



2025-2026 Student Handbook

Section I – INTRODUCTION

Mission

The Excel Center is a high-quality, free public school for adults aged 18 and older. The Excel Center's mission is ***to provide adults the coursework and support needed to earn an Indiana High School diploma to pursue career and college pathways***. Our schools “meet students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help students manage work, life, and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

Goodwill LEADS, Inc.

Goodwill LEADS, Inc. is a non-profit organization operating the Excel Center. LEADS stands for Learn, Educate, Advance, Develop Students. The LEADS board is comprised of community members and meets quarterly. All LEADS Board meetings are open to the public, unless specified as a closed or executive session in accordance with Indiana statute. Meetings are typically held at Goodwill campuses near The Excel Centers.

The Excel Center Model

The Excel Center model operates on three main pillars: an academic philosophy that meets the goals and needs of adult students; a concentrated focus on college and career readiness; and a coaching program designed to address barriers that impede students' continued educational success.

Academic Instruction

Students enroll at the Excel Center at various skills levels, have different numbers of credits to achieve, and face various life obstacles, including work and family obligations. Therefore, each student will establish personal educational goals and move at his or her own pace to achieve them. Staff will work with each student to craft a unique educational program that fits his or her specific needs.

Career and College Readiness

Students' educational plans will build toward post-secondary certificates and/or advanced degrees that lead to career pathways. The Excel Center promotes students' awareness of and access to valuable careers by introducing students to several possibilities and helping outline the path a student might take to enter a specific career.

Life Coaches

The life coaching program helps students address the life barriers and issues that often prevent students from being successful. The relationship that life coaches create with each student provides security, confidence, and encouragement for students to persevere when work becomes difficult and life barriers difficult to manage.

School Calendar & Schedule

The Excel Center operates year-round with five, eight-week sessions throughout the year. Office hours for the school are Monday – Thursday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am – Noon.

There are four class periods per day each lasting 90 minutes, although some courses merge two periods together for 3 hour blocks (with breaks included). Some courses also provide multiple credits. This accelerated pace gives students the opportunity to earn credits in less time than a traditional school.

Classes take place Monday through Thursday, while Fridays are available for one-on-one tutoring sessions and meeting with instructors. A variety of activities will take place throughout each school day, including classes, one-on-one tutoring, self-directed study, and coaching activities.

Class Schedule: Monday – Thursday

Period 1 8:45 am - 10:15 am
Period 2 10:20 am – 11:50 am
Period 3 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm
Period 4 2:05 pm - 3:35 pm

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Friday 8:30 am – Noon

Kid's Excel Hours

Monday – Thursday 8:30 am – 3:35 pm
Friday 9:00 am – noon

Course offerings change at the end of each term to meet the needs of the student body. As a result, some courses (including basic skills instruction) will be offered every term, while others (higher-level math and English courses) will be offered at least every other term. Classes are either 90 or 180 minutes long. Many classes offer more than one credit which means students can reach their goal more quickly.

During breaks or other times not spent in class, students can access the computer lab for self-directed learning (online courses); connect with their life coach or teacher for academic support, or tutoring.

SECTION II – INFORMATION

Enrollment Procedures

The Excel Center is structured to fit the academic and life needs of adults (18 years and older) earning a high school diploma, and the school encourages individuals who meet that criterion to apply for the school. Traditional-age students (younger than 18) interested in attending the Excel Center are encouraged to investigate other schools.

There are five steps to becoming a student at The Excel Center. Important dates and times for the enrollment process such as application deadlines or testing and orientation dates can be found by contacting the Office Manager of a student's preferred campus.

Step 1: Application

- Adults interested in enrolling at The Excel Center should apply online at ***ExcelCenterHS.org/Apply*** or visit an Excel Center Campus.

Step 2: Submit a Transcript

- Transcripts should be submitted **as soon as possible**. Waiting to submit a transcript may cause more scheduling difficulties.
- To submit a transcript, applicants may contact the last high school they attended and ask them to send their transcript to The Excel Center via email or fax. (See contact information on final pages of Handbook.)
- In cases where a student has difficulty obtaining his/her transcript, the Excel Center may provide assistance. See the Office Manager for more information.
- If a transcript is not available, please contact The Excel Center for more information.

Step 3: Attend Testing

- All new students must complete math and reading placement tests to help place them in the appropriate classes.

Step 4: Attend iExcel Orientation

- iExcel is a required orientation program before classes begin.

Step 5: First Day of Classes

- Steps 1-4 **must** be completed for an applicant to begin classes at The Excel Center.

Any applicant who partially completes the enrollment process for a given term, but does not attend classes, should contact the Office Manager at their desired campus to complete enrollment.

