



# Student Handbook

## 2024-2025

The Excel Center  
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Aurora, CO 80013  
720-864-9674  
[excelcentercolorado.org](http://excelcentercolorado.org)



# GENERAL OVERVIEW

## School Mission

The mission of The Excel Center (TEC) is to provide adults aged 22 and older the opportunity and support to earn a Colorado high school diploma and begin post-secondary education while developing career paths in sectors of the local economy that offer better-than-average employment and growth opportunities. The school will “meet students where they are” in their education journey by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help them manage work, life and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

## The Excel Center Model

The Excel Center is operated by Goodwill of Colorado and operates on three main pillars: an academic philosophy that meets the goals and needs of adult students, a focus on college and career readiness and student support services designed to address barriers that may impede continued educational success. TEC provides adults aged 22 and older the opportunity and support to earn a Colorado high school diploma and begin post-secondary education. The program provides transportation assistance for travel within the Denver metro area, drop-in childcare while the student is on campus taking classes and Student Support Services Specialists.

## Academic Instruction

Students enroll at The Excel Center at various education levels, have different amounts of school credits to earn and face various life obstacles, including work and family obligations. Therefore, each student will establish educational goals and move at their own pace to achieve these goals. The Excel Center staff will work with each student to craft a unique educational program that fits his or her specific needs.

## Career and College Readiness Specialist (CCRS)

Students’ educational plans will build toward completion of industry recognized certificates, college credits and/or advanced degrees that lead to career pathways. TEC promotes students’ awareness and access to valuable careers by introducing students to several possibilities and helping outline the path a student can take to enter a specific career. Students will be introduced to the CCRS when beginning classes at TEC.

## Student Support Services Specialists (SSSS)

Student Support Services Specialist help students with academic advising and address the life barriers and issues that often prevent students from being successful. The relationship Student Support Services Specialists create with each student provides security and encouragement and builds confidence for students to persevere when work becomes challenging and life barriers become difficult to manage.

## Program Schedule

The Excel Center operates year-round and offers classes throughout five, eight-week sessions. Enrollment is open year-round. 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 throughout the year. Below is the schedule The Excel Center will follow:

Monday – Thursday	Friday
Teacher Prep: 8:30-9:00 am	Students will engage in self-directed learning.
Period 1: 9:00 am-10:30 am	Tutoring will be available.
Period 2: 10:35-12:05	The computer lab is available for student use.
Lunch: 12:05-12:35 pm	
Period 3: 12:35-2:05	
Period 4: 2:10-3:40	

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# ENROLLMENT PROCESS

## Enrollment Procedure

Anyone who left high school before graduating and earning a high school diploma and anyone who has a GED can enroll. However, The Excel Center is designed for adults 22 years and older. Applicants may apply online at [excelcentercolorado.org](http://excelcentercolorado.org) or may call (720) 864-9674.

Students are required to submit necessary documentation in the application packet prior to receiving an invitation to attend The Excel Center orientation. Enrolled students will read and acknowledge The Excel Center student handbook and provide their signature indicating they agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

All classes will incorporate lessons in employability skills. Lessons include, but are not limited to: interview skills, mock interview opportunities, email and phone etiquette, resume creation, volunteer opportunities, job shadowing, digital literacy training, etc.

There are five steps to become a student at The Excel Center:

**Step 1: Application** - Adults interested in enrolling at The Excel Center should apply online at [excelcentercolorado.org](http://excelcentercolorado.org). You must be a Colorado resident in order to attend The Excel Center.

**Step 2: Obtain a transcript** - Students applying to attend The Excel Center should contact the last high school they attended and obtain their transcript. Transcripts should be obtained prior to attending new student orientation and students should bring their transcript with them when attending orientation. In cases when a student has difficulty obtaining their transcript, The Excel Center staff may provide assistance in obtaining the transcript or provide a transcript waiver.

**Step 3: Attend New Student Orientation (NSO)** - Students will receive an invitation to attend New Student Orientation. Attendance at the New Student Orientation is required before classes begin. Please bring proof of your Colorado address to orientation. Proof of address can include, but is not limited to, a utility bill, a rent or mortgage statement or any other mail indicating your name and current address.

**Step 4: Assessment Test** - Students will complete a math, reading and writing placement test to help determine the best classes for them to begin. For English language learners, there will be a placement test to determine their appropriate skill level.

