexibility in regard to the amount of days of suspensions given to each scholar with disability. Scholars with disabilities can be suspended in excess of 10 school days in certain circumstances.

When campus officials suspend beyond the 10th day or anticipate a referral for expulsion, the following apply:

- Provide written notice to the parent/guardian or surrogate parent of the intervention or consequence being considered and the date of the 504 committee or Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, which must be held within 10 days of the date of the decision to discipline the scholar.
- The Section 504 committee or IEP Team should be convened for determining if the behavior of a scholar receiving special education services or who has been identified as a scholar with a disability under the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), is a manifestation of his/her disability.

The 504 committee or IEP team must:

- Determine whether the misconduct is related to the scholar's disability by reviewing evaluation and diagnostic results, information from the parent/guardian, observations of the scholar, and the scholar's 504 plan or IEP and/or BIP. The behavior is considered a manifestation of the scholar's disability if:
  - The team finds that the scholar's behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the scholar's disability, or
  - That the behavior was a direct result of the School's failure to implement the 504 Plan, IEP, and/or BIP.
  - Determine the appropriateness of an interim alternative educational setting, and, as indicated, include in the 504 plan or IEP those services and modifications that will enable the scholar to continue to participate in the general curriculum and address the behavior so it will not recur.

Special education scholars with disabilities may be referred for an expulsion hearing if they are in violation of any Zero Tolerance offense. All scholars will be ensured a due process expulsion hearing.

### **Disciplinary Process For Special Education Students**

Students who are served under IDEA (Special Education) or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are entitled to certain additional rights in the area of discipline based upon their qualification for services under these federal laws. Students for whom an IEP includes specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health or safety of the scholar or others, the matter will be immediately referred to the Special Education Team.

Students for whom an IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy relating to each infraction if it is determined by the Special Education Team that the behavior is not a manifestation of his or her IEP.

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination and the child shall remain in his or her current educational placement while the hearing is pending. A scholar suspected of having a disability shall be referred to the Special Education Team for evaluation.

### **Section 504 Grievance Procedure**

Any scholar or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding their child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504.

Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator- at EVA, this is the Student Services Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate EVA's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

### **Hearing Request**

The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- 1) The name of the scholar.
- 2) The address of the residence of the scholar.
- 3) The name of the school the scholar is attending.
- 4) The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- 5) The requested reasons for review.
- 6) The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- 7) The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time.

If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

### **Hearing Procedures**

1. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
2. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.
3. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
4. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
5. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the LEA to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. An LEA shall place a disabled scholar in the general educational environment operated by the LEA unless it is demonstrated by the LEA that the education of the scholar in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (34 C.F.R.§104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.
6. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue prehearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
7. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
8. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
9. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
10. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.

11. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the LEA. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the LEA.
12. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.
13. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

## **Decision**

The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

## **Review**

If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

For complaints that fall under 504 safeguards please contact addressed to Excelsior Village Academies' Student Services Coordinator.

## **Family Grievance Procedure**

- 1) **Step One: Informal Discussion.** A family having a grievance hereunder shall make a good-faith effort to resolve the matter through informal discussions with the individual(s) involved in the matter and/or with the employee's direct supervisor, within five (5) working days of the occurrence or cause of such matter.
- 2) **Step Two: Administrative Review.**
  - a) If the matter cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the aggrieved family may submit their complaint, in writing, to the Head of School within ten (10) working days after the most recent event upon which the complaint is based.
  - b) The written complaint should include identification of the problem, a description of the efforts undertaken to informally resolve the dispute, and a proposed resolution.
  - c) The Head of School will respond to the complainant with confirmation of receipt and explanation of grievance process and timeline (which will include notifying families of their rights to engage in due process or file a complaint with the EVA Board of Directors when appropriate).
  - d) The Head of School will investigate the concern and respond with his/her findings in writing five (5) working days of receipt, or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable.
  - e) The Head of School will make every reasonable effort to schedule a meeting to occur within five (5) working days of receipt (or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable) of the complaint with the Head of School and any other person(s) whose actions or decisions give rise to the matter. At such meeting, each party will have the opportunity to be heard and to request relief.
  - f) Within three (3) working days or as soon thereafter as is reasonably practicable, the Head of School will issue a written recommendation as to how the matter should be resolved. All parties present at the meeting shall receive copies of the written recommendation.
- 3) **Step Three: Review by the Board or a Committee Thereof.** If the aggrieved family remains dissatisfied after review by the Head of School of a Category 2 or 3 complaint, the family may appeal the Board of Directors for a full review decision by filing within ten (10) working days of the decision, with the Chairperson of the

Board of Directors, the original complaint, and a written explanation of why he or she disagrees with the decision of the Head of School. A written decision

will be issued by the Board, or his/her designee as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than five (5) working days after the next meeting of the Board. Board members who are interested parties shall excuse themselves from the hearing if such members have a conflict of interest in the subject of the appeal.

