

**2015-2016**  
**Student Code of Conduct**

**Gateway Charter**  
**Academy**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Student Code of Conduct .....	4
Use of the <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> and Campus Handbooks .....	4
School District Authority and Jurisdiction .....	5
Responsibilities .....	7
How May We Assist You .....	10
Frequently Asked Questions .....	11
Levels of Student Misbehaviors and Disciplinary Actions .....	22
General Information .....	23
Group I Misbehaviors .....	24
Group I Disciplinary Consequences .....	25
Group II Misbehaviors .....	25
Group II Disciplinary Consequences .....	26
Group III Misbehaviors .....	27
Group III Disciplinary Consequences .....	28
Group IV Misbehaviors .....	29
Group IV Disciplinary Consequences .....	30
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) .....	32
Gangs, Secret Societies, Sororities or Fraternities .....	32
Expulsion .....	38
Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses .....	42
Weapon-Free School Zones .....	44
Removal by a Teacher .....	45
Transportation Code of Conduct .....	46
Student Dress Code .....	50
Technology Regulation .....	54
Assignment and Appeal Processes for Expulsions.....	63
Volunteer Guidelines .....	68
Assistance for Students With Learning Difficulties .....	70
Extracurricular Activities .....	72

Attendance .....	75
School Safety Transfers .....	80
Notices .....	82
504 Child Find Notice .....	83
Asbestos Notice .....	83
Confidentiality Statement .....	83
Disclosures Under the Directory Information Exception .....	83
Dismissal from Campus at Lunch .....	83
Graduation Ceremonies .....	84
Non-Discrimination Statement .....	84
Pesticide Notice .....	84
Response to Intervention (RTI) Notice .....	84
Student Success Initiative (SSI) .....	85
Wellness Policy .....	85
Definitions .....	86
Student and Parent Acknowledgement of Student Code of Conduct and Notice Concerning Bullying and Harassment .....	99

## **Student Code of Conduct**

Gateway Charter Academy (GCA) is committed to providing each student with a quality educational program. This goal can only be achieved in a cooperative school climate free from disruptions which hinder and interfere with the educational process. The rights of students, teachers, parents and administrators are to be valued and are protected under federal and state laws. GCA will strive to achieve a working balance between rights and responsibilities, which foster a positive school climate where there is mutual respect and an opportunity for students to develop to their fullest potential.

The *Student Code of Conduct* (SCOC) has been formulated in compliance with relevant law. Policies and procedures of the GCA Board and administrative regulations that pertain to student conduct are addressed in the SCOC. The SCOC is designed to inform students, parents, legal guardians and school personnel of rules of conduct applicable to this school district.

## **Statement Regarding the Use of the District *Student Code of Conduct* and Campus Handbooks**

The *Student Code of Conduct* is a broad guide regarding expectations, violations and consequences. Throughout the code are statements that acknowledge the discretion that can be exercised by the campus administrator. Also, the lists of consequences indicate many choices. However, in some cases, the school administrator is bound by district policy, state law and/or federal law regarding disciplinary consequences. Appropriate due process hearings are held when disciplinary consequences for serious offenses are contemplated.

Many campuses issue their own campus handbook as a supplement to address their particular needs. While these handbooks are not intended to be as complete or as detailed as the *Student Code of Conduct*, many attempt to reconcile any differences between the *Student Code of Conduct* and the campus handbook. In most cases, neither the *Student Code of Conduct* nor the campus handbooks are to be seen as totally prescriptive to the point of no reasonable discretion being able to be applied by the campus administrator. In short, parents are urged to read both documents and review the content with their students. Both documents are broad but very clear on what is acceptable behavior, which aids in the orderly process of creating a safe and productive learning environment.

The *Student Code of Conduct* will govern whenever there is a conflict with the campus handbook.

## **School District Authority and Jurisdiction**

School rules and the authority of the district to administer discipline apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with or independent of classes and school-sponsored activities.

