



Student/Parent Handbook

2025-2026 School Year

734 Apple Street, Burlington, NC 27217

(336) 226-8526

www.excelalamance.org/champions



NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

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Champions Academy Mission

The mission of Champions Academy is to educate, empower, and engage all students while helping them to become productive leaders in an ever-changing world.

Champions Academy Affirmation

Here at Champions Academy we are respectful to ourselves and others. We take responsibility for our actions. We believe that we can achieve greatness. We are committed to excellence. We will help ourselves and others win because we are leaders and we are CHAMPIONS!

We are Champions and we are C.A.R.E.

Children Achieving Radical Excellence

Purpose of Program

The 21st CCLC program is authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The program provides before and after-school, weekend, and summer school academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low-performing schools to help them meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading, mathematics, and science. In addition, programs may provide activities for youth development, drug and violence prevention, art, music, technology, character education, counseling, and recreation to enhance the program's academic components. The program also supports a component for family literacy and community outreach.

The 21 st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program is authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to provide federal funds to establish or expand community learning centers that operate during out-of-school hours with three specific purposes:

1. Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students (particularly students in high poverty areas and those who attend low-performing schools) meet state and local student performance standards in core academic subjects such as reading and mathematics.
2. Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as: youth development activities; service learning; nutrition and health education; drug and violence prevention programs; counseling programs; arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs; technology education programs; financial literacy programs; environmental literacy programs; mathematics, science, career and technical programs; internship or apprenticeship programs; and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.
3. Offer families of students served by 21 st CCLCs opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Administration

Program Director:	Mrs. Reisha Drumgold	rdrumgold@excelalamance.org	336-226-8526 x7014
Site Coordinator:	Mr. Christian Scott	cscott@excelalamance.org	336-226-8526 x7025
Office Administrator:	Mrs. Janis Holness	jholness@excelalamance.org	336-226-8526 x7013
Lead Teacher:	Mrs. Ernestine Holman	eholman@excelalamance.org	
Fiscal Officer:	Mrs. Jean Oliphant		
Chief Financial Officer:	Rev. Dr. Larry E. Covington		

Schedules

Champions Academy operates on the same calendar as the Alamance Burlington School System. When ABSS is closed to students or operates on a half-day, Champions Academy is closed. Please make alternative arrangements for your child's afterschool transportation and activities.

"Regular" Days (Typically Monday through Thursday)

2:45 – 3:30 pm Arrival, Snack, SocioEmotional Activity
3:30 – 4:30 pm Enrichment Activities
4:30 – 5:45 pm Homework/Tutoring
5:45 – 6:00 pm "Dinner" & Dismissal
6:00 pm Last Pick Up

Fun Fridays

2:45 – 3:30 pm Arrival, Snack, SocioEmotional Activity
3:30 – 5:00 pm Enrichment Class
5:00 – 5:45 pm Homework/Tutoring
5:45 – 6:00 pm "Dinner" & Dismissal
6:00 pm Last Pick Up

Dress Code

To ensure a positive and respectful learning environment, we ask that all students adhere to the following dress code. Parents may be contacted to bring appropriate clothing for their child or to pick up their child if they are out of dress code:

- **Shorts and Skirts:** These are permitted as long as they are at least "finger-tip" length.
- **Shirts and Tops:** Clothing that exposes bare midriffs, bare chests, or undergarments, or that is transparent (see-through) without additional covering, is prohibited. Spaghetti straps, halter tops, tube tops, and shirts that expose a bare back are not allowed. Blouses, collared shirts, t-shirts, and polo shirts are acceptable. Please avoid shirts with slogans or advertisements that may be offensive.
- **Midriff Coverage:** There should be no skin showing between the top of pants and the bottom of shirts, whether standing or sitting.
- **Leggings/Tights:** These are allowed only if worn under a top that extends to mid-thigh.
- **Fit of Clothing:** Clothing must not be so tight that it reveals undergarments.
- **Footwear:** For safety reasons, closed-toe shoes or sandals are required. Flip-flops are discouraged.
- **Hats and Hoods:** No hats or hoods may be worn at any time during the program.

Your cooperation in following these guidelines helps maintain a respectful and comfortable environment for everyone.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend the afterschool program from start to finish on each scheduled day of operation. Attendance is critical to ensure students receive the full benefit of the program's educational and enrichment activities. Excessive absences may result in dismissal from the program.

