

CONGRATULATIONS on your acceptance into the BLA!



I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Banisters Leadership Academy (BLA) provides youth with a safe, structured environment during a time when youth are susceptible to acts of mischief, crime, and violence. BLA uses an evidence-based framework (CHESS) that focuses on developing Cultural Capital, Human Capital, Economic Capital, Social Capital, and Spiritual Capital. BLA serves the needs and interests of youth and their families by building relationships of trust and understanding. Our goal is to positively influence our mentees' mental health and wellbeing. BLA empowers youth with leadership, life and social skills, used to influence their personal success, and the success of the community. Youth who participate in BLA Programs are empowered to behave responsibly which leads to a healthy lifestyle, maintain positive attitudes towards one another, develop their full potential, practice risk-free behavior, and communicate effectively. BLA provides opportunities for our youth to grow and develop leadership skills. Youth are empowered to improve the socialization process through learning to choose good and reliable friends, to capitalize on their free time, to recognize and avoid risky situations, interacting positively with BLA team members, parents, peers, and those in their communities.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Selection Process Program Services and Planning

All youth in the program will complete a program intake form. The intake form is designed to recognize the needs of that youth and their families and identify what community services may be needed to help them and allows BLA the opportunity to help families with service referrals they can use in their home life, and any other areas of life where they will have to overcome obstacles.

Pre & Post Youth & Family Awareness Assessments

The assessment is to support BLA to reinforce its evidence-based practice. Both the youth and the parent/guardian will be taking part in assessments in the first week, and final week of the tier.

What is the purpose of our assessments?

Assessments help our organization show that our program is working to reach its goals and objectives.

Who must complete the assessments?

All BLA mentees must complete these assessments.

Where will these assessments be completed?

Assessment links will be sent out via text or email so that mentees may complete the assessments at home prior to programming. Mentees who have not completed their assessment before the first session will take time during the first program session to complete the assessment.

Why is it important to complete assessments?

These assessments play an important role in how our programs are funded by donors and state grants. Assessments help Banisters Leadership Academy continue to keep the program completely free for all mentees and families.

II. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents/guardians are responsible for dropping off and picking up mentees at the set time.

Students are expected to attend each program meeting. Parents/guardians are expected provide notice to a BLA Team member if their mentee will be unable to attend a program session.

MEDICAL NECESSITIES

The BLA Team does not include certified med-aids and therefore cannot administer any type of medication. If your child has a medication that cannot be taken prior to or after the program, the parent/guardian will need to notify a BLA team member and arrange a time to come administer the medication themselves.

PROGRAM DISMISSAL/TERMINATION FOR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for the smooth operation of the program. We want to establish uniform guidelines that will ensure a consistent and fair approach to solving attendance problems. Therefore, we have developed the following attendance policy.

We encourage 100% mentee attendance and family participation. We are in a pandemic and program participation may fluctuate due to family illnesses. However, if tardiness and absences persist, we will meet as a team to discuss the future of your child's participation in programming at BLA.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

There is an ongoing need for increased parental engagement in schools and programs all throughout Nebraska. BLA believes strongly in parent and family engagement. This effort is in place to collectively work alongside the family to help the students in our program succeed. The mandatory requirements of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of youth in our program are as follows:

- Informing the BLA Team Members or Team Leads of any changes at home that may affect your child.
- Notifying BLA if someone other than yourself will be picking up your child (the person must be on application as emergency contact).
- Arriving to pick up children from programs on time.
- Keeping emergency telephone numbers and other information up to date.
- Picking children up immediately if contacted by the program due to illness or injury.
- Attending reflection conferences and meetings.
- Keeping the BLA handbook for future reference.

Due to the requirements of program evaluation, it is necessary that your child stay until their programming is complete. Program times are listed on the BLA website. If parents/guardians are late pick-up due to inclement weather or emergency a text message or phone call needs to be sent to the Recruitment and Membership Specialists by 9:15p.m. Please note, if we feel you have been misappropriating this option, your child is subject to be terminated from the Program.