- 4) **Step Four: Appeal to the State Board of Education.** If the aggrieved family remains dissatisfied after review by the Governing Board, he/she may appeal to the State Board of Education in accordance with O.C.G.A § 20-2-1160.

Generally, the Board will not address a grievance where resolution has not been exhausted through the appropriate steps above. Further, the Board generally will not address a grievance that is made anonymously, based on hearsay, or made on behalf of another family.

For any grievance presented to the Board, the Board may delegate review of the grievance to a member or members of the Board, legal counsel, or another designee at its discretion.

EVA may, at its discretion, notify individual school employees about grievances brought against them. Parents/guardians may, however, request that they not be personally identified as the party bringing the grievance.

The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

#### **Ensure confidentiality of special education records.**

Excelsior Village Academies complies with all aspects of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to ensure that parents have access to their children's educational records and to protect the privacy rights of parents and children by limiting access to these records without parental consent. We comply with special education laws that require teachers, related services providers, and others who work with the child to have access to the child's IEP to understand the scholar's modifications and accommodations in place to meet the scholar's needs.

#### **Policy For Serving English Language Learners**

Excelsior Village Academies Charter School provides English Language Learners (ELs) a program of English language instruction, including content-based language instruction, and supports cultural adjustment so that EL scholars can become fully proficient in English and meet the same challenging academic content and scholar achievement standards that other scholars are expected to meet.

A certified ESOL teacher who assesses the English language proficiency of scholars will respond to questions related to the program posed by parents and the community. The ESOL teacher is also responsible for implementing the curriculum, monitoring, staff development, assessments, and parent outreach as they relate to English Language Learners. The ESOL teacher offers instruction to scholars at six levels of English language proficiency.

Students who are eligible for the ESOL program are assigned an English language proficiency Level 1-5 based on results of the Wida Assessment Proficiency Test (WAPT) at the time of registration. EL scholars are exited from the

ESOL program when they reach Level 5 on the ACCESS placement test. Students are monitored for two years after exiting the ESOL program. Parents are notified if the child qualifies for ESOL services or if the child exits the program. Excelsior Village Academies follows the eligibility criteria and exit requirements found in SBOE Rule 160-4-5-.02.

The program for English language learners is designed to improve the education of English language learners by assisting them in learning English and in meeting state content standards. Curriculum follows grade level standards of learning and WIDA standards. The state of Georgia joined the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium and adopted the following English language proficiency standards for implementation:

- Standard 1: English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes.
- Standard 2: English language learners communicate for academic success in the content area of Language Arts.
- Standard 3: English language learners communicate for academic success in the content area of Mathematics.
- Standard 4: English language learners communicate for academic success in the content area of Science.
- Standard 5: English language learners communicate for academic success in the content area of Social Studies

Instruction is adapted to scholar's English proficiency level to assist scholars in meeting the same state academic content and achievement standards as all scholars are expected to meet.

### **Professional Qualifications Policy**

We are dedicated to (1) Recruitment of outstanding staff, (2) Training staff to achieve excellence, and (3) Evaluating and Retaining staff to propel the mission and serve the needs of all scholars. A rigorous interview process, including resume screening, phone interview, demonstration lesson with feedback, re-teaching based upon feedback, and in-person interview will be utilized to ensure the quality of candidates prior to offering a position.

The hiring process is designed to ensure we are inviting candidates to join our organization who match the following criteria:

- *Alignment* – believes in school mission and our core values; holds scholars to highest expectations out of respect for scholar potential
- *Commitment to Community*—has a deep and authentic understanding of the community we serve
- *Coachability* - takes and implements feedback
- *Team Orientation*— works well with others; mindset that team trumps individual
- *Strong Teaching* – has strong behavior management; delivers rigorous instruction

In addition, we meet all federal requirements of “highly qualified” for each position; verify transcripts, which includes at minimum a bachelor’s degree, GACE test scores, and other data related to “highly qualified” status; complete a criminal background check before finalizing employment contracts; and maintain files with up-to date documentation for each teacher.