Re-Enrollment: Students who withdraw from the school can re-enroll by contacting their Life Coach or Office Manager.

Waiting List Procedure

Enrollment Lottery

At such a time as The Excel Center student body reaches capacity, the school will hold a random lottery to determine which students will receive a place at the school.

- a. The enrollment lottery will include only students who have completed the application and submitted their transcript.
- b. Each student will be assigned a random number, and numbers will be drawn to determine which students will be offered a place at the school
- c. Students selected will be offered the opportunity to enroll. Students not selected will be placed on a waiting list in the order that their numbers are drawn.
- d. The Lottery will be held two weeks prior to the beginning of each term.

Waiting List

Throughout the year, some students will leave the school (either by graduating or by withdrawing from the school). When this occurs, the student's vacated place will be filled at the next iExcel by a student on

the waiting list. Students will be selected from the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis. The waiting list will be maintained year-round.

Scheduling

Class schedules will be adjusted at the end of each eight-week term. The Excel Center staff will adjust schedules according to students' credit needs and their availability to attend classes each term.

Special Education

Students with learning disabilities or other challenges will work with staff to create individualized learning plans to accomplish their goals. The Excel Center's curricular format provides ample support for special student populations, including students with identified disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and students with Section 504 plans under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Because all students have flexible schedules based upon their unique situation, it is common to adjust plans to accommodate students with identified eligible disabilities. Staff will work with students to establish academic schedules that are appropriate for students' needs.

Students spend much of the instructional day participating in fixed-length classes. The remainder of the day, they may utilize supplementary services as indicated in their IEP or Section 504 plan. Based on student need, individualized or one-on-one instruction may also be provided. The instructor to student ratio allows for every student (regardless of special education status) to enjoy an increased level of attention from his or her instructor and coach. All classes are inclusionary, and none are comprised solely of special education students; however, the school has the ability to provide more intense individualized services if necessary.

SECTION III – ACADEMICS

Graduation Requirements

To graduate, a student must fulfill the graduation pathways requirements for the State of Indiana as established by the Department of Education. Graduation pathways includes three requirements.

First, a student will work toward a Core 40 diploma, earning credits with the requirements outlined in the table below.

Course and Credit Requirements	
Language Arts	8 credits
Mathematics	6 credits
	2 credits: Algebra I
	2 credits: Geometry
	2 credits: Algebra II
Science	6 credits

	2 credits: Biology 2 credits: Physical Science 2 credits: Science Electives
Social Studies	6 credits 2 credits: US History 1 credit: Government 1 credit: Economics 2 credits: World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World
Physical Education	2 credits
Health and Wellness	1 credit
Directed Electives	5 credits
General Electives	6 credits
40 Total Credits Required	

Second, a student must learn and demonstrate employability skills via a Project-Based, Service-Based, or Work-Based learning experience. All students in the Excel Center are offered a Project-Based Learning Experience through the completion of Senior Seminar during the end of the enrollment period.

Last, a student must complete at least one Department of Education approved option of demonstrating postsecondary readiness. The Excel Center strives to help connect students with many different options for this requirement depending on student interest and need. Some more common options in the Excel Center include:

- Earning a state and industry recognized credential or certification
- Meeting College and Career readiness benchmarks for ACT or SAT testing
- Earning a 31 or higher on the ASVAB and completion of the Military Enlistment Intent Form
- Dual Credit courses

Further information about graduation requirements can be found on the Department of Education's website.

DOE - Diploma Requirements

<https://www.in.gov/doe/students/graduation-pathways/diploma-requirements/>

DOE - Graduation Pathways

https://www.in.gov/doe/students/graduation-pathways/#Grad_Pathway_Requirement_3_Postsecondary_Ready_Competencies

Credits

Earning Credits

Students primarily receive face-to-face instruction. Students earn credits by demonstrating satisfactory completion of a course with a passing grade higher than a D- in that course. Some courses may allow a student to earn multiple credits through the work of one class.

PLATO/Edmentum

Students may earn credits through PLATO as a Credit Recovery option. PLATO classes are entirely online, although students are expected to pursue the completion of these courses primarily within the PLATO lab, and complete final assessments with Excel Center staff proctoring. A student can only earn one credit per PLATO course completed.

Transfer Credits

Student transcripts from other schools are reviewed to determine if any coursework completed before enrolling at the Excel Center may also apply to graduation requirements.

Curriculum

The Excel Center curriculum is designed to teach the necessary content and skills to grant students a high school diploma, focusing on key academic subjects such as language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Courses are designed to develop the skills required to be successful in modern careers, and is shared amongst the Excel Michiana Network.