Parent Involvement: Access to Our Online Portal (CiviCore)

All parents/guardians on mentee applications will be given access to our online portal. BLA uses CiviCore, an online case management system that holds our program information all in one place. Using this online portal parents will be able to access case notes to see how their child is doing in our program. Case notes will be regularly updated after each program session, this way parents/guardians can keep track of their child's progress and/or issues.

CiviCore will also give parents the opportunity to access parent assessments throughout the tier, and to update their contact information as needed.

If there are any issues logging into our system, please contact **jr@banisters.org**

*By signing the Statewide Program Policy Handbook, you are agreeing to our terms of confidentiality and liability. At BLA we place a great importance on privacy, and under no circumstances can parents or guardians share their accounts, passwords, or any other information found on CiviCore with anyone as it is prohibited. Violating this agreement will result in termination from Banisters Leadership Academy.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Although BLA will make every effort to remain open for programming, there may be times where conditions make it impossible to do so. These include, but are not limited to, severe weather, declared state of emergency, utility disruptions, natural disasters, and terrorist actions. In all cases, youth, family, and BLA team members safety will be the primary consideration. The following procedures will set forth BLA team member and family obligations regarding programming attendance:

1. In the event of program cancellation due to inclement weather, you will receive a text message alert.
2. If there is a declared state of emergency that prevents BLA team members from being able to drive, then the program will be closed.

3. Youth who are late due to inclement weather will not be penalized for tardiness.

III. PROGRAM BEHAVIOR PLAN

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Mentees who abide by these expectations will be successful at BLA.

1. Respect yourself and others
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
3. Use positive language and positive behaviors. Arrive with a positive attitude
4. Listen and understand before responding
5. Have fun and learn!

POSITIVE REDIRECTION STEPS

If a mentee fails to follow program expectations, they will receive positive redirection steps. During Lighting the Torch, mentees will sign an agreement to follow BLA expectations on the first night of the program.

Redirection - A positive reminder of our expectations. A positive comment, fist bump, high five, positive gesture like a thumbs up, or a smile may accompany this reminder.

Warning - Short one on one meeting on the spot between mentor and mentee.

Reflection - Mentees will be reminded that the next step includes a call home. They will review the core values and what they mean with a BLA team member as well as the expectation that they violated.

Positive Family Engagement Phone Call - Mentees will spend five minutes in reflection while a BLA team member calls the mentee's parent. Further violations of expectations will result in ten

minutes spent in reflection and a conference will be scheduled with the mentee's parent at pick-up time.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The high quality of BLA's programs and services is based on building positive relationships with the families we serve. To provide and maintain positive relationships with youth and their families, open communication between BLA team member and parents/guardians is essential. Parents/guardians should always feel free to talk with a BLA team member or the Program Co-Captain, if they have any questions or concerns about their child or the program.

Documentation and Follow-up

All concerns brought to the BLA Team by parents/guardians will be documented by the individual to whom the concern was addressed. All documentation will be forwarded to the administrative team. All concerns brought to the attention of the program will be recorded and kept in a file. BLA will keep a file regarding concerns that will be reviewed on a regular basis as part of the continuous improvement loop. Once a decision has been made by the program regarding a concern, the parents/guardians will be notified in writing.

IV. MANDATORY REPORTING

Under Nebraska law BLA is a mandatory reporter. Mandatory reporting requires any adult with firsthand knowledge of child abuse or neglect to report it to the proper authorities. BLA will report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect that involves enrolled children, their families, or BLA team members. Any suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to The Nebraska Human Services Hotline at 1-800-652-1999.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY

It is the policy of BLA that youth and family that participate in the BLA programs will not disclose confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with BLA to any person, including their relatives, friends, and business and professional associates, unless BLA has authorized disclosure. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law. Board members, volunteers and employees are cautioned to demonstrate professionalism, good judgment, and care to avoid unauthorized or inadvertent disclosures of confidential information and should, for example, refrain from leaving confidential information contained in documents or on computer screens in plain view. Upon separation from BLA Programs, he or she shall return all materials that may contain confidential info.