Late Arrivals/Early Departures:

If your child needs to arrive late or leave early on any given day, please communicate this information in advance to one of the following contacts:

- **Site Manager:** Christian Scott at 336-226-8526 x7025 or cscott@excelalamance.org
- **Administrator:** Janis Holness at 336-226-5726 x7013 or jholness@excelalamance.org
- You may also reach out to Mr. Scott or Mrs. Drumgold through the TalkingPoints app.

Consistent Absences for Extracurricular Activities:

If your child will have a consistent absence due to participation in a seasonal extracurricular activity, this must be communicated **in writing** to the Program Director, Reisha Drumgold, at rdrumgold@excelalamance.org.

Parent Meeting Requirement:

Parents are required to attend at least **50% of parent meetings** held throughout the program year to stay informed and engaged in their child's progress and program activities.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring consistent attendance and communication, as it helps us maintain a supportive and structured environment for all students.

Policies for Champions Students

Restroom Policy

Children must go into the bathroom one at a time and staff must remain standing at the door with the door propped open. Should a child need assistance with bathroom needs, one staff should remain at the door and one staff person (preferably of the same gender) should assist the child with their needs. Children should never be allowed to enter the same bathroom stall or be sent to the bathroom alone. Children and staff should wash their hands after using the bathroom, playing sports or outside and before and after eating. Hand sanitizer should be utilized after students blow their noses.

Illness

A child must be isolated from the group and the parent and Site Director should be contacted if any of the following symptoms appear. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts must be reached.

- Severe pain or discomfort, particularly in the joints, abdomen and ears
- Acute diarrhea characterized as two times the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a loose consistency
- Vomiting
- Severe cough or sore throat
- Oral temperature of 99.8 degrees F or over
- Yellow/Jaundiced skin or yellow eyes

- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches or lesions
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin rashes and/or severe itching of body or scalp
- Lice
- Swollen joints
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- Stiff neck
- Blood or pus from the ear, skin, urine or stool
- Unusual behavior for the child characterized by confusion or persistent, inconsolable crying
- Loss of appetite characterized by refusing all solids
- Symptoms, which indicate any of the following diseases: Chicken Pox, Lice, Strep Throat, Impetigo, Scabies, Pink Eye and Measles

The child may return to the program when they are symptom free for 24 hours or a licensed physician indicates the child poses no serious health risk to any other children via a signed physician's note. In case of absences due to communicable diseases, the child must have a physician's note to return to the program. Announcements regarding any communicable diseases will be posted at the site to make parents aware that they exist.

Minor Injuries

Injuries such as bumps and bruises, etc... will be treated using First Aid procedures. Parents will be notified of the injury when they pick up their child. An accident report must be completed the same day and immediately forwarded to the Site Coordinator.

Serious Injuries

If the Champions has suspected that a child has broken a limb, requires stitches, or has otherwise seriously injured him/herself, a staff will stay with the group while the other staff calls 911 and the Program Director. Provide appropriate first aid. An ambulance must be called to transport the child.

The Site Coordinator must be notified immediately. An accident report must be completed that same day and forwarded to the Program Director immediately.

Playground/Outdoor Safety

Children should follow all school rules regarding playground use/outdoor play. Standard rules include no food or drinks on playground equipment; do not walk up slides, no standing on top of structures (ie. monkey bars, tall structures, etc.), no pushing/shoving, one person at a time on slides, swings and other equipment, children must be in the site of staff at all times.

Medication

Medication may only be given to children if it has been provided by the parent with written permissions on file from the student's doctor.

Homework & Academic Support Procedures

Champions Academy is committed to supporting students' academic success while also providing engaging enrichment experiences. Homework completion and academic support are incorporated into the daily program structure as outlined below.

Daily Homework Check

Each program day, students are asked whether they have homework or academic assignments from their school. This daily check helps staff appropriately plan students' academic support needs.

- **Students who report that they do not have homework** will participate fully in the scheduled lesson plan activities and enrichment programming for the afternoon.
- **Students who report that they do have homework** will enjoy the enrichment activity and then be provided dedicated time and a structured environment to work on their assignments.