**Step 5: First Day of Classes** - Students will receive class schedule confirmation from their Student Support Services Specialist. Steps one through four must be completed for an applicant to begin classes at The Excel Center.

Any applicant who partially completes the enrollment process for a given session, but does not attend classes should contact the Office Administrator at (720) 864-9674 to confirm their next step to enrollment.

## Re-Enrollment

Students who withdraw from the school can re-enroll by contacting their Student Support Services Specialist.

## Waiting List Procedure

In the event The Excel Center student body reaches capacity, the school will begin to add students to a waiting list. Students will be selected from the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis. The waiting list will be maintained, as needed, year-round.

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## 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. The enrollment lottery will include only students who have completed the application, submitted their transcript and attended NSO. 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. Students selected will be offered the opportunity to enroll. Students not selected will be placed on a waiting list in the order their numbers are drawn. The Lottery will be held two weeks prior to the beginning of each session.

## Scheduling

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

# STUDENT SERVICES

## Student Support Services Specialists

Each student at The Excel Center will be assigned to a Student Support Services Specialist. The Specialist will help students address concerns in their life and facilitate access to supportive services to help them stay in school and achieve their goals. The Specialist will meet with students individually and in small groups to provide a forum for students to share concerns and address barriers they may be facing. Regular meetings may be scheduled based on the student's individual need(s). Specialists are also responsible for tracking students' academic progress, graduation plans and guiding them toward post-secondary pathways.

## The Adventure Center Childcare

The Excel Center operates a drop-in childcare center, called The Adventure Center, for students who have children between the ages of 2 ½ and 12. The Adventure Center is accessible when a student is attending classes on-site and parents are required to remain on-site while utilizing The Adventure Center. A child may stay in the drop-in center for a maximum of 3 hours per day. The Adventure Center provides an introductory curriculum for children who engage with this service. The Adventure Center is available from 8:00am – 5:00pm and will be closed for lunch. Students are responsible for picking-up their child at lunch time and providing lunch for their child. Vending machines, microwaves and tables are available throughout The Excel Center. There is no cost for this service. Students who leave The Excel Center campus while their child is in The Adventure Center will not be allowed to use The Adventure Center. Students will need to register their child for The Adventure Center directly with the daycare staff.

## Transportation Assistance

The Excel Center will provide public transportation assistance to students, which is a cost-effective way for students to attend class. Passes are distributed by the Office Administrator. Passes are available to students who are enrolled in the current session. If a student misuses or misplaces their transportation pass, additional passes will not be provided.

## 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 Section 504 plans under the Americans 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 work with students to establish academic schedules that are appropriate for the 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 Section 504 plan. The Excel Center will provide reasonable accommodations based on the documented needs of the student.

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## Student Records

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 Excel Center must have written consent from a student before personal information can be released to a third party (i.e., spouse, parent, employer, etc.). Student records are maintained in a secure student information system. The Excel Center does not require students to submit health records. All staff of The Excel Center have access to student records for advising and support services purposes.

Throughout the year, Goodwill of Colorado will provide the Colorado Department of Education and other current and potential funders with aggregate student data. This data will NOT contain any identifying student information.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate, a student must fulfill the graduation requirements for the State of Colorado as established by the Department of Education. Graduation requirements are as follows:

- English - 4 credits
- Math - 4 credits
- Science - 3 credits
- Social Studies - 3 credits (1 of which must be US History and .5 Civil Gov)
- College & Career Readiness or Financial Literacy - 1 credit
- Elective & Additional core Academic Courses - 5 credits

## Earning Credits

Students primarily receive face-to-face instruction, with very few courses available online. 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. Students who have demonstrated high skill levels may enroll in dual credit courses to begin their career pathway certification or post-secondary education. Certification and shortened courses, such as a two-day introductory course, will be offered for students to earn credits.

## Transfer Credits

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

## Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to teach the necessary content and skills to grant students a Colorado high school diploma, focusing on the following academic subjects: language arts/English, mathematics, social studies and science. Courses are designed to develop the skills required to be successful in modern careers.



# STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

## 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. Students should be present and arrive on time for each scheduled class. If tardiness or absence is unavoidable, the student must contact their Student Support Services Specialist. Absent students will be contacted by text, phone call, and/or email. Students must check-in at the front desk before going to class when they are tardy.

## Active Student Policy and Withdrawal

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 to withdraw.