VI. Non-Discrimination Policy

Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance

Race, Color, National Origin, Sex

In addition to the protections of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Employment discrimination is covered by Title VI if the primary objective of the financial assistance is provision of employment, or where employment discrimination causes or may cause discrimination in providing services under such programs. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities which receive Federal financial assistance. If you believe you have been discriminated against in a program of any institution which receives Federal financial assistance, you should immediately contact the Federal agency providing such assistance.

My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the BLA Handbook. I understand that this handbook contains information regarding the BLA rules, regulations and expectations which affect me as a participant. I acknowledge that I have read and understood the BLA policies and expectations. I also understand that the BLA may revise, supplement or rescind policies, procedures, and expectations described in the handbook, with or without notice.

Mentee's Name: _____

Mentee's Parent/Guardian name: _____

Program Name: _____

Program County: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

**BANISTERS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
LIABILITY RELEASE AND WAIVER FORM**

Name: _____

Address: _____ Daytime Phone Number: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Evening Phone Number: _____

Assumption of the Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19

The novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19") has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is reported to be extremely contagious. The state of medical knowledge is evolving, but the virus is believed to spread from person-to-person contact and/or by contact with contaminated surfaces and objects, and even possibly in the air. People reportedly can be infected and yet exhibit no symptoms. The exact methods of spread and contraction are unknown, and there is no known treatment, cure, or vaccine for COVID-19. Evidence has shown that COVID-19 can cause serious and potentially life-threatening illness and even death.

Banisters Leadership Academy, a Nebraska nonprofit corporation ("BLA"), cannot prevent you from becoming exposed to, contracting, or spreading COVID-19 while utilizing BLA's services or attending in-person BLA meetings or after-school programs (collectively, the "BLA Services"). It is not possible to prevent against the presence of the disease. Therefore, if you choose to utilize the BLA Services, you may be exposing yourself to and/or increasing your risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK: I have read and understood the above warning concerning COVID-19. I hereby choose to accept the risk of contracting COVID-19 for myself in order to utilize the BLA Services. The BLA Services are of such value to me that I accept the risk of being exposed to, contracting, and/or spreading COVID-19 in order to utilize the BLA Services in-person rather than arranging for an alternative method of utilizing the BLA Services virtually (e.g. videoconference or teleconference), which I hereby acknowledge that BLA has made and will continue to make available to me to the extent possible.

WAIVER OF LAWSUIT/LIABILITY: I, in consideration of BLA allowing me to utilize the BLA Services, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, hereby agree to release and to hold harmless BLA and its members, directors, managers, officers, owners, representatives, agents, lessors, licensors, employees, or other representatives and each of its and their respective successors, assigns, heirs and beneficiaries (hereinafter collectively the "Released Parties") from any and all liability for claims, judgments, losses, liabilities, costs and expenses (including, without limitations, attorney's fees and costs) arising out of or connected with exposure, infection, and/or spread of COVID-19 related to utilizing the BLA Services. I further expressly agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties against loss from any further claims, demands or actions that may subsequently be brought by me or by any other persons on the account of personal injuries, death, disease or property losses, or any other loss, including but not limited to claims of negligence, and give up any claim I may have to seek damages of any character, whether known or unknown, foreseen or unforeseen, resulting to me in any way from the use of the BLA

Services. I further agree to reimburse and to make good to the Released Parties any loss, or costs the Released Parties may have to pay as a result of any such action, claim, or demand.

CHOICE OF LAW: I understand and agree that the law of the State of Nebraska will apply to this liability release and waiver form.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL PROVISIONS OF THIS RELEASE, AND FREELY AND KNOWINGLY ASSUME THE RISK AND WAIVE MY RIGHTS CONCERNING LIABILITY AS DESCRIBED ABOVE:

Signature: _____ Date: _____