

2025 EXPLO Essentials Guide

Middle School Program Rising Grades 7-9

Wellesley College in Massachusetts



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We have a 1:7 staff-to-student ratio to make sure every student gets quality guidance and support as they live and learn at EXPLO. This section describes the staff support available to students:

- Office of Student Life
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- Main Office

Rules + Standards

All members of the EXPLO community are expected to follow the Program's rules and standards:

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Communication

Contacting EXPLO at the Exploration Center (EXPLO Headquarters) During the Year

To reach EXPLO before June 25, 2025:

932 Washington St.
Norwood, MA 02062

Phone: +1 781.762.7400
Email: summer@explo.org

Contacting EXPLO on Campus at Wellesley College During the Summer

Our Admissions team will be moving to campus during the summer to run the Main Office.

To reach EXPLO from June 26 - July 26, 2025:

Main Office: +1 781.762.7400
Nurse Fax: +1 781.787.2742
Email: summer@explo.org

Contacting or Visiting Your Child

PHONE + CELL PHONE POLICY

While we encourage students to keep in touch with those close to them, we also want them to be fully engaged in our programming throughout the entire day and evening. Students may not use cell phones, smartwatches, or other mobile communication devices until the final day of the session and will not be allowed to make or receive calls during the first week. Students who carry a cell phone, smartwatch, and/or other mobile communication device during travel to and from the Program will be required to store these devices in a secure space on campus. Overnight students will have their devices returned on the final day of the session, and day students can retrieve their devices upon checking out each day.

Overnight students may begin calling home the second Monday of each session from a shared phone on the floor.

We are happy to speak with parents/guardians at any point during the Program. If you are concerned about your child, please call us.

PHONE MESSAGES

Families calling the Main Office may leave a message for their child, but students will not be called to the phone. Phone messages for students will be delivered during Advisor Group meetings.

EMAIL MESSAGES

Students may access personal email accounts during open hours in the EXPLO student lounge beginning on the second Monday of each session. Remember that students will not have access to their cell phones, so you are encouraged to consider turning off 2-step verification with your email provider.

Alternatively, you may send your child an email message using the “Email my student” link on the [Dashboard](#). These messages will be printed and delivered during Advisor Group meetings.

SENDING LETTERS + PACKAGES

Summer mailing address:

Student’s Name and Advisor Group
c/o EXPLO
300 Central St.
Distribution Center
Wellesley, MA 02481

While we encourage the families of our overnight students to write letters, we strongly discourage sending “care packages” since it can distract students from actively engaging in the program and can become an unnecessary focal point for other students.

Due to the way packages are processed via Wellesley College’s Distribution Center, some packages can take many days to reach our offices, even after they’ve been confirmed as received. Please understand that EXPLO cannot take responsibility for delayed packages.

VISITING STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

Families of overnight students occasionally schedule visits with their child. Students may receive visitors starting on the second Monday of each session. Visitors may include parents/guardians and other friends and family members who are specifically named in the authorized pickups section of the [Dashboard](#).

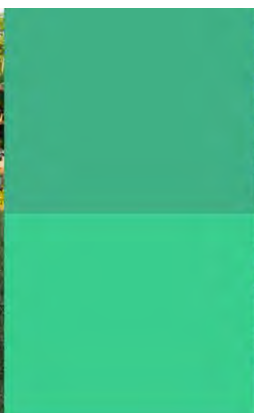
Visitors should make arrangements with the Main Office. We recommend students sign out for an evening visit between 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, so as to not interfere with programming.

Visitors must register at the Main Office, where a guest pass will be issued and must be worn for the duration of the visit. Visitors are permitted only in the Program's public areas and may not visit students' floors or rooms.

Although it will mean that students will miss evening events, visitors may also sign the student out for an evening visit. Visitors must meet students in the Main Office to sign them out. Visitors will be asked to show a photo ID before they can leave campus with the student.

Visitors must sign the student back into the Main Office immediately upon returning to campus.

Students **must** be signed back in by 9:00 p.m. Students may not be signed out of the Program overnight.



Dates + Deadlines

Important Dates

MARCH 1, 2025 — Tuition deposit becomes non-refundable

APRIL 22, 2025 — Enrollment Forms Due

(For details, go to your [Dashboard](#))

Payment — All bills must be paid in full by April 22, 2025.

Medical Forms — All health and medical forms must be received with complete information and up-to-date immunizations.

Arrival and Departure Forms — Update your plans for arriving to and departing from campus.

Housing or Day Student Group Request Form — Indicate your housing or day group preferences.

Parent/Guardian Comment Form — Help us learn about your child so we can support them on campus during the summer. Note: responses to this form are saved year-after-year so please review and update this form if your child has previously attended EXPLO.

Complete Your Student Profile - Provide information like t-shirt size, name preference and photo. Note: responses to this form are saved year-after-year so please review and update this form if your child has previously attended EXPLO. Additionally, for returners, please ensure that a new photo for your child is uploaded as this is used for identification during the summer

Student Technology Form — Provide updated contact information to assist EXPLO staff in case of unexpected travel delays or travel complications when arriving to or departing from campus.

Intersession Form - For overnight students attending both sessions, indicate your plans for the day in between sessions.

Please note, anyone applying after April 22 will need to complete the necessary forms immediately upon enrollment.

JUNE 2, 2025 — Summer Forms Due

(For details, go to your [Dashboard](#))

Trip Waivers — Optional trip waivers must be signed by a parent/guardian if the student would like to attend weekend trips that require a waiver. Applicable to overnight students only.

Session 1 Dates

Overnight: June 29 - July 12

Day: June 30 - July 11

Session 2 Dates

Overnight: July 13 - July 26

Day: July 14 - July 25



Travel + Preparations for Overnight Students

Planning for Arrival + Departure

Note that all times listed below are in the local time zone: Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Registration begins at 1:00 p.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. (EDT) on the first day of the program, at which point parents/guardians will be asked to leave so that the Program can get underway. It is important that you do not arrive early as we will be busy preparing campus buildings for your arrival.