### **Nepotism Policy**

Excelsior Village Academies welcomes the opportunity to hire and retain qualified employees who are related to one another by blood or marriage. However, since such relationships sometimes can create problems in the workplace, including suspicions of favoritism if the related employees are in a supervisor-subordinate relationship, it is the policy of Excelsior Village Academies that:

- Board members and their immediate family members (as defined below) will be excluded from consideration for employment by the organization.



- Any employee of Excelsior Village Academies who has or acquires a familial relationship (as defined below) with another employee shall not have any direct or indirect administrative or operational authority over the other person. This prohibition means not only that a person cannot supervise a family member but also that the family member cannot be in that person's line of management.
- An employee of Excelsior Village Academies cannot use his/her authority or position with Excelsior Village Academies to benefit or to disadvantage another employee in a familial relationship. Although all such potential misuses of authority cannot be listed here, examples include an employee signing an evaluation for a family member or signing/approving a check payable to a family member.
- Employees are required to notify the Head of School of (a) any existing familial relationships; (b) any familial relationships that are created among employees (for example, by the marriage of two employees); and (c) the potential employment by Excelsior Village Academies of a family member.
- Excelsior Village Academies will refuse to hire a job applicant who is in a familial relationship with a current employee if the applicant would be in a supervisory or subordinate position to the existing employee. Excelsior Village Academies employees who marry one another during their employment will be allowed to remain with the school unless they are in a superior-subordinate relationship and there is no open position to which one of them may be moved.

“Familial relationship” within the meaning of this policy means two employees (or an employee and a job applicant) in the relationship of husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, or granddaughter, or any of those relationships arising as a result of marriage (for example, brother-in-law).

#### **FERPA Notice**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and scholars over eighteen years of age certain rights with respect to scholar educational records. Those rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the scholar’s educational records within forty-five (45) days of the date Excelsior Village Academies receives a request for access.
- Parents should submit to the school administrator (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The administrator or designee will arrange a records inspection for the parent or eligible scholar.
- The right to request the amendment of the scholar’s educational records that the parent or eligible scholar believe are inaccurate or misleading.
- Parents may ask Excelsior Village Academies to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
- Should Excelsior Village Academies decide not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible scholar, we will notify the parent or eligible scholar of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is available to the parent or eligible scholar when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to provide written consent before Excelsior Village Academies discloses personally identifiable information (“PII”) contained in the scholar’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official includes a person employed by Excelsior Village Academies as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the board.
- A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, collection agency, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or scholar volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance

committee; or a parent, scholar, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. (34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1)).

- Further, upon request, Excelsior Village Academies discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a scholar seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the scholar's enrollment or transfer. (34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(2)).

FERPA also permits disclosure of PII from scholars' education records without consent:

To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible scholar's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal-or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs.

These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35).

1. In connection with financial aid for which the scholar has applied or which the scholar has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, the amount of the aid, the conditions of the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid (§ 99.31(a)(4)).
2. To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the scholar whose records were released, subject to § 99.38 (§ 99.31(a)(5)).
3. To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer scholar aid programs; or (c) improve instruction (§ 99.31(a)(6)).
  - To accrediting organizations carrying out their accrediting functions (§ 99.31(a)(7)).
  - To parents of an eligible scholar if the scholar is a dependent for IRS tax purposes (§ 99.31(a)(8)).
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (§ 99.31(a)(9)).
  - To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36 (§ 99.31(a)(10)).
  - Information the school has designated as "directory information" under § 99.37 (§ 99.31(a)(11)).
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Excelsior Village Academies to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:  
Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-8520.
5. Excelsior Village Academies may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. Disclosures of "directory information" relating to individual students will be made under limited circumstances without the written consent of the parent, legal guardian, or eligible student. These circumstances include when directory information is posted in schools such as on displayed student work; when printed in school or district publications such as graduation programs, yearbooks or school playbills; in district communications for student recognition or information; when disclosed to the United States military; law enforcement entities; welfare agencies; colleges, universities and other postsecondary institutions; studentship-granting organizations; and other entities as approved by the Head of School or his/her designee.
6. Directory information is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The School has designated the following information as "Directory Information": student or parent/guardian name(s); student or parent/guardian address(es); student or parent/guardian telephone

listing(s); email address for student and/or parent/guardian; photograph or image of the student; student's date and place of birth; student grade level; student participation in officially recognized clubs and athletic activities; student weight and height, if the student participates in an athletic activity; dates of attendance at Excelsior Village Academies; enrollment status; most recent educational agency or institution attended; and degrees, honors, and awards received.