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

- Submit an official withdrawal form to school staff
- By default, after 16 absences in a session a withdrawal form will be submitted on the student's behalf

By signing the Student Handbook, students acknowledge and agree they have read and understand the above options/circumstances as an active student, and consent for a withdrawal form to be submitted on the student's behalf under said circumstances. Student Support Services Specialists can provide assistance in obtaining and/or clarifying the information included in this handbook.

## Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to provide fair and reasonable procedures to promote student development and to ensure students engage in conduct that supports a productive learning environment for themselves and others. If a student chooses to engage in behaviors that interferes with the education of students, he or she may be immediately dismissed from The Excel Center temporarily or permanently.

The following are examples of disruptive behaviors in the areas of attendance, use of technology, dress code and respect. Examples include, but are not limited to:

### Attendance

- Persistent or excessive absences or tardiness
- Absence without a valid reason
- Tardiness without contacting the Teacher, Office Administrator and/or Student Support Services Specialist in advance
- Leaving the classroom without permission

### Use of Technology

- Talking on the phone or texting during class
- Failing to set phone to silent or vibrate during class time

### Dress Code

- Clothing that reveals the breasts, midriff or butt area
- Attire that is not neat, clean or appropriate for school

- Attire that displays weapons and/or promotes violence

### **Respect**

- Any behavior that is disruptive to the orderly process of classroom instruction
- Language that may be offensive to others (cursing, profanity, racial slurs, etc.)
- Refusal to actively participate in class activities or complete assigned tasks
- Persistent defiance to the requests and guidance of school staff

### **Other unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:**

- Threats, bullying or intimidation
- Physical harm to self or others (including fighting)
- Bringing, using or possessing a weapon at TEC campus
- Possession or use of a drug, controlled substance, or alcohol
- Vaping in the building
- Assault
- Theft or robbery
- Cheating or plagiarism

### **Acceptable Use of Technology**

The primary purpose of using the internet at school is the promotion of educational excellence through increased access to information and innovative instruction. Student access to the network resources is a privilege, not a right. Students will be expected to use the resources for the educational purposes for which they are provided. Just as they are responsible for good behavior in the classroom, students are expected to show the same type of consideration while using the internet.

### **Disciplinary Action**

The purpose of disciplinary action at The Excel Center is to ensure both individual students and the school community remain focused on growth and learning. Depending on the nature of the infraction and the student's past performance, any or all of the following consequences may be appropriate and must be documented:

- Warning – Oral or Written - immediate resolution of the issue is expected.
- Participation in instructional program - a student may be expected to attend a course such as anger management, conflict resolution, peer mediation or stress reduction.
- Remuneration - a student may be expected to perform service to correct or repair any damages or harm which may have resulted from the student's behavior.

### **Expulsion**

After a proper investigation and hearing, a student may be expelled when their behavior renders it appropriate. Poor attendance or repeated offenses can lead to expulsion. When the school Director or designee makes a recommendation for expulsion of a student, the school Director or designee may suspend the student until the conclusion of expulsion proceedings. This may occur if the school Director believes the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of:

- Interference with an educational function or school purposes.
- A physical injury to themselves, other students, school employees or visitors to the school

- Expulsion is mandatory for the following reasons:
  - Bringing, using or possessing a weapon on school grounds. Expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year shall be mandated for a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school, except that the school Director may modify the expulsion order on a case by-case basis.
  - Theft or robbery.
  - Commission of an act, which, if committed by an adult, would be first- or second-degree assault as defined in Colorado law.
  - The possession of a drug or controlled substance as defined in Colorado law.
  - Threats, bullying and/or intimidation will not be tolerated at The Excel Center or in connection with students, families and staff of The Excel Center. Students will be subject to expulsion for verified acts which threaten, bully or intimidate others.
- Fighting will not be tolerated at The Excel Center. A student who physically strikes another individual will be subject to expulsion.

### **Restorative Justice Procedures**

Purpose:

- To assist the student in understanding a performance problem and opportunity for improvement exists.
- To assist the student in overcoming performance problems and satisfy The Excel Center expectations.
- To prepare students for conduct that is expected in the workplace.
- To provide students with opportunities for due process in disciplinary actions.

Steps - Counseling by the Student Support Services Specialist in conjunction with input from the student's teachers, is the initial step to mentor or modify performance:

- Meet with the student and affirm expectations regarding performance.
- Discuss the performance deficit or behavioral concern.
- Provide a timeline and resources for improvement.
- Report consequences for no improvement.