Upon arrival, students will go through a brief registration, which includes picking up their keys, EXPLO ID and access card, and turning in their mobile phones, smartwatches, and similar devices. After registration parents/guardians can drop students outside of their residential hall where students will be greeted by one of our residential staff. After unpacking, students are encouraged to participate in one of several informal recreational activities located in our quad and student lounge. EXPLO's staff and students are friendly and approachable; this is a great opportunity to start making new friends.

We will escort students arriving by plane from Boston Logan International Airport to Wellesley College and help them get settled. Students flying alone will be encouraged to call their parents/guardians upon arrival at Wellesley to let them know they have arrived safely.

DEPARTURE INFORMATION

On Departure Day (the final day of the program), students should be picked up between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon (EDT). It is important that all students depart by 12:00 noon. Students will pack the evening before and be ready for pick-up, along with their luggage. Signs and EXPLO staff will direct your car through our pick-up procedure.

We will begin taking students to the airport at approximately 6:00 a.m. Due to the high volume of students traveling by plane, your child may arrive at the airport earlier than you would choose to arrive for personal/ family travel. Please know that this is to ensure that all of our students will make their flights on time. EXPLO staff will remain at the airport until all students have departed.

SPECIAL TRAVEL SITUATIONS

If you have any special travel needs or arrangements, please contact our Admissions Office.

RIDESHARE APPS

Rideshare apps can be a convenient way for students to travel to and from EXPLO. At this time Uber Teen, which requires and is connected to a parent's Uber account, is the only rideshare option that is legal for students between the ages of 13 and 18. On Departure Day, EXPLO staff are available to assist students traveling alone using Uber Teen. Prior to the summer, families should complete their child's Overnight Student Departure Details Form on the [Dashboard](#), and include the departure destination. Our staff will verify that the destination entered into Uber Teen on Departure Day matches the destination entered on the Dashboard before the summer.

Please note, once a student gets in a taxi or rideshare car, they are no longer within the control, supervision, or responsibility of EXPLO.

Travel by Car

On arrival day, navigate to the Wellesley College Club at 727 Washington Street in Wellesley, MA; this is where we will start student registration. On departure day, you will head directly to the student dorms at McAfee Hall. We will have staff and signage at various points on campus to give further instructions regarding registration or pick-up.

Arrival Day — Registration is held from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (EDT)

Departure Day — Pick-up takes place between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. (EDT)

Note: As much as we love them, we ask that you please leave pets at home.

Travel by Plane

EXPLO offers shuttles from Boston Logan International Airport (BOS) for students flying solo. Note: if flight arrangements are made to arrive at or depart from a different airport, families must arrange for their own ground transportation to and from campus. EXPLO staff will meet students in the baggage claim area for their arrival terminal wearing bright orange EXPLO T-shirts and will help at every step of the travel process, from airport pickup to arrival on campus. On Departure Day, EXPLO staff will assist students to airport security and will remain at the airport until all flights have departed.

When booking your travel or your child's flight to EXPLO, flights should arrive and depart in the shuttle windows listed below:

Arrival Day — Flights should arrive between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. EDT

Departure Day — Flights should depart between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. EDT

It is the family's responsibility to organize any transportation needed outside these shuttle windows.

There is a \$100 fee each way for the shuttle service to and/or from the airport.

FLYING AS AN UNACCOMPANIED MINOR

To facilitate a smooth arrival experience, we strongly recommend that students **do not** fly as unaccompanied minors (UM) unless your airline requires it based on your child's age. There is a \$150 fee each way for students traveling as UMs.

It is very important that we know your student's travel status prior to arrival and departure, so there are no last-minute surprises at the airport.

If your airline requires that you provide them with the name of the person picking your child up at BOS Airport, please provide them with the placeholder name of "an EXPLO Summer Programs representative" or "Jonathan Grinde". We will contact you several days in advance of Arrival Day to inform you of the actual staff member picking up your child.



Travel + Preparations for Day Students

Drop-Off + Pick-Up

Note that all times listed below are in the local time zone: Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

Regular morning drop-off is at 8:30 a.m., and regular afternoon pick-up is at 5:30 p.m. At the time of regular drop-off and pick-up, students will check-in with an EXPLO staff member. EXPLO signs will lead families to the car circle outside our Main Office in McAfee Hall — no need to get out of your car! At pick up, staff will wait with students until their rides arrive. We ask parents/guardians to be patient and understanding of our staff's requests in monitoring the flow of traffic in the parking areas. If a student is arriving or departing outside of the regular times then they must go inside the Main Office to check-in or out with an EXPLO staff member.

Students have several options for arrival and departure from the Program each day:

Drop-Off / Pick-Up: Students may be dropped off and picked up at Wellesley College each day by a parent/guardian.

Walk/Bike: Students may choose to walk or bike if they live locally.

Carpools: If you are interested in finding another EXPLO family to carpool with, please fill out the applicable sections in the Day Student Transportation Details Form on your [Dashboard](#). Families who have indicated interest will be added to a contact list that will be shared via the Dashboard with other interested families. While EXPLO does not organize carpools, we can help connect families from similar areas.

Late Pickup

For families seeking extended hours, our flexible late pickup option of 8:45 p.m. allows day students to join their friends for dinner (in the dining hall) and evening events. Students staying after 5:30 p.m. will be charged \$30 per day. Day students must check out with EXPLO staff before departing campus.

Packing List

What to Bring (Overnight Students)

Students are encouraged to use the following packing list to guide their preparations for the summer. If you have any questions about what to bring (or what not to bring), please feel free to contact us anytime.

- Underwear
- Socks
- Short sleeve shirts
- Long sleeve shirts
- Jeans/Pants
- Shorts
- Sweater/Sweatshirt
- Jacket/Raincoat
- Dress clothes (for final night banquet)*
- Pajamas
- Bathrobe
- Swimsuit (for weekend trip options)
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sneakers or comfortable closed-toe shoes
- Shower sandals
- Toiletries
- Insect repellent
- Sunblock
- Reusable water bottle
- Alarm clock**
- Wrist watch**
- Camera**
- Stamps, envelopes + stationery
- Debit/credit/prepaid card***
- Laundry bag
- Laundry detergent
- Box fan or oscillating fan for dorm room
- Hangers
- Extra-long Twin sheets
- Pillow
- Pillowcase
- Blanket
- Bath towel
- Beach towel
- Sleeping bag + camping mat****

*Optional, though many may choose to dress as they might for a school dance.