7. The School records and maintains audio recordings and video or photographic footage and audio recordings of students on school property and at school events in locations including, but not limited to, parking lots, school buses, lunchrooms, classrooms, and hallways. Such information is used and maintained for security and other informational purposes, including yearbooks, video yearbooks, school publications, school/district websites and district/school social media such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook. In many cases, recordings or photographs contain directory or peripheral video or photographic footage of students engaged in day-to-day activities including, but not limited to, walking to class and attending classroom or participating in school/district activities. The School or School designees may crop, edit, or treat the photograph, video, or audio clip at its discretion. Peripheral video footage, photographic images, or audio recordings of day-to-day student activities do not include footage of a student or students committing, being involved in, or witnessing a violation of law or School or school rule, procedure, or policy. The School may also determine that other activities do not qualify as peripheral images, footage, or recordings on case-by-case basis.
8. You have the right to limit or refuse the disclosure of "Directory Information". If you do not want the School to disclose any or all of the above information as Directory Information, you must notify the Head of School in writing within 10 days of receipt of this notice/handbook to opt out of having your child's information included as Directory Information. The written notice must:
  - (1) include the name of the student;
  - (2) include a statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student is opting out of the disclosure of Directory Information under FERPA; and
  - (3) be signed and dated by the parent, guardian, or eligible student (a student age 18 or older).

Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current year only and must be renewed on an annual basis should you wish to continue to opt out of the release of Directory Information.

Each school is to keep any opt out provided in the student's permanent record folder and a copy should be forwarded by school mail to Excelsior Village Academies: Attn: Head of School.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Notice**

This is to give notice that Excelsior Village Academies has updated the AHERA asbestos management plan as required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of all public and private elementary and secondary schools in the United States, under Federal Law 40 CFR 763, Subpart E. Excelsior Village Academies has met all AHERA requirements including this Annual Notice. The management plan is available for your review in the main office.

## **Health Policy**

### **Required Immunizations**

State law requires that all children in elementary, middle, and high school must have an updated Georgia Certificate of Immunization. Immunizations are required for measles, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, mumps, whooping cough, and hepatitis B. The Georgia DHR Form 3231 and Certificate of Immunization must be used for students in grades K-12. A local health department computer-generated form is acceptable. Georgia law allows for two types of exemptions from the immunization requirements: medical and religious. Each child must have one of two items on file – either a valid Georgia Immunization Certificate (Form 3231) indicating a medical exemption or a signed, notarized statement, which is called an affidavit of religious exemption.

### **Diabetes Medical Management Plan**

As part of Excelsior Village Academies' student health services program and in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779, the Head of School is responsible for designating at least two employees to serve as trained diabetes personnel when a student with diabetes is enrolled in the school, when appropriate.

The Head of School shall develop rules and procedures for the implementation of any diabetes medical management plan submitted by any parent/guardian of a student with diabetes who seeks care while at school or school-sponsored activities. A student who has been diagnosed with diabetes must have a Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP), signed by a parent/guardian and physician, on file with the school to receive or administer the related medication or treatment while at school or school-sponsored activities. The DMMP must contain all items covered in the plan, including how, when, and under what circumstances the student should receive blood glucose monitoring and injections of insulin as well as steps to take in case of an emergency.

Upon written request by a parent/guardian and if authorized by a student's DMMP, a student with diabetes shall be permitted to perform blood glucose checks, administer insulin through the insulin delivery system the student uses, treat hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and otherwise attend to the monitoring and treatment of his or her diabetes in the classroom, in any area of the school or school grounds, and at any school related activity, and he or she shall be permitted to possess on his or her person at all times all necessary supplies and equipment to perform such monitoring and treatment functions.

### **Vision, Hearing, Dental, & Nutrition Screening**

The parent or guardian of a child being admitted for the first time to a public school shall furnish to the school a properly executed Department of Public Health Form 3300: Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening. The screenings reported on the certificate shall have been conducted within one year prior to the time that the child is admitted for the first time to a public school. Any child admitted to a public school without a Certificate shall present a Certificate within three months following admission. When a child transfers to another school within Georgia, the Certificate and any related follow-up documentation must be forwarded to the new school.