Homework Support

Students with homework are given ample time and opportunity to complete assignments during program hours. Champions Academy staff are available to:

- Provide guidance and clarification when requested by the student,
- Encourage independent problem-solving and positive study habits, and
- Monitor progress to ensure students remain engaged and on task.

While staff offer support, Champions Academy does not complete homework for students. The program focuses on reinforcing skills, building confidence, and supporting learning in alignment with students' school-day instruction.

Support for Students with IEPs and Special Needs

Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or other documented learning needs will receive academic support in accordance with the documentation provided by their parent or caregiver. Champions Academy will make reasonable efforts to:

- Provide appropriate accommodations or instructional supports as outlined in the student's documentation, and
- Offer individualized assistance during homework and academic support time as needed.

Parents or caregivers are responsible for providing current and accurate documentation to ensure appropriate supports can be implemented.

Parent Partnership

Champions Academy encourages families to communicate regularly with program staff regarding homework expectations, academic concerns, or changes in a student's support needs. This partnership helps ensure consistent support between school, home, and the afterschool program.

Release of Children

Children may only be released to a custodial parent or guardian, or other person listed as authorized by the parent/guardian on the child's registration paperwork located in the child information binder. Staff must verify the person picking up with a photo id (driver's license, passport, military id, etc.). If staff is unable to verify the person attempting to pick the child up the child is NOT to be released.

School Pick-Up & Transportation Authorization Policy

Champions Academy partners closely with participating schools to ensure the safe and orderly transportation of students from school to the Champions Academy program. To support student safety and clear communication, the following procedures apply:

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to notify their child's school that their child(ren) will be attending **Champions Academy** and that the student is authorized to be dismissed from school and picked up by Champions Academy staff for program participation.

Parents/guardians must ensure that:

- Champions Academy is listed as an approved after-school pick-up option with the school, and
- Any school-required transportation or dismissal authorization forms are completed accurately and on time.

Failure to complete or maintain proper authorization with the school may result in a student not being released for Champions Academy transportation.

School Dismissal Procedures

When Champions Academy vehicles arrive at each participating school:

- **School personnel are responsible for releasing students** who have been authorized by their parent or guardian for Champions Academy pick-up.
- Students are brought by school staff to the designated pick-up location and loaded onto the Champions Academy vehicle under staff supervision.

Champions Academy Staff Procedures

For the safety and security of all students:

- **Champions Academy staff do not enter school buildings** to retrieve students.
- Champions Academy relies on school personnel to release only those students who have proper parental authorization on file.

Important Reminder

If a student is not released by school staff due to missing, incomplete, or incorrect authorization, Champions Academy staff are unable to override school dismissal procedures. In such cases, the parent or guardian will be responsible for arranging alternate pick-up directly with the school.

In the event that a student **should have been released to Champions Academy but is not released by the school**, Champions Academy will assess the situation based on timing, staffing, student safety, and transportation logistics. At Champions Academy's discretion, staff may either:

- Return to the school to pick up the student, **or**
- Advise school personnel that the student will need to utilize alternate transportation arrangements to return home.

Champions Academy's priority is the safety of all students, and decisions will be made in the best interest of the program and participating children.

Transportation Policy

The Champions Academy employees are NOT permitted to transport Champions Academy participants in their personal vehicles at any time. Any person having a personal relationship with any Champions Academy student must disclose the relationship/friendship in writing to the Program Director.

For students attending one of our official feeder schools, the program provides van transportation to drop them off at home if their parents or guardians are unable to pick them up. All other students must be picked up by their parents/guardians at the designated time of 6:00 p.m.

The program van drivers follow a consistent route when picking up and dropping off students from feeder schools. However, please note that dropping off each student at home can take additional time. Factors such as weather, traffic, road construction, and changes in student routes may cause delays. If your child needs to be home by a specific time, we recommend arranging to pick them up from the program no later than 6:00 p.m.

Van Drop-Off Requirements:

- **Mandatory Adult Presence:** An adult must be **visible and present** at the child's drop-off location to receive them. Children **will not be released** from the van unless a responsible adult is present and visible.
- **Drop-Off Location:** Children will **only be dropped off** at the address provided in their application. No exceptions.
- **Supervision:** Children are **not allowed** to enter their homes without adult supervision present.