**Students will not have access to their cell phones.

***Students are strongly discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash to the Program, though most families do choose to send their child some spending money. Please refer to the Trips + Sundries Account section of this Essentials Guide for more details.

****In the event of excessive heat during the summer, students may be moved from the dorms to air-conditioned spaces on campus. Most students bring the linens from their bed to the air conditioned space. Yoga mats will be provided for padding. Additional padding beyond a yoga mat is not provided. We suggest students bring a sleeping bag and camping mat for added comfort.

What to Bring (Day Students)

We recommend that day students bring a backpack to carry their personal items. Please label all bags with your child's full name and Advisor Group.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

- Sun protection gear (sunglasses and sunhat, or baseball-style cap)
- Reusable water bottle
- Backpack/Bookbag for day use

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

While we appreciate the important place technology occupies in the lives of many of our students, the use of personal electronic devices can interfere with full involvement in the Program. Therefore, we have adopted the following policies regarding various devices that students might seek to bring:

LAPTOPS + CLASSROOM DEVICE USE

EXPLO classes are focused on hands-on, project-based activities and experiences. However, on some occasions, laptops or tablets may be used for various class activities (for example, for topical research, online simulations, and other discrete activities). If the workshop your child selects during the registration process regularly includes these activities, they will be expected to bring their own laptop or tablet. These will be stored in a secure location, and students will only be allowed to check them out during class time, for those specific classes. When devices are being used during class, students will be expected to follow the clear instructions and guidelines from the instructor. At no time may they use these devices for messaging, gaming, or anything else unrelated to the class activity.

At no time will students be permitted to have these devices in residential spaces or outside of workshop meetings. Students who are not enrolled in a workshop that requires the use of a computer or laptop should leave their devices at home. Students who are enrolled in a workshop that requires a computer or laptop will be notified in the spring.

PERSONAL MUSIC + READING DEVICES

Kindles, iPods, tablets, and other personal music/reading devices with cellular or internet capabilities are not allowed on campus for the duration of the Program.

Student Dress Code

While dress is generally informal, the Program has community standards to ensure that appropriate student dress provides a comfortable environment for all. These expectations will be made explicit to students at the Program, and we reserve the right to address breaches of our dress code. Dress code guidelines include, but are not limited to the following:

No clothing that is too revealing (clothing that allows exposure of undergarments or those areas typically covered by undergarments)

No clothing with offensive wording, logos, designs, etc., including those containing alcohol and drug references

No clothing that is inappropriate or unsafe for a particular activity, such as wearing open-toed shoes or shorts in a science lab, flip-flops on a hike, or other items that could cause injury or unsafe conditions

Packing Notes

All belongings should be labeled with permanent marker or labels. We do have a Lost and Found, and are often able to return misplaced items if they are clearly labeled!

Sports equipment — EXPLO provides all necessary athletic equipment, with the exception of mouthguards and soccer cleats. We strongly recommend that mouthguards be worn for a variety of sports, and it is best if students bring a pre-fitted mouthguard from home. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required, for participation in the soccer elective. Students should feel free to bring their own racquets, gloves, shin guards, etc., though EXPLO will provide these.

Closed-toe shoes — For all athletic activities, and some science and performing arts classes, closed-toe shoes are required. We recommend that every student come to EXPLO with a pair of sneakers.

Musical instruments — If you enjoy playing, we encourage you to bring your instruments to share your music with students and staff. There are numerous opportunities throughout the summer to share your talents.

Fans — The dormitory spaces are not air-conditioned, so we recommend bringing a desk or stand fan.

Linens — Linens can be requested in the Housing Form on the [Dashboard](#) and requests can be updated at any time. Linens will be provided to students who requested them on Arrival Day, and we'll have extra linens in case anyone needs them. Full linen sets include a flat/fitted sheet, pillow/pillowcase, blanket, and bath towel/washcloth. Most students prefer to bring their own bedding.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT THE PROGRAM:

Appliances — air conditioners, refrigerators, toasters, hot plates, coffee makers, etc.

Sound systems — large stereo and speaker sound systems (note: small radios or radio/alarm clocks are permitted)

Weapons — including toy weapons and pocket knives

Skateboards, scooters, hoverboards, and bicycles — Our schedule is too full to make use of this type of equipment. Day students may commute on a bicycle, and should bring their own lock.

Medication in student rooms — Students may not keep any kind of medication in their rooms. Please register all medications through the appropriate health forms on your [Dashboard](#) before the summer. Medications will be administered through the Health Office.

EXPLO is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Lost + Found

EXPLO begins packing up to leave Wellesley College on the last day of the Program (Saturday, July 26, 2025) and will be finished moving out by Sunday, July 27, 2025. We do have a Lost and Found at the Program and make every attempt to return lost items to students.

If your child realizes they have lost something after leaving the Program, please call us as soon as possible to maximize the possibility of returning the item. We cannot store lost items indefinitely; it is unlikely that we will be able to locate and return items after the end of August.

Health + Medical

About the EXPLO Health Center

An EXPLO Health Center is set up on campus exclusively for EXPLO students. There will be nurses on duty 24/7. Parents/guardians can contact the EXPLO Health Center by calling the Main Office.

Due to the age of our students, parents will not be notified in the event of basic first aid (cuts, bruises, and scrapes) or the administration of over-the-counter medicines for minor ailments such as an upset stomach, headache, or menstrual cramps. Parents can expect to be contacted prior to their child starting any new prescription such as antibiotics, illnesses that require an overnight stay in the Health Office, or in the event of an accident or serious injury when a student needs to be brought off-site for medical treatment.

Immunizations + Medical Records

IMMUNIZATIONS

EXPLO requires that all students and faculty be immunized against communicable, preventable diseases in accordance with state regulations. Please note that to protect the safety of our community, EXPLO does not recognize or allow exemptions to these immunizations. For safety reasons, students whose completed medical forms have not been received by the Program will not be allowed to register on Arrival Day, nor will they be allowed to remain at the Program. More information about immunizations at EXPLO can be found in the [Immunization Compliance Guide](#).

MEDICATION

State regulations forbid student self-medication. Students who keep medication in pill form in their rooms or medication in non-pill form that has not been approved for such use by the Head Nurse will be subject to dismissal from the Program.