### **Verbal Redirection**

After an investigation, the procedure outlined above will be followed for the counseling process. This process will include a discussion of previous informal efforts and the current warning.

### **Written Redirection**

At this time, the Student Support Services Specialist or Teacher may consult the Director. After an investigation, the procedure outlined above for the counseling process will be followed, except for providing documentation to the staff person in the letter of reprimand. The letter should outline previous informal efforts and the current issue. Tools such as attendance improvement plans, behavior improvement plans and performance improvement plans can be used at this stage. These plans can be used at increments of 30, 60 and 90 days. Signed copies of the signed letter and improvement plan will be provided to appropriate staff and added to the student file. The student may be referred for a hearing after two written reprimands.



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## Short Suspension (or equivalent)

A full investigation of the issue/concern, followed by a discussion with the student will occur. A summary of the previous progressive discipline and the current issue and a specific time frame for the suspension will be provided in writing. Identification of further discipline and possible termination as a potential consequence for not meeting and maintaining the standards for improvement may occur. A copy of the written reprimand will be provided to the student and staff. The student must have a hearing before returning to The Excel Center. A record of progressive discipline must be submitted to the panel of staff/students sitting in on the hearing.

## Long Suspension (or equivalent)

A full investigation of the issue/concern, followed by a discussion with the student will occur. A summary of the previous progressive discipline and the current issue and a specific time frame for the suspension will be provided in writing. Identification of further discipline and possible termination as a potential consequence for not meeting and maintaining the standards for improvement may occur. A copy of the written reprimand will be provided to the student and staff. The student must have a hearing before returning to The Excel Center. A record of progressive discipline must be submitted to the panel of staff/students sitting in on the hearing.

## Expulsion

Expulsion may be necessary when discipline is not successful in improving the student's performance or actions. The Student Support Services Specialist and/or Teacher should review the performance history and the record of progressive discipline with the Director. A final meeting will be scheduled with the student, Student Support Services Specialist and/or Teacher and Director. The student will be provided with a letter of expulsion. If necessary, the expulsion notice may be sent via certified mail. Copies of previous disciplinary measures will be provided.

## Hearings

Hearings should consist of two staff who are responsible for determining guilt or innocence. Staff will make recommendations for retention or expulsion to the Director. They can impose additional consequences/sanctions. The panel of staff will provide documentation of the hearing explaining the appeal process. The student may have an advocate with them during this process.

## Appeals

Students have the right to appeal recommendations made by the panel. An appeal must be made within 30 days of the hearing to the Director. The decision of the Director is final and may not be appealed.

## Plagiarism

Definition - submitting another person's ideas or expressions in your writing as your own.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Taking someone else's assignment or *portion* of an assignment and submitting it as your own work
- Submitting material written by someone else or *rephrasing the ideas* of another without giving the author's name or source
- Presenting the work of *artificial intelligence (AI), tutors, parents, siblings or friends* as one's own
- Submitting purchased papers as one's own
- Submitting papers from the Internet written by someone else as one's own
- Supporting plagiarism *by providing work to others*, whether it is believed it will be copied or not
- Not properly citing your sources, either in your work or in the works cited page
- Insufficient citation of factual information not held to be common knowledge (*common knowledge is defined as facts readily available from a variety of sources*)

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Tips on avoiding plagiarism:

- Begin the writing process by stating your ideas, then go back to review the author's original work
- Use quotation marks and credit the source when you copy exact wording
- Use your own words when paraphrasing, instead of copying directly when possible
- When paraphrasing an author's writings, crediting the author is required

## INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Student ID Badge

Your student ID badge must be always worn and visible while at The Excel Center. This is for the safety of students, staff and children in The Adventure Center. If you do not have your ID, you must sign in at the front desk and wear a temporary name badge. If you have lost your student ID, please contact the Office Administrator for a replacement. There will be a fee for replacement badges.

### Responsibility of Valuables

The Excel Center is not responsible for the loss or damage of personal valuables that a student chooses to bring on the premises.

### Parking

Handicap parking spaces are only for those with appropriate handicap permits.

### School Closings

School delays and closings will align with the Aurora Public Schools delays and closings. Closings will be posted to the local television stations. Students with an email and/or phone number on file will receive an automated message related to delays and closings.

## DISCLAIMER

Please be advised the information contained in this Student Handbook is subject to change.