### **Communicable Diseases**

If there is reasonable cause to believe that an individual has become infected with a communicable disease, the determination of the individual's condition shall be based on reasonable judgment, after consultation with the school nurse and based on the following criteria: the nature of the risk, i.e., how the disease is transmitted; the duration of the risk, i.e., how long the carrier is infectious; the severity of the risk, i.e., the degree of potential harm to third parties; and the probability that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm. If after consideration of these criteria it is determined that the individual does not present a significant risk of contagion, the individual may remain at the school. If it is determined that the individual does present a significant risk of contagion, the individual should be sent home, and the below reporting procedure shall be followed.

#### **Reporting Procedure:**

1. A confirmed communicable disease case should be reported to the Head of School or School Nurse.
2. The School Nurse will complete the Communicable Disease Incident Form and fax it to the Henry County Health District, which will provide guidance for communicable disease cases that require management beyond the local school level.
3. Excelsior Village Academies will follow the guidance provided by the Henry County Health Department for areas such as mass notification, school closure, prophylactic treatment, etc., as well as all communicable disease cases that require management beyond the local school level.

## **FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

Excelsior Village Academies receives Federal Funding under various programs to support scholar education.

### **Title I, Part A**

The purpose of a Title I program is to help low income and low-achieving scholars meet the state’s challenging academic content and performance standards. The Title I program offers a variety of services which may include additional teachers and support staff, extra time for instruction, a variety of teaching methods and materials, smaller classes, extensive use of technology by scholars, and additional training for staff.

### **Title I School Improvement 1003(a)**

The purpose of the School Improvement 1003(a) grant is to provide financial resources to local educational agencies (LEAs) on behalf of Title I schools identified as Alert, Focus, or Priority.

### **Title I, Part C Migrant Education Program**

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is designed to support comprehensive educational programs for migrant children to help reduce the educational disruption and other problems that result from repeated moves.

### **Title II, Part A Teacher Quality**

The purpose of the Title II, Part A program is to increase academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality. This program is carried out by: increasing the number of teachers who meet applicable state professional standards in classrooms; increasing the number of leaders that meet applicable state professional standards; and increasing the effectiveness of teachers and principals by holding LEAs and schools accountable for improvements in scholar academic achievement.

### **Title III, Part A Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students**

Title III, Part A provides eligible LEAs with funding to supplement ESOL services already in place. Both ESOL and Title III help ensure that English Learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English. English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), ESOL is a state-funded instructional program for eligible English Learners (ELs) in grades K-12 (Georgia School Law Code 1981, § 20-2-156, enacted in 1985). The ESOL program is a standards- based curriculum emphasizing academic and social language development. ESOL coursework is based upon the WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) standards. Students who are served in the ESOL program are required to complete an annual state assessment, which is called the ACCESS. Certain programs exit criteria are in place and must be followed as part of the eligibility process.

### **Title IX, Part C McKinney-Vento for Homeless Children and Youth (Transitional Program)**

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address issues that homeless and foster children and unaccompanied minors have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless and foster child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children, and youth.

## **Pupil Privacy Rights Act**

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary scholars certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- Consent before scholars are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –
- Political affiliations or beliefs of the scholar or scholar’s parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the scholar or scholar’s family;

- ex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the scholar or scholar's parent; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

*Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a scholar out of –*

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a scholar, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, scholars or educational institutions.)

*Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –*

- Protected information surveys of scholars and surveys created by a third party;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from scholars for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a scholar who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. Excelsior Village Academies has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect scholar privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Excelsior Village Academies will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Excelsior Village Academies will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of scholars who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. Excelsior Village Academies will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from scholars for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by EVA.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

*Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:* Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202

## **Equal Access**

Equal Access to Public School Facilities- Boy Scout of America Equal Access Act: No public elementary school, public secondary school or local educational agency that has a designated open forum or a limited public forum and that receives funds made available from the US Department of Education shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity

to meet, or shall discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting with that designated open forum or limited public forum, including denying such access or opportunity or discriminating for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or of the youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society). For the purposes of this section, an elementary school or secondary school has a limited public forum whenever the school involved grants an offering to, or opportunity for, one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after the hours during which attendance at the school is compulsory. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any school, agency, or a school served by an agency to sponsor any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society). Compliance with this provision will be enforced through rules and orders issued by the Office for Civil Rights. If the public school or agency does not comply with the rules or orders, no funds made available through the Department of Education shall be provided by a school that fails to comply with such rules or orders or to any agency or school served by an agency that fails to comply with such rules or orders (P.L. 114-95, Section 8525).