Student Assessment

At enrollment, each student takes a math and reading test. These tests determine a student's baseline skill level to help determine where the student will begin his or her coursework and which courses he or she must take to complete graduation requirements.

Grade Point Average

Grade point averages (GPAs) are calculated based upon the grades that students earn in each course. GPAs are calculated on the following scale (below) and are averaged upon the points earned for each credit. In courses that award multiple credits, the student's letter grade applies the point for each of those credits earned.

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Points per Course</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Points per Course</u>
A+	4.33	C	2.0
A	4.0	C-	1.67
B+	3.67	D+	1.33
B	3.0	D	1.0
B-	2.67	D-	0.67
C+	2.33	F	0

SECTION IV – STUDENT SERVICES

Life Coaches

Each student is assigned a life coach. Our life coaches are compassionate and trained professionals who help students address life barriers and issues that may have caused them to drop out of high school in the past and often prevent them from feeling successful. Life coaches are responsible for keeping students engaged and motivated to earn a high school diploma.

Career & College Readiness

Including graduation pathways, all students have access to supportive staff who help them achieve their educational goals and develop employment skills or prepare for college enrollment after graduation. All students who graduate from the Excel Center are assisted with earning either a job certification or dual credit courses for college.

Computer Lab

The Computer Lab is typically open from 8:00 am to 3:35 pm, Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 am to 12:00 pm on Fridays. All students may utilize the computer lab for coursework outside of their scheduled class periods. See your life coach for more information on any potential scheduling for computer lab use.

Kid's Excel

The Excel Center operates a childcare center for students who have children. The childcare center will only be available when a student is studying onsite. All students who wish to enroll their children must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Submission of an official birth certificate
- Submission of immunization records
- The child must live in the home of the student

Contact the Kids Excel coordinator for a copy of the Kids Excel Parent Handbook for more details and requirements for attendance. There is no cost for this service.

Transportation

Bus passes are available for students who qualify. Qualification for a bus pass will be determined during orientation (*see your life coach for more information*).

SECTION V – STUDENT RIGHTS

Rights in the Pursuit of Education & Freedom from Discrimination

Enrollment in The Excel Center open to any individual who lives in Indiana, has not earned a high school diploma, and is 18 years of age or older. It is a policy of The Excel Center not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.)

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Chief Human Resources Officer at 1805 W. Western Avenue, South Bend, IN 46619; 574-472-7309.

Right to Freedom from Harassment

The Excel Center is committed to providing an educational environment that is professional and free from sexual harassment, as well as harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law.

Harassment of students inside of our schools is not tolerated. Harassment is any unwelcome conduct, either verbal, non-verbal, visual and/or physical, related to characteristics protected by law that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to unreasonably interfere with an individual's performance; create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment; or adversely affect an individual's learning opportunities.

Harassment can take many forms. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following actions and situations:

- **Verbal:** epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that infer race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ordinance;
- **Non-Verbal:** written or graphic material that degrades, intimidates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ordinance that is displayed or circulated; or
- **Physical:** unwelcome physical contact that degrades, intimidates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ordinance.

Conduct of a harassing nature exists if such conduct meets any one or a combination of the following criteria:

- If you are required to submit to the conduct as either an express or implied qualification for a grade or a requirement of your educational relationship;
- If submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as a basis for educational decisions affecting you; or
- If the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with your educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

“Sexual harassment” refers to conduct of a sexual nature, which is unwelcome, offensive, and has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's work performance or creating an

intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples include unwelcome sexual advances or flirtations, requests for sexual favors, unnecessary touching, displaying lewd or degrading pictures or sexual objects, jokes of a sexual nature, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of education (e.g., a teacher or support member tells a student to commit a sexual act in exchange for a grade);
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a basis for educational decisions affecting such student (e.g., a teacher or support member fails a student because the student refused to engage in sexual behavior); or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's work performance or creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment (e.g., a student is subject to repeated and unwelcome sexual or derogatory jokes or unwelcome obscene or pornographic material or other forms of harassing conduct).

The Excel Center will not tolerate harassment related to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance by any teacher, support member, administrator, or group, manager, supervisor, co-worker, client, supplier or visitor. Anyone who participates in harassing conduct of this nature will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student or non-employee participating in harassing conduct like this will be asked to leave the premises immediately and may be subject to further legal action.

Right to Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities

Special Education services are provided to students of any age who have a diagnosed disability or impairment through the use of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504. Services include academic and behavioral assistance from the Special Education Instructor, accommodations, transition services, and related services when appropriate. Excel Center staff will guide students through the process of receiving services and will make every reasonable effort to serve students with disabilities or impairments.

