

Winchester-Clark County, KY Entrepreneurial Academy

Youth Protection & Mandatory Reporting Policy

Governance Policy 7 of 7 · Adopted at Founding Organizational Meeting

Priority policy: This is the most operationally critical of the seven governance policies. Every adult who works with WCEA students must comply with every provision of this policy before Session 1. No exceptions.

1 Purpose

The Winchester-Clark County, KY Entrepreneurial Academy is committed to providing a safe environment for every student. This policy establishes minimum standards for the protection of minors in WCEA programs and sets forth the mandatory reporting obligations of all WCEA personnel, coaches, mentors, volunteers, and board members.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who interact with WCEA students in any capacity including the Executive Director, board members, coaches, mentors, volunteers, guest speakers, and any other adult present at WCEA sessions or events.

3 Background Check Requirements

All adults who work directly with WCEA students must complete a criminal background check before their first session or event. This requirement applies without exception regardless of the individual's professional credentials, community standing, or prior relationship with WCEA leadership.

- Background checks must be completed through an approved provider. The WCEA currently uses Sterling Volunteers at sterlingvolunteers.com or equivalent service.
- Results are reviewed by the Executive Director. Any individual with a conviction for a crime against a minor, a violent felony, or a crime of moral turpitude shall not be permitted to work with WCEA students under any circumstances.
- Background check results are confidential and maintained in a secure file by the Executive Director.
- Background checks must be renewed every three years for continuing coaches and mentors.

4 Mandatory Reporter Training

All adults working with WCEA students are mandatory reporters under Kentucky law and must complete mandatory reporter training before their first session.

- Coaches and volunteers: Complete the Volunteers course at mandatedreportertraining.com. Download and submit the certificate of completion to the Executive Director before Session 1.
- Executive Director: Complete the General course at mandatedreportertraining.com. Maintain current certification at all times.
- Training must be renewed every two years.
- Kentucky Child Abuse Hotline: 1-877-597-2331. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

5 Two-Adult Rule

No WCEA adult shall be alone with a student in a private, unobservable setting at any time. All WCEA sessions and events shall have a minimum of two unrelated adults present at all times. If a second adult is unavailable a session shall be postponed or relocated to a public observable space.

6 Code of Conduct for Adults Working with Students

All adults working with WCEA students shall:

- Treat every student with respect and dignity at all times.
- Never use physical punishment, intimidation, or threatening language with any student.
- Never discuss or share inappropriate content of any kind with students.
- Never transport a student in a personal vehicle without written parental consent and a second adult present.
- Never communicate with students through personal social media accounts or personal phone numbers. All student communications shall go through the Executive Director or official WCEA channels.
- Never meet with a student one-on-one outside of official WCEA sessions or events.
- Never accept gifts of significant value from students or their families.
- Report any boundary violation — their own or another adult's — to the Executive Director immediately.

7 Mandatory Reporting Obligations

Kentucky law requires mandatory reporters to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation immediately. Under this policy all WCEA adults are treated as mandatory reporters regardless of whether they are legally designated as such.

A report must be made when an adult has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or exploited. Reasonable cause does not require certainty. When in doubt report.

- Reports are made to the Kentucky Child Abuse Hotline: 1-877-597-2331.
- After making a hotline report notify the Executive Director immediately.
- If the suspected perpetrator is the Executive Director report directly to the Board Chair and the hotline.
- Document the report in writing including the date, time, what was observed or disclosed, and what action was taken. Provide this documentation to the Executive Director.

Good faith protection: Any person who reports suspected child abuse in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability under Kentucky law even if the report is not substantiated. Do not let fear of being wrong prevent a report.

8 Student Privacy

No photographs, videos, or identifying information about students shall be shared publicly without written consent of the student's parent or guardian. The Executive Director maintains consent forms for all enrolled students. Coaches and mentors shall not photograph or record students without explicit authorization from the Executive Director.

9 Violations

Any adult who violates this policy shall be immediately removed from the WCEA program pending review. Violations involving abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a minor shall be reported to law enforcement and child protective services in addition to any internal action. The WCEA will cooperate fully with any investigation by law enforcement or child protective services.

10 Acknowledgment

All coaches, mentors, and volunteers must sign a Youth Protection Policy acknowledgment form before their first session. This form confirms they have read and understood this policy and agree to comply with all provisions. Signed acknowledgment forms are maintained in the corporate records by the Executive Director.

11 Policy Amendments

This policy may be amended by majority vote of the Board of Directors. Any amendment that reduces protections for students requires a two-thirds vote of all directors then in office.

12 Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Winchester-Clark County, KY Entrepreneurial Academy at the Founding Organizational Meeting.

Board Chair signature

Date adopted