EXPLO regularly stocks over-the-counter items such as generic Tylenol, Advil, Benadryl, Claritin, Zyrtec, Allegra, and cough suppressants for students to use for minor intermittent issues. Students may not keep such medications in their rooms. If your child is in need of an inhaler or an EpiPen, it is strongly recommended to bring two to the Program. One will be kept with them throughout the day and the other will be stored in the Health Office.

If medication is to be given to your child at the Program, we must receive orders for the administration of the medication from their physician. This includes vitamins. Day students are advised to take their routine medication at home.

Additional information can be found in EXPLO's [Guide to Medications](#). Permission for medication administration should be submitted via the appropriate health forms on your [Dashboard](#).

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students must have U.S.-based health insurance. Travel insurance is not a sufficient replacement. EXPLO has identified a [low-cost, high-coverage option](#) supported by the UnitedHealthcare network for families who need U.S.-based health insurance, or supplemental coverage.

All international families without U.S. coverage must purchase this insurance.

A Note About Nuts

EXPLO is a nut-sensitive program. Students with severe nut allergies, or other allergy concerns should contact our Admissions Office before the start of the summer.



Financials

Payment of Bills

Final payments must be received in full by April 22, 2025 for all students, regardless of their program session. Students applying after the final balance due date of April 22 must pay the entire bill immediately after acceptance.

We expect the Program to be filled to capacity — as such, some students will be placed on a waitlist. Families will be notified in writing that the student has been placed on a waitlist and EXPLO will hold the deposit. If space does not become available for the student or if the family wishes to be removed from the waitlist, EXPLO will return the deposit in full.

Students enrolling after June 2, 2025 must pay by certified check, wire, or credit card. Students who have outstanding balances will not be allowed to register on Arrival Day, nor will they be allowed to remain at the Program.

Trips + Sundries Account

Part of the tuition and fees paid by every EXPLO family goes to the student's Trips + Sundries Account (Overnight) and/or Sundries Account (Day). Students may not withdraw cash from the Trips + Sundries Account. That account is established for the following purposes:

Trip fees — Trips carry varying fees depending upon the destination. These fees are deducted directly from the Trips + Sundries Account. Note: weekend trips are only available to overnight students.

Lost items — All students will receive an EXPLO ID and an access card for use on campus. At registration, all overnight students will receive room keys for their dorms. If a student loses one of these items the fee for replacement will be deducted from the student's Trips + Sundries Account. The fee for replacing access cards and room keys is \$25 each.

Sundries — Miscellaneous sundries charges, including extended day charges for day students and any unexpected expenses borne by the Program, will also be deducted from the Trips + Sundries Account.

If a student's Trips + Sundries Account is running low and needs to be replenished, we will make all reasonable efforts to contact families to replenish accounts. If a student's account becomes overdrawn and is not replenished, EXPLO may deduct the overage from the student's Damage Deposit. In extenuating circumstances, families may be charged an additional amount to replenish the account. Refunds of unused Trips + Sundries Account balances, except those covered by a scholarship, will be made in the fall.

Responsibility for Damage

Damage incurred during the Program will be deducted from the student's Damage Deposit. Rooms are inspected and maintenance requests are made prior to student arrival. Any pre-existing damage should be noted by students when they move in and reported immediately to their Advisor. Damage to other college facilities or damage attributed to more than one student may be charged to a class, dorm, or floor. Parents/guardians will be billed for any amount exceeding the Damage Deposit. Refunds of unused Damage Deposits, except those covered by a scholarship, will be made in the fall.

Student Spending

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash to the Program, though most families do choose to send their child with spending money. While additional program expenses, such as off-campus field trips, are paid for using the student's Trips + Sundries Account and EXPLO students will never be asked to pay for any additional program expenses, there are opportunities throughout the summer to make independent purchases.

Some students take the opportunity to go into the town of Wellesley with a few friends to buy a slice of pizza, a scoop of ice cream, or a coffee. There are also several stores in town, and a small convenience store on campus. Other students might decide to purchase a souvenir on a weekend trip. Most parents/guardians and students have found that pre-paid debit cards or a credit card with a spending cap are the best alternatives to cash. Whatever you decide works best for your family, we highly recommend talking about a budget with your child before they begin the Program. EXPLO is not responsible for monitoring student spending outside of the program fees applied to the Trips + Sundries account.

Students will also have occasional access to ATMs. Please note that students will not be able to receive funds for spending via wire transfers. If EXPLO is asked to hold cash or valuables for safekeeping, they will not be returned until the end of the session.

Tipping of EXPLO Staff

EXPLO has a no-tipping policy. However, the staff works hard all summer to support students and your words of gratitude are appreciated. You are also welcome to make a contribution to our [scholarship fund](#).

Academics

Curricular Information

EXPLO 360°

What excites your child? Is it Fashion Illustration? Forensic Science? Codebreaking? Comedy? At EXPLO, students have the freedom to choose topics they're actually into—and try new things in a judgment-free zone. Students choose two workshops, two electives, and activities and events they can get excited about. They'll connect with other clever students from around the country and world, whether in our overnight or day program. They might even spark an unexpected interest!

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about the workshops + electives we offer.

MEDICAL ROTATIONS FOCUS PROGRAM

EXPLO gives students the chance to work with medical professionals from top hospitals, practices, and simulation labs to develop medical skills— from suturing and intubation to starting an IV and reading an X-ray. Students will step into the life of a medical doctor or nurse and make rounds through different specialties such as internal medicine, trauma care, cardiology, and pathology. They'll be encouraged to ask questions, get advice, and make connections that can help them visualize future career paths in medicine. By the end of the program, students will be solving a series of progressively challenging case studies for a range of patients and symptoms, thinking quickly and analytically to diagnose and treat each patient. They'll also get to meet new friends from around the world and choose from a menu of fun activities and events that get them excited for each day.

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about the Medical Rotations Focus Program.

VETERINARY SCIENCE FOCUS PROGRAM

The Veterinary Science program gives students a chance to dig deep into their interests. Students work with real animals alongside professional veterinarians and technicians. They'll learn to diagnose diseases, check vital signs, suture wounds, splint broken limbs, and more. Behind-the-scenes trips to wildlife centers, animal clinics, and rehabilitation centers give students an authentic experience in animal medicine.