If no adult is available to receive the child:

- The child will remain on the van and be returned to the church site.
- Reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parent or emergency contacts.
- If no one can be reached, the local police department will be contacted to escort the child home.

Your cooperation with these procedures ensures the safety of your child and the smooth operation of our transportation services.

Behavior Management – Students & Parents

Staff must guide children in a manner consistent with care, honesty, respect and responsibility. Children will be encouraged to think about choices they make daily. Staff will use positive reinforcement techniques and discussion to guide children in making positive and appropriate choices. Inappropriate behavior will result in consequences and will be handled in the following manner:

STUDENTS

- **Minor Behavior Issues:**
 - **Verbal Warning/Redirection-** Children will be redirected to another activity when needed.
 - **Types of Behaviors (examples):**
 - Talking during quiet time or instructional periods
 - Not following staff instructions
 - Running in the hallway or play area
 - Disrupting activities (e.g., shouting or rough play)
 - **Response:** Staff provides a calm verbal correction, explaining why the behavior is inappropriate and what is expected moving forward.
- **Major Behavior Issues**
 - **Reflection Time & Incident Report:** Removal from an activity Children behaving aggressively will immediately be removed from the activity. Time outs may be used to a maximum of one minute for every year of age of the child. All efforts should be made to resolve issues peacefully and allow the child to return fully to program as quickly as safely possible. Parents may be notified by the Site Coordinator of incident at pick up or asked to pick immediately depending on the nature of the incident. Program Director should also be made aware of incident.
 - **Types of Behaviors (examples):**
 - Repeating disruptive behavior after a verbal warning
 - Minor physical altercations (pushing, shoving)
 - Defacing or damaging property (e.g., drawing on tables)
 - Showing disrespect toward staff or peers
 - First instance of vulgar language or inappropriate gestures
 - **Response:** The child is removed from the activity for reflection and has a one-on-one conversation with staff. An **incident report** is completed, documenting the behavior. The report is shared with parents at pick-up.
- **Aggressive Behavior**
 - **Parent Contact & Early Pick-Up:** If behaviors occur once staff will remind the children that such behavior is not appropriate and will not be tolerated. Staff will make every effort to redirect the child to a positive activity; if aggressive behaviors continue or escalate the child will be removed from activities and directed to the Site Coordinator. Should behaviors escalate or continue parents and the Program Director will be notified and appropriate disciplinary actions taken.
 - **Types of Behaviors (Examples):**
 - Repeated use of vulgar or inappropriate language (second offense)
 - Persistent refusal to follow instructions
 - Disrespectful or defiant behavior toward staff
 - Bullying or making hurtful comments to peers
 - Leaving the designated area without permission
 - **Response:** The parent is contacted and asked to pick up the child early. The behavior is discussed with the parent, and an incident report is completed and reviewed.
- **Zero Tolerance Policy**

- **Suspension or Expulsion:** The Champions Academy will not tolerate any violence or threats of any kind. If a child is involved in any inappropriate physical contact (which is determined by the Program Director), he/she will immediately be suspended from the program.
- **Types of Behaviors:**
 - Repeated physical aggression or fighting
 - Unsafe behavior (e.g., leaving the facility grounds, tampering with safety equipment)
 - Destruction of property
 - Threatening harm to staff or peers
 - Repeated misbehavior after previous steps and documented interventions
- **Response:** The child is suspended or expelled from the program based on the severity and frequency of the behavior. An incident report is completed and shared with the parent, and the decision is discussed in a final meeting.