Right to Confidentiality

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal Law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. This act protects a student's personal information from being distributed to third parties.

The staff at The Excel Center are guided by ethical behavior regarding confidentiality. Counseling issues, medical services and reports, special programs information, and state assessment scores are kept confidential. Access to student files is limited to staff personnel who need particular information and is strictly monitored. The school is legally required to report any form of abuse and credible threats toward another person. The Superintendent maintains a comprehensive system of student records and reports dealing with all facets of the school program operation. These data

and records are stored in a safe and secure manner and are conveniently retrievable for utilization by authorized school personnel.

The Excel Center requires written consent from a student before any personal or academic information can be released to a third party (spouse, parent, employer, etc.). Exceptions include (but are not limited to):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies

All students enrolled in the Excel Center are “eligible students” and are granted the parental rights under FERPA. There is one exception to this rule: an adult who has petitioned for and received guardianship over an adult student retains parental rights.

Directory information including name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance can be disclosed without consent. Any student (or individual granted adult guardianship of a student) can request that directory information about this student be withheld by notifying school officials.

SECTION VI – STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Code of Conduct

The Excel Center approaches student conduct in terms of professionalism. With a focus on workforce development and College & Career Readiness, all students learn to conduct themselves professionally. Responses to conduct, both positive and negative, support the concept of natural logical consequences. Students at The Excel Center are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for their learning and to help maintain an environment in which their classmates may learn as well.

Natural logical consequences for positive and professional behavior are numerous and may include increased friendships, increased opportunities and responsibility both on campus and in the community, achieving both academic and personal goals, awards and incentives celebrating achievements, recommendations and letters of reference attesting to students’ positive and professional attributes. Natural logical consequences for behavior that fails to meet the positive, professional standard are outlined below.

Students who receive Special Education services are subject to the student code of conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with applicable federal laws. For each violation, any listed consequence may be chosen as they are not in order of severity. Staff may choose to (but are not required to) issue a verbal warning prior to enforcing any consequences for Level I and Level II

offenses. The Excel Center Charter follows all State and Federal laws. As a result, the police will be called to campus when students are found in possession of any type of drug or alcohol.

Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources and Technology

The computers at The Excel Center are intended for educational purposes only. Students may not use Excel Center computers or network resources to access or distribute offensive, obscene, or abusive material. Students must respect the legal protection provided by copyright and license to programs and data. Students must not use programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer, computing system or network, and/or damage or alter the software components of a computer, computing system, or network. All computer use should be consistent with accepted classroom standards and the teacher's instructions.

Internet: In making decisions regarding student access to the Internet, The Excel Center considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are fundamental to the preparation of citizens and future employees. The purpose of school-provided internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by The Excel Center's professional staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior online just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply. Access is a privilege, not a right, and entails responsibility. All The Excel Center students are responsible for their actions and activities involving the school's computers, electronic devices, network and Internet services, and for their computer files, passwords and accounts. These rules provide general guidance concerning the use of school computers and other electronic devices and provide examples of prohibited uses. The rules and guidelines detail acceptable use of electronic information resources under which students will be held accountable. The rules do not attempt to describe every possible prohibited activity. Students who have questions about whether a particular activity is prohibited are encouraged to contact a teacher or building administrator. These rules apply to all school computers and all school-provided electronic devices wherever used, and all uses of school servers, Internet access and networks regardless of how they are accessed. Students should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will always be private. School administrators, staff and technology administrators may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are acting responsibly. Accessing of social networking sites should be done minimally and outside of the classroom.

Computers: The Excel Center reserves the right to limit or restrict student access to computers if it is determined that social media and/or computers are being used inappropriately or inconsistently with school goals. The Excel Center computers may not be used in violation of any laws or regulations. The Excel Center computers and any attached network devices may not be used in a manner that hampers use by others, which includes, but is not limited to, the use of proxy server websites or internet radio sites, such as Pandora. Repeated, unsolicited, or unwanted communication of an intrusive nature is not acceptable. Students may not share passwords or user accounts without receiving prior approval from the teacher. Network traffic and computer usage, including email, may be monitored. Students should be aware that such monitoring may occur and

that inappropriate material or activities will be reported to the proper authority. The Excel Center does not guarantee the privacy of any electronic communication or data stored on The Excel Center computers or networks. Failure to comply with these standards may result in disciplinary action as described in the Student Code of Conduct, including removal from self-paced courses and/or complete loss of computer use privileges on all Excel campuses.