Visit [our website](#) to learn more about the Veterinary Science Focus Program.

EXPLO 360° Workshop + Elective Changes

Most students eagerly anticipate the workshops and electives they've chosen before the summer, but we also encourage students to embrace their own changing interests. Our Admissions Team is happy to help families make workshop and elective changes before the summer starts, as long as there is space available.

During the summer, students will have the opportunity to change their workshop following the first full day of classes on Monday, provided there is still space in the desired workshop. No additional workshop changes will be allowed after Monday evening, as it will be too disruptive to students, instructors, and the rest of the class. Changes to electives are not permitted after the class has started, as they are only one week long. However, students may freely choose a new elective prior to their start each week, as long as there is space available.

Students who are interested in making a change during the summer should speak with a member of our Office of Teaching and Learning. In an effort to encourage our students to make independent decisions, students do not need parent/guardian permission to make these changes.



Student Life on Campus

Weekday Schedule

7:45 a.m.	—	Overnight Student Morning Huddle
8:00 a.m.	—	Breakfast Opens
8:30 a.m.	—	Day Student Arrival
9:00 a.m.	—	Workshop Period 1
10:40 a.m.	—	Workshop Period 2
12:00 p.m.	—	Lunch
1:15 p.m.	—	Elective
2:45 p.m.	—	Check-in
3:00 p.m.	—	Clubs, Leagues, Activities
4:15 p.m.	—	Flex Time
5:30 p.m.	—	Day Student Dismissal
5:30 p.m.	—	Dinner Opens
7:15 p.m.	—	Check-in
7:30 p.m.	—	Evening Event
8:45 p.m.	—	Day Student Late Pick-Up
9:15 p.m.	—	Dorm Check-in
10:15 p.m.	—	Room Curfew

Note: The Wellesley College campus is more than 500 beautiful acres. Students should expect to walk anywhere from 10 to 15 minutes to get to classes and other destinations.

Weekend Schedule for Overnight Students

On the weekend, we follow a similar schedule to the weekdays for our overnight students. The main difference is that students do not meet for workshops or electives. Rather, overnight students participate in a wide variety of day trips to locations around the region. On the weekends, students pack a lunch while at breakfast and bring it with them to eat while off-campus and on their trip. Note: day students are not permitted on campus on the weekend and are not able to attend trips.

Meals

All meals are served in the dining hall, with the exception of packed lunches on the weekends. Students can feel free to take snacks from the dining hall during meal times, such as fruit or baked goods. Students who go into the town of Wellesley during Flex Time will also have the opportunity to purchase food there before returning to campus. Energy drinks are not permitted to be consumed on campus.

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

We work closely with the Wellesley College Dining Services to meet students' needs. Food in the dining hall is labeled for common dietary restrictions, and we are able to accommodate many of them, including vegetarian, vegan, nut free, dairy free, and gluten free, provided that we are made aware in advance of a student's arrival.

EXPLO recognizes the prevalence and severity of nut allergies. For this reason, we ask families to abstain from sending their child to the Program with items containing nuts. Though we will explain this policy to our students during the summer, we cannot guarantee error-free student compliance.

Students with special dietary requirements should contact our Admissions Team before the beginning of the Program to make appropriate arrangements.

DAY STUDENTS

Lunch will be provided during the week in the dining hall. Day students may also bring food from home, which can be stored in the common space assigned to their group; however, they should be aware that these are shared spaces. Dinner will also be available in the dining hall for day students opting to stay late.

Housing + Living Arrangements for Overnight Students

LIVING WITH OTHERS

Living closely with others is a wonderfully enriching experience for a young person. Over the years, we have seen that students take a great deal of responsibility for working out how to set up a room, establishing the guidelines for living together, and resolving conflicts that arise. While we are intentional about allowing students to take responsibility for the dynamic in the Advisor Group, we are mindful that this is a new experience for many and Advisors will offer close supervision and thoughtful support throughout the weeks that students are with us. From the beginning of the session, our Advisors work with students to negotiate boundaries and compromises to help students get the most of the overnight experience.

HOUSING ASSIGNMENTS

Overnight students often report that meeting new people from around the world is a highlight of their EXPLO experience. As such, we strive to cultivate new friendships by maintaining geographically diverse Advisor Groups and balancing the number of new and returning students.

Like many colleges and universities, Wellesley College has a variety of dormitories and room configurations. All floors will have a mix of single and double rooms, as well as a common area, kitchen, and shared bathroom. Students are placed in Advisor Groups that are generally composed of students of the same grade and gender identity. Should space be available, families may also opt-in to a mixed-grade, gender-inclusive living space. Note that we offer a variety of opportunities for social connections during the first few days of the Program. We will help all students adjust to living with others and being a part of a new community. There are no room changes unless there are exceptional circumstances, and then only with the approval of the Office of Student Life. Students must always sleep in their own rooms.

For students who would like to make an Advisor Group request, we do our best to honor mutual requests for a roommate or a friend in the same Advisor Group. Students may also request a single or double room, but our ability to honor requests is limited by the rooms and floors available to us.

Laundry for Overnight Students

Students will have access to on-campus washers and dryers, either on their Advisor Group floor, or on an adjacent floor. Laundry access at Wellesley College is free of charge.

Students may use the laundry machines during their free times: during meal times, in the late afternoon, and evenings. Students should be aware that the machines are used by many people so they should always plan to bring detergent back to their rooms and retrieve their wash as soon as it is done.

Multi-Session Overnight Students

On Saturday, July 12, 2025, first session students will be leaving. New students will arrive on Sunday, July 13, 2025. On Saturday, and through new student arrival on Sunday, EXPLO provides supervision, programming, and housing for students who wish to stay on campus. Students attending both sessions will have the opportunity to be picked up on Saturday morning and brought back to campus on Sunday afternoon, or to attend the intersession programming on Saturday and Sunday with other students who are remaining on campus. Weekend activities and trip details will be available as the summer approaches, but past trips have included visits to amusement parks, movie theaters, and similar venues. Students participating in intersession will be charged \$250 for the cost of activities, housing, meals, and staffing. Families must let us know their intersession plans by April 22, as we cannot guarantee there will be space after this date.