PARENTS

- **Verbal Warning**
 - **Examples of Behaviors:**
 - Being on the phone while picking up a child, causing delays or distractions.
 - Not coming inside to pick up the child, instead expecting the child to come out unsupervised.
 - Frequently arriving late to pick up the child without notifying staff.
 - Use of vulgar language in front of children (first offense).
 - Ignoring or not responding to program policies (e.g., dismissal procedures).
 - **Arriving to pick up a child exhibiting signs that raise concern for possible impairment,** including but not limited to the odor of alcohol or illegal substances, slurred speech, unsteady movement, or other observable behaviors that may affect safe supervision of a child (first occurrence).
 - **Response:** A calm, professional conversation is held with the parent or guardian to address the inappropriate or concerning behavior. Staff will clarify program policies, emphasize student safety expectations, and outline required changes for future pick-ups. The interaction will be documented for program records.
- **Parent-Child Program Expulsion**
 - **Examples of Behaviors:**
 - Continued use of vulgar or abusive language directed at staff or in front of children (second offense).
 - Verbal or physical abuse of staff members (e.g., threats, aggressive behavior).
 - Repeated refusal to follow program pick-up procedures (e.g., not coming inside, or being excessively late without communication).
 - Creating a consistently disruptive environment that affects the safety and well-being of children and staff.
 - Any form of physical aggression toward staff or other parents.
 - Repeated incidents of arriving for child pick-up while appearing impaired or engaging in behaviors that pose a safety risk to the child, staff, or others, or refusal to comply with staff direction related to child safety.
 - **Response:** The child is expelled from the program. The parent or guardian is informed in writing that the decision is final due to repeated violations or behavior that significantly compromises the safety and well-being of students and staff.

NOTE: Champions Academy reserves the right to take immediate action when a child's safety is at risk. In situations where staff have reasonable safety concerns at pick-up, alternate arrangements may be required before the child is released.

Internet Use & Online Safety Policy

Champions Academy integrates technology and internet-based resources to support academic instruction, enrichment activities, research, and skill development. Internet access is provided in a structured and supervised environment to enhance students' learning experiences.

Authorized Educational Use

Internet access is permitted solely for educational purposes related to program activities, including but not limited to:

- Homework and academic research
- Educational websites, platforms, and learning tools
- Teacher-directed instructional activities

Students may only access approved websites and online resources as directed by Champions Academy staff.

Supervision and Safety Measures

All student internet use occurs under the supervision of Champions Academy staff. The program takes reasonable precautions to promote safe and appropriate use of technology, which may include:

- Monitoring student activity during internet use
- Restricting access to non-educational or inappropriate websites
- Reinforcing responsible digital behavior and online safety practices

Champions Academy strives to create a safe digital learning environment; however, no internet filtering or monitoring system is completely foolproof.

Compliance with Federal Law

Internet use within Champions Academy is conducted in compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). Online tools or platforms used with students under the age of 13 are selected with student privacy and data protection in mind.

Limitations of Responsibility

While Champions Academy takes reasonable steps to ensure safe internet use, the program cannot guarantee that students will not encounter inappropriate or unintended content. Parents and guardians acknowledge this inherent risk and understand that Champions Academy, its staff, and affiliates are not liable for content accessed during supervised program use.

Parent/Guardian Authorization

Internet access is granted only to students whose parent or legal guardian has provided written authorization as part of the program application process. By enrolling their child in Champions Academy, parents/guardians confirm their understanding and acceptance of this Internet Use Policy.

Consequences for Misuse

Inappropriate or unauthorized use of the internet, including accessing non-educational content or failing to follow staff direction, may result in restricted access, disciplinary action, or loss of internet privileges in accordance with program policies.

Data Sharing & FERPA Policy

Champions Academy is committed to protecting student privacy while using educational data responsibly to support student success and meet program requirements. This policy outlines how student information is accessed, used, and safeguarded in accordance with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**.

Purpose of Data Access and Sharing

With written parental consent provided during the application process, Champions Academy may access and review student education records to:

- Support academic growth and individualized learning needs,
- Monitor attendance, behavior, and academic progress, and
- Meet reporting, evaluation, and accountability requirements associated with the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program.

Types of Records Accessed

With parent or guardian authorization, Champions Academy may obtain and review educational records from a student's school or school district, including but not limited to:

- Attendance records
- Discipline and behavior reports
- Progress reports and report cards
- Assessment results, when available
- Other relevant educational information from the previous and current academic years

Only information necessary to support the student's participation and success in the program is accessed.

Use and Confidentiality of Information

Student information obtained under this authorization:

- Is used solely for educational, programmatic, and reporting purposes,
- Is shared only with authorized Champions Academy staff who have a legitimate educational interest, and
- Is handled in a manner that protects confidentiality and complies with applicable federal, state, and grant requirements.

Champions Academy does not disclose student education records to unauthorized individuals or entities.

Data Security and Protection

Reasonable safeguards are in place to protect student records from unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse. Records may be stored securely in paper or electronic form and are accessed only as necessary to fulfill program responsibilities.