Prohibited Uses and Unacceptable Uses of school electronic resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. **Accessing or Communicating Inappropriate Materials** – Students may not access, submit, post, publish, forward, download, scan or display defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying, and/or illegal materials or messages.
2. **Illegal Activities** – Students may not use Excel Center computers, electronic devices, networks, or Internet services for any illegal activity or in violation of any Board policy/procedure or school rules. The Excel Center administrators, teachers, employees and agents assume no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using school computers or school-issued electronic resources.
3. **Violating Copyrights or Software Licenses** – Downloading, copying, duplicating and distributing software, music, sound files, movies, images or other copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is prohibited, except when the use falls within the Fair Use Doctrine of the United States Copyright Law (Title 17, USC) and content is cited appropriately.
4. **Plagiarism** – Students may not represent as their own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, music, etc.). When using other sources, credit must be given to the copyright holder.
5. **Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access** – Students may not share passwords, use teachers' or other students' passwords, access or use teachers' or other students' accounts, or attempt to circumvent network security systems.
6. **Malicious Use/Vandalism** – Students may not engage in any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school's computers, electronic devices, network and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.
7. **Avoiding School Filters** – Students may not attempt to or use any software, utilities or other means to access internet sites or content blocked by the school filters.
8. **Unauthorized Access to Blogs/Social Networking Sites, Etc.** – Students may not access blogs, social networking sites, etc. prohibited by building administration or Goodwill's Information Technology department. Teachers and students using authorized social networking sites for educational projects or activities shall follow the age requirements and legal requirements that govern the use of social networking sites in addition to the guidelines established in this policy.
9. **Wasting System Resources** – Students shall not use the network in such a way that would waste system resources or disrupt the use of the network by others. This includes but is not limited to printing, file storage, online games, and video/audio streaming not directly related to educational projects, as determined by the supervising instructor or building administrator.

- 10. Unauthorized Equipment** - Students may not attach unauthorized equipment, including personal laptops, tablets, and handheld devices, to the school network without permission.

Student Cell Phone Use

The Excel Center is a school for adults who are expected to use their cell phones in a responsible manner. Students are expected to adhere to classroom rules regarding the use of cell phones in the classroom. Cell phone use in the hallway should be kept to a minimum and be respectful of the learning environment. Students should not use their cell phones to record audio, video, or pictures of other students without their permission. Cell phone misuse may result in disciplinary action.

Service Animal Policy

A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who are blind; alerting people who are deaf; pulling wheelchairs; alerting & protecting a person experiencing a seizure. Service animals are working animals, not pets. A student who requires the use of a service dog in order to access the general education curriculum must submit a request in writing that includes an explanation of the disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform to a school administrator at least ten school business days before bringing the service animal on campus so that it may be reviewed, and appropriate accommodations can be made. A determination will be provided to the student within 10 school business days.

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

The Excel Center is a smoke-free campus. Use of tobacco products on school property or at school-related functions is prohibited. This includes e-cigarettes.

Student ID Cards & Lanyards

All students will be issued an Excel Center Student ID card and designated student lanyard upon enrollment. In order to maintain campus security, students are REQUIRED to have their Student ID in view and worn above the waist at all times while on campus. Students who do not have their ID may not be admitted on campus. Students who are missing their ID should go to the Front Desk to obtain a new ID. Students are responsible for maintaining their student ID while enrolled at The Excel Center.

Visitors

A visitor is anyone who is not a current student or Excel Center staff member/contracted staff/approved volunteer or GW staff/GW Executive Group. All visitors must report to the front desk to sign in and receive a visitor pass. The Office Manager will call the person the visitor has come to see and ask him/her to come to the reception area to greet their visitor. This system is intended to ensure maximum safety for Excel students, staff, and children in Kid's Excel. Students are NOT permitted to bring guests onto the campus or children into the classrooms, except for special occasions such as an open house. Students may speak to their Life Coach regarding extenuating circumstances.

Dress and Appearance Code

The Excel Center expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the school's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. Students are responsible for ensuring that their attire fits within the school district's dress code. The school district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size, or age. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times. Clothes must be worn in a way such that private body parts are not exposed. School leadership has the discretion to determine a clothing violation.

STUDENTS CANNOT WEAR:

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting/suggesting drugs, alcohol, vaping or paraphernalia (or any illegal item or activity).
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments
- Swimsuits
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance or as personal protective equipment (PPE)).

Attendance

Daily attendance is essential to student success. Due to the accelerated pace of classes at the Excel Center, students who miss too much class time may need to retake courses in order to successfully complete them. Excessive tardiness or absences harm students by delaying the achievement of their educational goals.

The Excel Center expects that all students will be present and arrive on time for each scheduled class, or to notify their life coach and instructor if tardiness or absence is unavoidable.