We request that students who are not participating in EXPLO's programming on Saturday and Sunday be picked up by 12:00 p.m. on Saturday and returned to the Program on Sunday between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Students who choose to remain on campus and attend the trip will spend the evening in a single living space (i.e. most likely not their own dormitory room). They will have an opportunity to retrieve belongings they will need for the evening.

Although every effort will be made to keep a student in the same room for the second session, due to fluctuations in Advisor Groups between sessions, it is possible that students may need to move to a new room for the second session. Rest assured, we'll work with students to ensure the move is as seamless as possible.



The EXPLO Team on Campus

Office of Student Life

The Office of Student Life supports students in their campus experience outside of the classroom — from ensuring students have a healthy sleeping and eating routine to accounting for personal growth as members of the community. The Office of Student Life communicates regularly with families about their child's experience on campus.

DEAN OF STUDENTS AND ASSISTANT DEAN

The Dean of Students and Assistant Dean live at the Program and are available to speak with parents/guardians as well as students. The roles of the Dean and Assistant Dean are to actively support and supervise the Residence Directors and Student Advisors, and to ensure the health and safety of the EXPLO community through planning, communication, and problem-solving.

RESIDENCE DIRECTORS (RDs)

Our Student Advisors are supervised by Residence Directors (RDs), who also serve as the main communication links with parents/guardians. Working closely with the Dean and Assistant Dean, they oversee our entire residential system, checking in with each of the Advisors multiple times a day to be sure that all students are doing well and that any problems that have arisen are being handled appropriately. If you have a question or concern about your child, please contact an RD by calling the Main Office.

ADVISORS

Advisors meet with their students many times throughout the day and serve as their primary support system while at the Program. Advisors are there to help students with questions, problems, or concerns. Advisors live on the halls with overnight students and help create a sense of community and belonging within the group; day students will also be assigned to an Advisor Group so that students have a consistent resource on campus, and so that they have a “home base” during any free time they may have throughout the day.

Office of Teaching + Learning

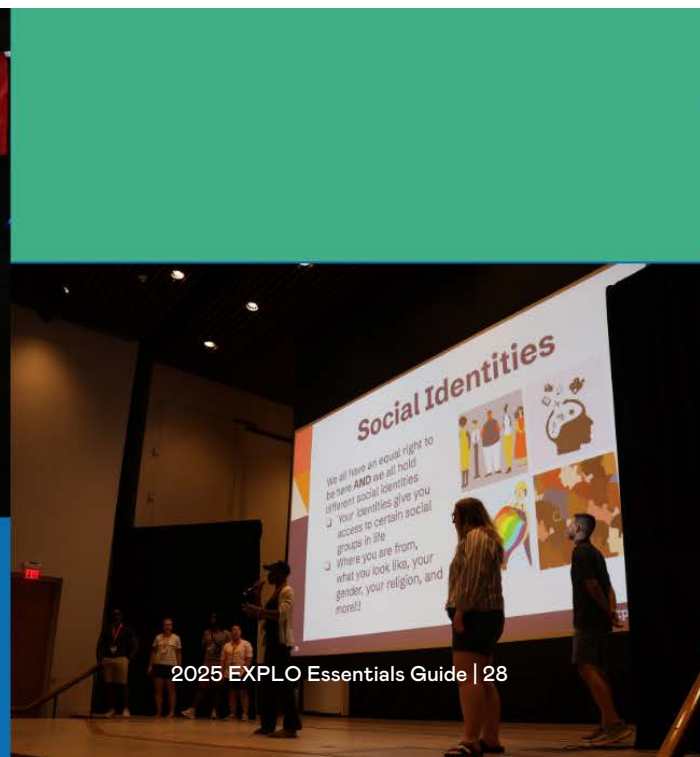
The Office of Teaching + Learning (OTL) is focused on supporting teachers in the classroom, as well as helping students with any questions or concerns related to their workshops and electives. The members of the OTL regularly observe workshops and electives, meeting with teachers to reflect on their successes and growth areas in the classroom. Teachers will also be available outside of class to meet with students and provide additional mentorship.

Programming Office

The Programming Office (PO) coordinates all activities, events, etc., that are not part of academics or residential life. Members of the PO organize our clubs, leagues, activities (CLAs), coordinate Evening Events, plan trips, and support all other areas of Program operations outside of workshops and electives. If students have any suggestions for events or activities of any sort, they are encouraged to speak with a member of the PO staff — some of our most popular events began as student suggestions.

Main Office

The Main Office is where EXPLO receives all of its incoming calls, emails, and visitors. Students often visit the Main Office throughout the day to check the Lost and Found, replace a lost key or ID card, ask questions about travel to and from the Program, get signed in/out by visitors, and ask any other questions that may not fall under the purview of any other office.



Rules + Standards

All members of the EXPLO community are expected to follow the Program's rules and standards, and to treat others with honesty and respect. For the safety of all community members and the harmony of the Program, both students and parents/guardians should understand and commit to the following rules and standards.

The Program makes every effort to address student life issues in a proactive manner; we strive to deal with disciplinary issues fairly and as quickly as possible. The staff and Program leadership handle each case individually, keeping in mind the circumstances of the violation as well as the best interests of the larger community. Although consistency is desirable, it will not always be the governing principle in settling disciplinary issues. Disciplinary action will be taken when the Program deems that there is a preponderance of evidence that a rule or standard of the Program has been violated. Our Office of Student Life strives to keep parents/guardians informed of their child's disciplinary process.

EXPLO Community Expectations

While students are expected to be familiar with and follow the Rules + Standards listed here, we also invite students to participate in creating a culture of community in their classes and Advisor Groups when they arrive at the Program. A strong community is formed when its members share clear expectations of how its values will be embodied throughout the experience. Once on campus, we ask students to consider the following EXPLO Community Expectations:

- **Be kind** — Respect people, property, places, and yourself.
- **Be safe** — Maintain a safe environment for yourself and others.
- **Be true** — Conduct yourself with honesty and integrity.
- **Be curious** — Explore the world of people and ideas.