Parental Rights and Revocation of Consent

Parents and guardians retain the right to revoke their FERPA authorization at any time by submitting a written request to Champions Academy. Revocation will apply prospectively and may affect the program's ability to access school data necessary for academic support and grant reporting.

Ongoing Consent

FERPA authorization remains in effect unless and until it is revoked in writing by the parent or guardian. By enrolling their child in Champions Academy, families acknowledge their understanding of and agreement with this Data Sharing & FERPA Policy.

Family Engagement Policy

Champions Academy recognizes families as essential partners in student success. Meaningful family engagement strengthens academic outcomes, reinforces positive behavior, and supports the overall effectiveness of the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program. This policy outlines expectations for family involvement and collaboration.

Shared Commitment to Student Success

By enrolling their child in Champions Academy, parents and guardians agree to actively support their child's participation and uphold all program policies and procedures outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook. Family engagement is a key component of the program and contributes directly to student growth and program quality.

Attendance and Participation Support

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends the program regularly and arrives and departs on time,
- Recognize that consistent participation is critical to academic progress and social development, and
- Notify program staff of absences or changes that may affect participation.

Adherence to Program Policies

Families are responsible for understanding and following all Champions Academy policies, including those related to attendance, behavior, discipline, communication, safety, and transportation. Consistent adherence helps maintain a safe, respectful, and structured learning environment for all students.

Parent and Family Engagement Activities

As part of the 21st CCLC program requirements, families are expected to participate in parent engagement activities offered by Champions Academy. These activities may include:

- Family engagement nights or workshops,
- Parent meetings, conferences, or informational sessions, and
- Opportunities that support student learning, wellness, and development.

Participation in these activities supports program goals and strengthens the connection between home, school, and afterschool learning.

Communication and Collaboration

Open and ongoing communication between families and program staff is essential. Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Communicate regularly with staff regarding their child's academic progress, behavior, or individual needs,
- Share relevant updates that may impact their child's participation or success, and
- Respond to program communications in a timely manner.

Support for Positive Behavior

Families play a critical role in reinforcing positive behavior expectations. Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Encourage their child to follow the program's code of conduct,
- Support staff in addressing behavioral concerns when they arise, and
- Promote respect, responsibility, and cooperation within the program community.

Commitment to Partnership

By signing the program application and Parent Compact, families affirm their commitment to active engagement, cooperation, and shared responsibility in supporting their child's success in Champions Academy. This partnership is fundamental to maintaining a high-quality, student-centered afterschool program.

Family Communication Plan

Champions Academy is committed to maintaining clear, consistent, and inclusive communication with families to support student success and meaningful family engagement. This written Family Communication Plan outlines how the program communicates with families and ensures equitable access to information for all households, including non-native English-speaking families and families with limited literacy, in accordance with 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Grant Guidance Section 6.D.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to:

- Promote open, two-way communication between families and program staff,
- Ensure families receive timely, accurate, and understandable information related to their child's participation and progress, and
- Remove language and literacy barriers that could limit family engagement or access to program information.

Language Accessibility (English & Spanish)

All Champions Academy family communications are available in both English and Spanish. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Written notices, emails, and flyers,
- Text messages and digital communications,
- Enrollment materials and program updates, and
- The Champions Academy website, excelalamance.org, which provides bilingual access to program information.

Families may request additional language support as needed.

Enrollment & Program Communications

Each family will receive an enrollment confirmation email at the start of their child's participation in the Champions Academy program. Families will also receive a Family Engagement Calendar outlining scheduled family engagement activities for the program year.

Prior to each scheduled family engagement session, families will receive event reminders with relevant details to support participation.

Parents and guardians will receive ongoing communications related to:

- Program schedules and updates,
- Family engagement activities and events,
- Attendance and participation reminders,
- Facility status updates, including closures, delays, or schedule changes, and
- Other information necessary to support student participation and program operations.

Families may also request and receive copies of any ECAA Champions Academy testing or assessment results related to their child, in accordance with privacy protections and program policies.

School Calendar Alignment & Closings

Champions Academy operates in alignment with the Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) calendar and schedule of closings.

- When ABSS is closed for students or operating on a half day, Champions Academy is also closed.
- Families will be notified of closures or schedule changes using established communication channels.