## **Enrollment/Class Placement**

Excelsior Village Academies is a charter school that is provided under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 a waiver of certain requirements of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia, including but not limited to the requirements of O.C.G.A. Sections 20-2-282 through 285 regarding the retention and promotion of scholars. Consistent with the flexibility provided to Excelsior Village Academies under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065, Excelsior Village Academies desires to establish an appropriate policy regarding the procedures for promotion, placement, and retention of its scholars.

The placement or promotion of a scholar at Excelsior Village Academies into a grade, class, or program shall be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the scholar and a determination of the education setting in which the scholar is most likely to receive the instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement, in a manner consistent with the policy set forth below.

## **Instructional Definitions**

**Accelerated Instruction** – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on scholar academic deficiencies in reading and mathematics. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a scholar who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to meet grade-level standards in a compacted period of time.

**Additional Instruction** – academic instruction, beyond regularly scheduled academic classes, that is designed to bring scholars not performing on grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before or after the school day, and/or summer or other inter- session instruction.

**Differentiated Instruction** – instructional strategies designed to meet individual scholar learning needs. **Grade Level Achievement** – standard of performance, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, on the state adopted assessment(s).

**Placement** – the assignment of a scholar to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the scholar with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

**Promotion** – the assignment of a scholar to a higher grade level based on the scholar’s achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

Retention – the re-assignment of a scholar to the current grade level during the next school year.

State Adopted Assessment – an assessment in any subject required by the state of Georgia to be administered to scholars.

## **Compliance With Federal And Other Applicable Laws And Rules**

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in compliance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), and its implementing rules and regulations, all decisions regarding the provision of a free, appropriate, public education to scholars served under IDEA, including but not limited to decisions regarding placement, promotion and retention shall be made by the child’s IEP team in accordance with the provisions of IDEA, and the decision of the IEP team shall be final. Also notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in the event a child is served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and its implementing rules and regulations, if a parent disagrees with a promotion, placement or retention decision, the child’s Section 504 team shall convene to determine whether the District will be providing a free appropriate public education to the child as required by Section 504 if the promotion, placement or retention decision is implemented, and the Section 504 team may make such modifications to the promotion, placement or retention decision to the extent the Section 504 team determines that such changes to the promotion, placement or retention of the child are required in order to provide a free appropriate public education to the child pursuant to the requirements of Section 504. For purposes of this policy, the Section 504 team shall be the Placement Review Team for scholars served under Section 504, all decisions made by the Section 504 team shall be made in a manner consistent with Section 504, and the decision of the Section 504 team shall be final.

Excelsior Village Academies chooses to exercise the flexibility given to it under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 with respect to promotion, retention and placement of its scholars to the greatest extent permitted by law and in accordance with the terms of this policy; however, to the extent that any laws, rules or regulations cannot be waived or are otherwise required by law to apply to Excelsior Village Academies notwithstanding the flexibility given under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 or are applicable under Excelsior Village Academies’ Charter, Bylaws or other governing documents (collectively “Non-Waivable Laws and Rules”), all such Non-Waivable Laws and Rules shall be fully complied with by Excelsior Village Academies, notwithstanding any other terms of this policy to the contrary.

Legal citations:

O.C.G.A. 20-02-282 Academic Placement and Promotion Policy

O.C.G.A. 20-02-2065 Applicability of title, etc. to charter schools; waiver; requirements with respect to operation, control, and management

29 U.S.C. Section 794 Nondiscrimination under Federal grants and programs 34 C.F.R. 104.33 Free appropriate public education

*Last amended 06/23/2023 73*

20 U.S.C. Section 1412 State Eligibility

34 C.F.R. 300.101 Free appropriate public education (FAPE)



**Family Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

I have received and read a copy of Excelsior Village Academies’ Family Handbook and understand and agree to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. I understand that if I ever have any questions regarding school policies, I can always ask a member of the school community for further explanation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scholar Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date