Instructors and Student Advisors will guide students through developmentally appropriate discussions about the EXPLO Community Expectations and how students can take ownership for their own contributions and hold each other accountable as members of the community.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF BELONGING

EXPLO celebrates, values, and welcomes the diversity of the human experience, celebrating the differences that make us individuals and seeking the common ground that makes us a community. We believe that our collective power as a community can only be harnessed if we prioritize a sense of belonging, so that our students, families, faculty, staff, and the network of educators we support not only feel safe but welcome. To this end, our staff training, our student programming, and our campus dialogue emphasizes the importance of engaging in deeper listening, intentional reflection, and continuous growth, so that all can appreciate and understand the stories and identities that comprise that community. We specifically work with our staff on both how they can proactively work to create an inclusive space for all to succeed, as well as how to recognize and react when members of the community feel excluded or isolated.

Our guidelines, expectations, and Rules and Standards, as well as our disciplinary process, are all crafted with this goal as a guide, and our response to any behavioral or other concerns that might arise during the summer will be informed by this commitment.

Disciplinary Process + Consequences

Given the short length of our Program, it is often important that swift action be taken to address disciplinary infractions that impact the experience of other members of the EXPLO community, and/or those that have a direct impact on Wellesley College and the surrounding community. Although we aim to be proactive, and to help students avoid disciplinary consequences through positive community building, age-appropriate supervision, and the establishing of various structures, procedures, and guardrails, it is also the case that some behaviors will necessitate a more punitive response.

In general, there are three formal disciplinary responses: a Dean's Warning, Conditional Status, and Dismissal. It is also the case that members of our staff may provide verbal or other informal warnings for more minor violations. Although informal, these will be documented, and repeated infractions will escalate to a more formal response.

Major Rules

A student who violates a Major Rule can expect to be dismissed. Please note that if a student is knowingly and willingly in the presence of a Major Rule violation, it is as if they are breaking the rule themselves.

When a student is dismissed, parents/guardians must make arrangements for the student to be taken home immediately and at the parents'/guardians' expense. Claims for partial tuition reimbursement may be made through EXPLO's tuition insurance program in the event of any early departures, including withdrawals and dismissals.

In addition to the examples cited below, behaviors — whether on or off campus — that violate local, state, or federal law, or that are deemed by the Program to jeopardize the welfare of the community or bring the name of the Program into disrepute, are considered Major Rule violations.

1. Students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity. Therefore, lying, cheating, and deceitful behavior (falsification of permissions, absences without appropriate permissions, forgery, reporting false complaints about others, computer violations, etc.), are violations of the Program's standards.
2. Students are expected to act with respect for the well-being and rights of others. Behavior that is deemed to be injurious to the Program, individual students, or the larger campus community is unacceptable. Therefore, impinging on the rights of others through harassment and/or hazing is a breach of such standards. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to: sexual assault or harassment; physical or verbal assault or threats (including those based on race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, religious practice or belief, and physical or mental ability); behaviors intended to intimidate or humiliate others, or those that may cause emotional distress or physical harm; cyber bullying, and/or other harassing, intimidating, or threatening behavior or language communicated over the internet or phone/text; abusive physical behavior (including hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, biting, etc.); soliciting or eliciting sexually explicit content or communications (also known as "sexting"); and the use of abusive language.
3. Students are expected to act in a manner that recognizes EXPLO as a place of inclusion and belonging. Therefore, the use of any words, phrases, or other messages that are derogatory toward others, including, but not limited to, the use of racist, sexist, homophobic, or other similar language, is considered a violation of this rule. The language and/or messaging does not need to be directed toward an individual to be considered a violation; for example, a derogatory comment made in public and/or in the presence of others would fall under this rule.
4. Students are expected to respect both community property and the property of others. Theft, the possession or use of stolen property, or the deliberate destruction or abuse of personal or community property are violations of this standard.

5. We place a certain degree of trust in our students that, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation, they will abide by our community expectations. In order to respect one another's privacy, and to recognize that residential spaces should feel safe and comfortable for all who inhabit them, students must adhere to the Program policies governing the residential spaces.

In general, students will not be permitted to visit residential floors/Advisor Group spaces that are not their own. This includes the common spaces at the center of each floor. There are many community spaces within the dormitory buildings in which students from all groups can socialize. If a student needs to visit a different floor for a special circumstance, they can seek permission from the Office of Student Life. Any failure to respect these guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

6. EXPLO IDs and lanyards (issued at registration) must be worn at all times except while swimming, playing sports, sleeping, and showering. Lost IDs will be replaced for a fee to be withdrawn from the student's Trips + Sundries Account. For reasons of safety, a student may not give away or sell their EXPLO ID, lanyard, keys, access card, or anything else that would identify a person as an EXPLO student or grant access to campus rooms or facilities.
7. Students are expected to maintain a safe environment. Examples of violations of this standard are: possessing or using fireworks, firearms, or other dangerous weapons, items (including pocket knives), or substances; using the fire extinguishers or setting off fire alarms (except in an actual emergency); and engaging in other behaviors the Program deems dangerous. Because a possible fire exposes so many EXPLO community members to extreme danger, the burning of anything or the use of an open flame indoors (candles, matches, lighters, incense, tobacco products, etc.) is a violation of this standard.
8. For reasons of safety and accountability, the Program has stated policies regarding where students can be throughout the day and evening, and all students are expected to uphold any policy concerning their whereabouts. For example, students who are outside of their Advisor Group area after final evening check-in would be in violation of this policy. Furthermore, any student who leaves the designated Program boundaries, either on campus or on a trip, would also be in violation of this policy. EXPLO cannot guarantee the safety of a student who is not compliant with our whereabouts rules, and will not take responsibility for a student once they have left the Program in an unauthorized fashion.

9. Students are expected to abide by the rules of the Program as well as the public laws governing the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Therefore, it is not acceptable to: possess, use, distribute, provide, or cause to be brought on campus any illegal drug, controlled substance, tobacco product, anabolic steroid, alcohol, or any related paraphernalia (including tobacco, marijuana, or hashish pipes or papers, vaping devices, e-cigarettes, and alcohol containers); misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications or chemical substances; or return to the Program showing evidence of having been smoking, drinking, or using illegal drugs. Students who knowingly remain in the presence of a tobacco, drug, or alcohol violation are themselves in violation of this policy.
10. Students are expected to be positive and cooperative in all of their dealings with the Program. If a student repeatedly breaks Program rules, does not abide by the written or verbal directives of the Program, or does not follow Program procedures, they can expect to be dismissed for the accumulation of such incidents.