Active Student Policy

To effectively fulfill The Excel Center's mission of assisting students toward earning their high school diploma and preparing them for the next steps, students must consistently make progress

toward their academic goals. However, The Excel Center recognizes that life challenges can cause disruptions to a student's education. If at any time a student's progression towards graduation is interrupted, there is a policy in place in which they withdraw.

As an active student, students can be withdrawn from The Excel Center by one of the following options/circumstances:

- Submitting a written notice to a school official that they wish to be withdrawn.
- Submitting an official withdrawal form to a school official.
- By default, after accumulating 16 consecutive absences.

SECTION VII – STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Reporting Procedure For Discrimination Or Harassment

While The Excel Center encourages students to communicate directly with their teachers and/or life coaches if they experience behavior that is unacceptable, offensive, or inappropriate, The Excel Center does not require students to do so. They must, however, notify administration of any conduct believed to be in violation of Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy. A prompt investigation will follow and the situation will be appropriately addressed.

Any student who wants to report an incident of discrimination or sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to the director of their school. If the director is unavailable or the student is uncomfortable reporting his/her concerns to the director (e.g., if the concern pertains to that individual) or otherwise believes it would be inappropriate to report the concerns to, or if the student believes a reported concern was not resolved to his/her satisfaction, the student should contact the superintendent of the network at 574-472-7381.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Chief Human Resources Officer at 1805 W. Western Avenue, South Bend, IN 46619; 574-472-7309.

Complaints and Grievance Procedures

Occasionally a student has a complaint or concern with some aspect of the program at The Excel Center. The following steps are in place so that the complaint will be addressed in a fair and timely manner:

1. The student is encouraged to resolve the conflict with the person against whom there is a grievance.
2. If a resolution is not achieved, or if the student is not satisfied with the resolution, he/she will submit a written account of the grievance to the appropriate campus administrator. After a copy of the complaint is received, an informal conference will be scheduled within five working days. This meeting will give all parties an opportunity to resolve the complaint. The Excel Center encourages resolution of the complaint prior to the conference.

3. Complaints not resolved through the meeting with the campus administrator will be forwarded to Superintendent of the Excel Centers. The Superintendent will review the complaint and meet with all parties concerned within 3 working days.

Students have the right to appeal any recommendations made through a hearing. An appeal must be made within 30 days of the hearing to the Campus Administrator. If the conflict is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal to the Superintendent of the Excel Centers. If still unresolved, the school provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Directors. Requests to be on the Board agenda must be made in writing two weeks prior to the scheduled School Board meeting.

Due Process Hearings

Due process hearings will be held by the designated campus administrator. They are responsible for determining guilt or innocence. They make recommendations for retention or expulsion and they can impose additional consequences/sanctions. The campus administrator will provide documentation of the hearing for the student's file. They are to notify the student of decisions made and are responsible for explaining the appeal process. If a student commits an offense that warrants expulsion, the student will be suspended and a due process hearing will be scheduled. The student will be notified of the hearing by letter, in person, or by phone. If the charter school district makes a good-faith effort to inform the student of the time and place of the hearing, the charter school district may hold the hearing regardless of whether the student or another adult representing the student attends. The following people may be present at the hearing: Campus Administrator(s), District Administrator(s), parent/guardian or any other adult representing the student, student's Life Coach, and student. The purpose of this hearing is to describe the student's behavior and verify that The Excel Center has followed all behavior intervention processes. The decision may be appealed to the Superintendent of the Excel Centers. Expulsions are in effect for the amount of time determined by the administrator.

SECTION VIII – STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Code of Conduct Consequences

(L1) Level 1 Offenses - "Offenses." Minor infractions of the Student Code of Conduct.

(L2) Level 2 Offenses - "General Misconduct Offenses." Infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, more serious than L1, which often will result in suspension (up to 3 school days) or expulsion.

(L3) Level 3 Offenses - "Removable Offenses." Infractions of the Student Code of Conduct that are of a serious nature, the majority of which will result in mandatory expulsion following a due process hearing.

Possession - has on one's person, in one's belongings, or in one's vehicle.

Under the Influence - Student demonstrates signs of drug/alcohol usage (i.e., smells of marijuana or alcohol, red or glassy eyes, dilated pupils, slurred speech, staggering/stumbling, excessively active, irregular breathing, uncontrollable laughter, excessive trembling, loss of muscle control, extreme difficulty concentrating, or any other unusual behaviors that are not typically exhibited by the student).

Sexually provocative clothing - clothing that reveals breasts, buttocks, genitals, undergarments, pubic hair; or, clothing that depicts sexual acts and/or contains sexual language.