Champions Academy reserves the right to close or modify operations due to inclement weather, facility concerns, or other unforeseen challenges, even if ABSS schools remain open. In such situations, families will be notified as promptly as possible.

Core Communication Expectations

Champions Academy encourages families to:

- Communicate regularly with staff regarding their child's academic progress, behavior, or individual needs,
- Share relevant updates that may impact their child's participation or success, and
- Respond to program communications in a timely manner to support effective coordination.

Primary Communication Methods

Champions Academy uses multiple communication methods to ensure accessibility and understanding, including:

- Verbal communication at pick-up or during scheduled meetings,
- Phone calls and text messaging,
- Written notices and flyers, and
- Digital communication platforms such as TalkingPoints.

No single communication method is relied upon exclusively.

Support for Non-Native English-Speaking Families

To support families whose primary language is not English, Champions Academy:

- Provides bilingual (English and Spanish) communication whenever possible,
- Utilizes translation-supported communication tools, and
- Encourages families to download and use the free **TalkingPoints** app (<https://talkingpts.org/>), which:
 - Automatically translates messages into the family's preferred language,
 - Allows two-way communication between families and staff, and
 - Supports consistent communication without requiring families to read or write English fluently.

Support for Families with Limited Literacy

Champions Academy recognizes that some families may have limited reading or writing abilities. To support these families, the program:

- Prioritizes verbal communication and phone calls when needed,
- Explains written materials using plain, family-friendly language,
- Provides opportunities for families to ask questions in person or by phone, and
- Uses reminders and follow-up communication to ensure understanding of important information.

Staff make reasonable efforts to confirm understanding when sharing critical updates.

Accessibility and Responsiveness

Champions Academy strives to:

- Provide clear, culturally responsive communication,
- Share timely reminders for important dates, events, and requirements, and
- Respond to family inquiries within a reasonable timeframe.

Families may request alternate communication formats or additional support at any time.

Continuous Improvement

Champions Academy periodically reviews communication practices and seeks informal feedback from families to improve accessibility, effectiveness, and responsiveness. Adjustments are made as needed to ensure communication practices meet the diverse needs of the families served.

Commitment to Partnership

By enrolling their child in Champions Academy, families acknowledge their role as partners in communication and engagement. Champions Academy is committed to fostering a welcoming, inclusive environment where all families—regardless of language or literacy level—can remain informed, engaged, and supported.

Emergency Procedures

Staff must know where emergency exits are located within the building. Emergency information is posted in each room for all staff.

In the event of an evacuation, please adhere to the following:

- Evacuate the building to a designated meet up location.
- Take attendance sheets.
- After evacuating, make sure all children in attendance are accounted for
- Enter the building only after the all clear has been given by the emergency professionals.

Safety drills will be conducted periodically with the students reviewing procedures for fire, tornado, lockdown, and/or active shooter protocols.

Parents are to follow instructions received through the Talking Points Application to pick up their child in the event of an emergency. There are several scenarios to consider therefore please be diligent when following the instructions.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Procedures

The Champions Academy takes allegations of child abuse and neglect seriously. All child care staff are legally mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect. Should any staff person witness or hear of a report of child abuse or neglect they are legally required to report the allegation to the Child Abuse Prevention Hotline. The phone numbers for the child abuse hotline are located in the student information binder at each site location. Reports are to be made immediately and the Program Director should also be notified when a report is made. Staff is not to investigate the claims for validity. If a child discloses a case of abuse or neglect or staff have reason to suspect such has occurred (visible bruising, child wearing the same clothing multiple days in a row, etc.) they are to call the hotline and report the allegation immediately after calming the child and seeking assistance from co-staff and the Site Coordinator. Staff making such a call should have the child's information file accessible and move to a private area where they will not be overheard by children. Do NOT have the child call or be present while calling.

Title VI

Title VI is a Federal law that protects persons from discrimination based on their race, color or national origin in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance. The Champions Academy does not discriminate against any person based on their race, color or national origin at any time.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Agreement to Follow the Rules of the Champions Academy Student/Parent Handbook

We, the undersigned, acknowledge that we have received, read, and understand the **2025-2026 Champions Academy Student/Parent Handbook**. By signing below, we agree to adhere to and follow all the rules and policies outlined in the handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this signed acknowledgment to the program staff to confirm your understanding and agreement.