DISCIPLINARY STATUS AND FUTURE ENROLLMENT

A student's disciplinary status will impact their future enrollment in EXPLO Programs.

If a student has been placed on Conditional Status, they should expect that this will affect whether they will be allowed to return to EXPLO in subsequent summers. In this case, a conversation with the Head of Program will be required in order to discuss whether returning is appropriate. If a student is dismissed from the Program, they will not be allowed to enroll in subsequent summers.

Final Days' Rule

During the final two days of the Program, any violation of any Program rule can result in immediate dismissal.

It is important to maintain an atmosphere that is orderly and safe in the final days, and we do not want to encourage students to take behavioral risks that would result in leaving prematurely, missing the culmination of the Program, and causing them to be ineligible to return to EXPLO in subsequent summers.

Local, State + Federal Regulations

While the guidelines described reflect EXPLO’s own philosophy and mechanisms for dealing with breaches of our rules and standards, we are also obligated to adhere to all applicable local, state, and federal ordinances and laws.

Thus, should we become aware of certain types of incidents — such as child abuse (current or in the past), illegal sexual behavior, hazing, theft, underage use of alcohol or tobacco, use of controlled substances or misuse of prescription medication, improper use of technology (such as “sexting”), or some forms of harassment — we may be required to report them to outside authorities, including the local police and the state offices of child and family services.

Self-Destructive Behaviors

Eating disorders, cutting, burning, suicidal gestures or ideation, and other similar behaviors are profound and potentially life-threatening. These types of behaviors require the treatment and attention of specialists. EXPLO is not designed to provide such specialized treatment for these behaviors. Therefore, if a student engages in any of these types of behaviors during the Program, they must go home to ensure their safety and the well-being of others.

If a student has exhibited these types of behaviors before the start of the Program, EXPLO will need to consult with the student’s treating physician or mental health professional regarding the student’s ability to participate in the Program without the threat of harm to themselves or others. This consultation will be considered as a recommendation only, as EXPLO reserves the right to decide whether Program attendance is in the best interests of the student and/or the Program. EXPLO may also require a contract that will specify behavior and permit EXPLO to monitor the student’s compliance.

Policy on Sexual Behavior

The days at EXPLO are busy ones, with workshops, electives, activities, and other organized events occupying much of the day. However, students will also have significant time to socialize — indeed, many of our alums speak about the fantastic friendships they made at EXPLO, even in a relatively short time. For some of our older students, this might also include a first “crush,” and experimenting with how to express affection. Although not a concern with most of our students, EXPLO believes that it is in the best interest of adolescents to delay engaging in sexual behavior until they are more physically and emotionally mature.

We recognize, however, that sexual feelings are a normal and natural part of that maturation process. If students are engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior (which may include technology-based behaviors), they will be addressed by a member of the Office of Student Life to discuss the physical and emotional implications of their actions. In addition, parents/guardians may be notified. In cases involving inappropriate use of technology and/or “sexting,” with or without the transmission of images, students are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Further, because sending sexually explicit images can involve minors, the ramifications can involve EXPLO needing to report the behavior to state authorities.

Ultimately, consistent with our commitment to creating an atmosphere of belonging, students will also be reminded that the Wellesley campus should be a comfortable space for the entire EXPLO community. If a student is found engaging in sexual behavior that is inappropriate for public spaces, the student will be subject to disciplinary action because of the negative effect such behavior has on the community.

In Massachusetts the age of sexual consent is 16. Therefore, students under the age of 16 are not legally able to give consent. Sexual activity with a student under 16 is considered illegal and could be considered statutory rape. It does not matter if two students say they are consenting, as long as one is under 16, consent is not legally possible. In such a case, EXPLO may have to report such behavior to state authorities.

Right of Entry + Room Search

EXPLO reserves the right to enter a student’s room at any time for health, safety, or maintenance reasons and to ensure that use of the room is within the Program’s and the College’s regulations.

EXPLO will conduct a room search for health or safety reasons; if there is reasonable belief that there may be drugs, alcohol, or stolen property; or if a student is believed to be in possession of any materials that are in violation of EXPLO’s Rules and Standards.

In the interest of security and safety, EXPLO reserves the right to search a room without the student or students being present.

Use of Technology

Student use of telephones and computers is subject to all rules and standards governing student behavior. Behavior that is in any way disrespectful, harmful, or deemed inappropriate will not be tolerated.

Parents/guardians should be advised that the Program cannot assume responsibility for monitoring all student activity on the internet, and that some sites may contain material that is pornographic, discriminatory, violent, or otherwise objectionable. Any student found to be accessing, downloading, posting, or distributing such material will be violating guidelines for student behavior at the Program and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students should be careful not to give out personal information over the internet, such as dorm location or phone number, to people they do not know.

The use of cell phones, video games, and laptop computers outside of class or project work time are not permitted at the program, because of their tendency to prohibit engagement with the community. If laptops are used as part of a workshop, they must be used responsibly, and in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws. The same is true with respect to mobile phones that are returned on the final day of the Program. Any cameras and/or other devices capable of taking photographs or recording video may not be used to take photographs or video without the knowledge of the subject of those images, or in any other manner that would violate the privacy of others. The use of these devices at the Program is considered a privilege rather than a right.

Note to Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

EXPLO not only forms a relationship with the students who attend the Program, but also with their parents, guardians, and caregivers. Our experience has shown that our students are best served when caregivers and the Program have a positive and open working relationship.

For the Program to be most effective for our students, parents/guardians must be able to support our policies and procedures. EXPLO reserves the right to dismiss a currently enrolled student if the student's parents/guardians are uncooperative with and/or unsupportive of EXPLO policies and procedures. In addition, EXPLO reserves the right in subsequent summers to deny enrollment for similar reasons. EXPLO also reserves the right to dismiss a student if parents/guardians have misled the Program about their child's history, including, but not limited to, behavior, physical and emotional health, and/or school experience.