Lewd - conduct that is considered offensive, obscene, and/or indecent.

Bullying: Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. **Cyber Bullying:** involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Sexual harassment - unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Suspension - period of time during which a student may not attend school for disciplinary reasons. This time may not exceed three days and is considered an unexcused absence.

Expulsion - students are withdrawn from school for up to one calendar year for disciplinary reasons.

Procedures

Procedures for a Suspension

In addition to the following Code of Conduct, the campus administrator or designee has the authority to suspend a student out of school for a period of up to three (3) school days for any of the following additional reasons:

- The need to further investigate an incident;
- A recommendation to expel the student; or
- An emergency constituting endangerment to health or safety

Prerequisites to Suspension

Prior to suspending a student, the campus administrator or designee must hold an informal conference with the student to:

- Notify the student of the accusations
- Allow the student to relate their version of the incident; and
- Determine whether the student's conduct warrants suspension.

Credit during Suspension/Alternative Instruction

A student shall receive credit for work missed during the period of suspension if the student makes up work missed within the same number of school days the student was absent on suspension. Students who are suspended will be provided with alternative instruction. Arrangements will be made between the school and the student for the pick-up/delivery of work, and the making up of any missed assignments. All IDEA mandates will be followed for students with disabilities.

Procedures for an Expulsion

Notice

When the Director determines that a student's conduct warrants expulsion, but prior to taking any expulsion action, they will provide the student and the Campus Administrator with written notice of:

- The reasons for the proposed expulsion; and
- The date and location for a hearing before the Campus Administrator, within 5 school days from the date of the expulsion.

The notice shall further state that, at the hearing, the student:

- May be present;
- Shall have an opportunity to present evidence;
- Shall be apprised and informed of the school's evidence;

Hearing Before Campus Administrator

The school shall make a good faith effort to inform the student of the time and place for the hearing, and the school shall hold the hearing regardless of whether the student or another adult representing the student attends.

As soon as possible following the hearing on expulsion, the Campus Administrator will notify the student in writing of the decision. The decision shall specify:

- The length of the expulsion, if any;
- When the expulsion is not permanent, the procedures for re-admittance at the end of the expulsion period; and
- The right to appeal the Campus Administrator's decision to the Superintendent and Board of Directors.

The notice shall also state that failure to timely request such a hearing constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter. The expulsion does not take effect until the Campus Administrator has made a ruling at the hearing. If the adult student or parents/guardians choose to appeal the decision to the Superintendent and Board of Directors, the expulsion will remain in effect during this time.

Appeal to the Superintendent and Board of Directors

The student may appeal the Campus Administrator's decision to the Superintendent and the Board of Directors by notifying the Campus Administrator in writing within 3 calendar days of the date of receipt of the Campus Administrator's decision. The Superintendent and a select committee of the Board will review the audio or transcribed record from the hearing before the Campus Administrator

at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, or at the discretion of the Board, at a specially called meeting. The Superintendent and Board will notify the adult student or parents/guardians of its decision, in writing, within 3 calendar days of the hearing.

Discipline consequences will not be deferred pending the outcome of an appeal of an expulsion to the Superintendent and Board of Directors.

Searches and Interrogations

Administrators, teachers, and other professional personnel may question a student regarding the student's own conduct or the conduct of other students. In the context of school discipline, students are expected to cooperate with school officials and the lack of such cooperation may lead to further disciplinary action.

Students have full responsibility for the security of their belongings, and for vehicles parked on school property. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that vehicles are locked and the keys are not given to others. Students shall not place, keep, or maintain any article or material that is forbidden by law or district policy in vehicles parked on school property.

School officials may search persons or belongings on school property if there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. If the student refuses, the district shall contact local law enforcement officials or take necessary action to ensure the safety of the school environment.

SECTION IX – FURTHER INFORMATION

Parking

Park only in the areas designated as Excel Center Student Parking. Handicap Parking spaces are only for those with appropriate handicap permits and visitor parking is reserved for visitors to the Excel Center. At the South Bend Excel Center, parking in areas designated for Curtis Products may result in your vehicle being towed.

School Closings

School delays and closings will be posted to local television stations and the Excel Center Facebook page. Students with an email and/or phone number on file will also receive an automated message related to delays and closings.

Wi-Fi Access

Public Wi-Fi: no password needed.

Contact Information

Elkhart

2626 Prairie St.

Elkhart, IN 46517

Phone: 574-206-4880

elkhart@excelcenterhs.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GoodwillExcelElkhart/>

Gary

4610 Ridge Rd.

Gary, IN 46408

Phone: 219-980-6381

gary@excelcenterhs.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/excelcentergary/>

Hammond

5426 169th St.

