

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND BUILD STAFF

The BUILD program website (<https://www.bethel.edu/academics/build/>) is updated regularly and is intended to be a comprehensive resource for students and families to access current information regarding the BUILD program. Communication directly to and from families is carried out primarily through the BUILD program email (build-program@bethel.edu).

Students and families will receive **periodic newsletter updates by email** containing information about upcoming events and highlights from the month. These newsletters are a great source for the most recent information. Along with highlighting student achievements and experiences, the newsletters also provide timely reminders regarding housing check-in and check-out, and information about upcoming events. If there is any new information regarding scholarships, academics, or any other aspects of life at Bethel, the newsletter is a method to communicate with all families. Please ensure the BUILD office has a current email address on file for each parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are welcome to contact the BUILD Office by phone (651-635-8799), as needed.

BUILD program **family dinners** are held at least two times each year to provide opportunities for celebrating student progress and bringing together students and parents/guardians.

Personal Learning Plan (PLP) meetings are held prior to the start of each semester. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for students and parents/guardians to meet with BUILD staff to give input and plan for future semesters. These meetings focus on discussing upcoming opportunities for students so they will be prepared to make decisions regarding elective classes, internships, housing, and transportation.

Family Partnership

Family partnership is encouraged throughout students' enrollment in the BUILD program. Families provide many vital direct and indirect supports that contribute to students' success in college. As students transition to a post-secondary setting, students' role as decision-maker continues to grow. Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities allows students, families, and Bethel staff to collaboratively focus on students' success.

To assist in this collaboration, parents/guardians submit any directives outlined on legal documents, such as guardianship and/or specific power of attorney, during the application process and any time updates are made to these directives. These documents are reviewed, discussed as needed for clarity, and followed throughout the student's participation in the BUILD program.

In general, once students enter a post-secondary institution, students "own" educational data. This is detailed in Bethel's description of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mmvahkvs3LHIdp2_uVml_lc1zdj7uNVf/view/?usp=sharing). Students' educational information is legally protected by FERPA. Bethel University routinely receives requests from a student's parent, spouse, guardian, other relative, or friend to discuss or disclose student educational records. To protect student records privacy and comply with federal laws (i.e., FERPA), the "guests" are allowed access to student education records after the student has given authorization through a FERPA waiver, by establishing a proxy, and/or as directed by other legal documents. This authorization may be established or revised at any time beginning 45 days before the first term of enrollment. Information regarding these releases is shared with families at the Royal Retreat and Cohort Connection Events. When students' Bethel Community Accounts are activated, specific directions are provided in the summer update.

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Questions regarding responsibilities, limitations, and communication of information are often related to the areas of academics, finances, spiritual formation, and transportation. These topics are addressed below, with additional details in other sections of the handbook.

Academics

Working closely with their academic advisor, students select a Career Pathway and elective courses throughout their program. Parents/guardians play an important role in these decisions through ongoing conversations with their son or daughter. In addition, during Personal Learning Plan, (PLP) meetings students' plans are discussed with the students, parents/guardians, and BUILD staff. Students' final course schedules can be accessed through their MyBethel account. Up until the add/drop date for the term, there may be changes to students' schedules. Within the guidelines of the program requirements, and with guidance from BUILD staff and parents/guardians, students make final decisions including academic decisions regarding which courses to take, internships, and all other academic decisions.

Students receive information regarding their academic success through ongoing feedback from each instructor. Course progress reports are completed by instructors and shared with advisors, students, and parents/guardians at the midterm each semester. For semester-long courses, an additional PLP meeting will be scheduled at the midterm point if the student is currently failing, or is at risk of failing, any course. Students, and parents/guardians, if the student has signed a release of information, have access to final grades through Banner.

Financial

Because each agency and county is different in the documents they require and when they want invoices, families often have the student or the parents/guardians submit a copy of the student's invoice/monthly statement through MyBethel. This invoice/monthly statement will include the student's name, ID #, and each course and cost. If for some reason a student's county or agency requires something different, he or she must contact build-program@bethel.edu to share what is needed.

To view online monthly statements:

MyBethel > Scroll Down to see My Statements and Finances> Click on the link for Last Statement (Date Shown in Blue) > View Statement

Link to BUILD Financial Aid (<https://www.bethel.edu/undergrad/financial-aid/build/>)

As outlined in the BUILD Program Agreement, the parent/guardian/co-signer of the agreement agrees to be financially liable for all sums owed by the student to Bethel University and agrees to the terms and conditions of the BUILD Program Agreement. The BUILD Program Agreement is signed by the student and cosigner prior to the beginning of classes.

Students and families are encouraged to discuss arrangements for spending money. BUILD staff do not monitor students' spending. Though students make their own decisions, mentors and staff provide ongoing coaching and reminders regarding spending habits. Students also learn basic budgeting and money management skills as part of their Independent Living courses.

Spiritual Formation

Students are encouraged to actively participate in spiritual development opportunities on and off campus; some of these are briefly described below. This encouragement comes from many sources including BUILD staff, other Bethel staff and faculty, parents/guardians, student mentors, and other Bethel students. Students in the BUILD program also often influence others' journey of spiritual development. Parents/guardians have opportunities to give input regarding spiritual formation during the application process and PLP meetings, and during direct conversations with their student.

At Bethel, we voluntarily come together for spiritual refueling through worship, praise, prayer, and challenging messages from God's Word. This is done through **Chapel** (<https://www.bethel.edu/>

christian-formation/worship/chapel/) - weekday morning worship and **Vespers (<https://www.bethel.edu/christian-formation/worship/vespers/>)** - Sunday evening service.

Discipleship at Bethel is about doing life together with hopes of owning our faith. This is all about relationships. It is about building connections with mentors and friends who care about you and your walk with Christ. Through deep dialogue and asking good questions, discipleship groups wrestle to discover the truth of who God is and who we are as Christ-followers. To learn more about discipleship options at Bethel, students and parents/guardians can visit the Campus Ministries website (<https://www.bethel.edu/campus-ministries/>).

At Bethel, we encourage students to step outside their comfort zone and into experiences that stretch and reshape their view of God's world. Bethel sends students to be with, learn from, and serve alongside God and God's people through our **Solidarity Missions Partnerships (SMP) program**. We are grateful for our longstanding partnerships with the local churches, mission agencies, and development organizations that make these trips possible. Each year the BUILD program partners with the Office of Campus Ministries to plan integrated SMP mission trip experiences. As part of these integrated SMP experiences, students in BUILD are supported throughout the application, preparation and entire trip process by BUILD mentors and/or staff. Parents/Guardians will be involved in the trip application and may also be asked to help support their student in gathering contact information to send support letters. Typically, first-year students have an opportunity to apply to be on an integrated SMP trip within the United States and second-year students have an opportunity to apply to be on an integrated international SMP trip.

Transportation

Students' level of independence regarding transportation is reexamined prior to each semester during the students' PLP meetings. Students, parents/guardians, and BUILD staff discuss safety expectations and opportunities for increased independence as part of determining if a student is ready to progress to the next transportation level. Students do not progress to the next level for transportation unless all parties agree to the increased level. Please see the *Transportation* section for detailed information regarding each level of transportation independence and reasons for a change of level within a semester.