Hammond, IN 46323

Phone: 219-844-1911

hammond@excelcenterhs.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/excelcenterhammond/>

South Bend

2721 Kenwood Ave.

South Bend, IN 46628

Phone: 574-314-5570

southbend@excelcenterhs.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/excelatgoodwill/>

Corporation Website

<https://www.goodwill-ni.org/excel-center/>



Student Handbook Contract

It is a requirement of The Excel Center that all students sign the Student Handbook Contract prior to beginning classes with The Excel Center. Students must understand and adhere to the school guidelines stated within this Student Handbook (including those summarized below):

1. Student will commit to and participate in scheduled periods of class each Monday – Thursday.
2. Students will maintain good attendance in each class. Students will communicate with their coach and instructor if they must miss class. After 16 consecutive absences, a student may be withdrawn.
3. Students will be on time for each class.
4. Students will dress appropriately for school. This includes but is not limited to: no bare mid-ribs, no see through clothes, no open backs, no low cut tops, no tube/tank/halter tops, no sleeveless shirts, no stomach/back skin, no short shorts, no sagging, no undergarments showing, no clothing with profanity, no drugs, no alcohol, no sex, no obscenities, no violence, no gang related material, no pajamas, no slippers. Student's eyes must be visible to staff at all times (i.e. no sunglasses.)
5. Students will visibly wear their Student ID badge while in school or on school grounds.
6. Students will keep their telephone number, address and email address updated with their coach. All students will have an appropriate email address.
7. Students will be drug-free and alcohol-free while in school or on school grounds.
8. Students will abide by the school's zero tolerance policy for acts of violence and threats of violence.
9. Students will be respectful of every person within The Excel Center.
10. Students will follow all classroom rules.
11. Students will respect our school and help keep all areas neat and clean.

I have received a copy of The Excel Center Student Handbook and will honor the information included in it. I am responsible for knowing, understanding and following the rules for The Excel Center. I will seek guidance from my life coach and/or instructor in any case where I am unclear about the rules.

I understand the consequences of violating any of the policies in the Student Handbook will be left to the discretion of the administrative team of The Excel Center and may result in any consequences ranging from getting sent home from school for the day up to getting expelled from The Excel Center following the violation.

In addition, I acknowledge that if I follow all the above rules and expectations during my time with the school, the instructors, life coaches and staff of The Excel Center will work with me in every way possible to help me graduate with my high school diploma and to prepare me for a successful life beyond high school.

(Student Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)



Student Handbook Contract

is a requirement of The Excel Center that all students sign the Student Handbook Contract prior to beginning classes with The Excel Center. Students must understand and adhere to the school guidelines stated within this Student Handbook (including those summarized below):

1. Student will commit to and participate in scheduled periods of class each Monday – Thursday.
2. Students will maintain good attendance in each class. Students will communicate with their coach and instructor if they must miss class. After 16 consecutive absences, a student may be withdrawn.
3. Students will be on time for each class.
4. Students will dress appropriately for school. This includes but is not limited to: no bare mid-ribs, no see through clothes, no open backs, no low cut tops, no tube/tank/halter tops, no sleeveless shirts, no stomach/back skin, no short shorts, no sagging, no undergarments showing, no clothing with profanity, no drugs, no alcohol, no sex, no obscenities, no violence, no gang related material, no pajamas, no slippers. Student's eyes must be visible to staff at all times (i.e. no sunglasses.)
5. Students will visibly wear their Student ID badge while in school or on school grounds.
6. Students will keep their telephone number, address and email address updated with their coach. All students will have an appropriate email address.
7. Students will be drug-free and alcohol-free while in school or on school grounds.
8. Students will abide by the school's zero tolerance policy for acts of violence and threats of violence.
9. Students will be respectful of every person within The Excel Center.
10. Students will follow all classroom rules.
11. Students will respect our school and help keep all areas neat and clean.

I have received a copy of The Excel Center Student Handbook and will honor the information included in it. I am responsible for knowing, understanding and following the rules for The Excel Center. I will seek guidance from my life coach and/or instructor in any case where I am unclear about the rules.

I understand the consequences of violating any of the policies in the Student Handbook will be left to the discretion of the administrative team of The Excel Center and may result in any consequences ranging from getting sent home from school for the day up to getting expelled from The Excel Center following the violation.

In addition, I acknowledge that if I follow all the above rules and expectations during my time with the school, the instructors, life coaches and staff of The Excel Center will work with me in every way possible to help me graduate with my high school diploma and to prepare me for a successful life beyond high school.

(Student Signature)

(Print Name)

(Date)