The district has disciplinary authority over a student:

1. During the regular school day and while the student is going to and from school on district transportation;
2. While the student is in attendance at any school-related activity, regardless of time or location;
3. For any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location;
4. When retaliation against a school employee or volunteer occurs or is threatened, regardless of time or location;
5. When criminal mischief is committed on or off school property or at a school-related event;
6. For certain offenses committed within 300 feet of school property as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line;
7. For certain offenses committed while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of another district in Texas;
8. When the student commits a felony, as provided by Education Code 37.006 or 37.0081; and
9. When the student is required to register as a sex offender.

The district has the right and authority to perform the following searches:

- The search of a student's outer clothing, pockets, property, locker, and/or vehicle when there is reasonable cause to believe they contain articles or materials prohibited by the district or when a student voluntarily consents to the search.
- Random locker searches and metal detector screening exercises in the classroom will be conducted throughout the school year.

If a student refuses to comply with a metal detector search, the student's parent and/or guardian will be contacted, the student may be removed from the campus and the student may be subject to appropriate school discipline consequences.

## **Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement officials, including School Resource Officers (SROs), may be contacted to keep or restore order at school or at school-related activities. As city partners of the school district, Dallas Police officers are in the schools daily and may talk with students and provide assistance in crime prevention and control as well as school safety, utilizing such techniques as necessary to ensure safety of students and staff. They may also be contacted to conduct their own investigations of alleged criminal conduct on school premises or at school-related activities. Administrators, teachers, students, other district staff and adult volunteers have the ability to contact law enforcement and campus-based SROs for assistance. Law enforcement officials will determine whether students should be arrested and/or issued citations/tickets.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Gateway Charter Academy has set priorities to provide an effective educational program for its students. The district recognizes and requires that the school environment must be free of distractions and disruptions to allow maximum teaching and learning. A spirit of cooperation is a must if quality education and effective discipline are to be a reality. The responsibilities of students, parents and the district are defined as follows:

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Attend the entire instructional day, except when ill or otherwise lawfully excused, and be on time to all classes
- Review and acknowledge receipt of the *Student Code of Conduct*
- Follow the rules and regulations established by the teacher and the school as stated in the Campus Discipline Management Plan
- Follow the *Student Code of Conduct*, school policies and procedures concerning appropriate behavior and dress
- Cooperate with all lawful and reasonable directives issued by school personnel
- Be prepared for each class with assigned work and appropriate materials
- Pursue mastery of the essential knowledge and skills of the curriculum as prescribed by the district and the state
- Establish and maintain an effective working relationship with parents, peers and school personnel
- Show respect for others and their property
- Refrain from making profane, insulting, threatening or inflammatory remarks
- Make no visits to other GCA campuses during the school day, except with permission
- Express opinions and ideas in a respectful and courteous manner
- Seek changes in school policies and regulations through approved channels in an orderly and responsible manner
- Strive toward self-discipline, setting individual goals and utilizing good work habits
- Leave campus immediately after dismissal bell unless involved in a school activity
- Assume responsibility for making choices and accept consequences for your behaviors.

**PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Establish and maintain a positive attitude toward education and school personnel
- Take an active interest in the overall school program
- Make every effort to prepare your student emotionally and socially to be receptive to learning and discipline by providing your student with the necessities of life in the home environment
- Encourage and lead your student to develop proper study habits at home
- Supervise and direct your student in a positive manner
- Make certain your student is properly attired for school according to the *Student Code of Conduct - Dress Code*
- Send your student to school daily as required by law and promptly notify the school to explain absences and tardies
- Maintain up-to-date and correct addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses in the school office for home, work and emergencies
- Bring to the attention of school authorities any learning problem or condition that may impact your student's education
- Sign the Student and Parent Acknowledgment statement indicating that a copy of the *Student Code of Conduct* has been received and read
- Make certain your student adheres to the *Student Code of Conduct* and school discipline policies
- Attend scheduled conferences; respond to the teacher's initial contact
- Initiate conferences to discuss academic progress or other concerns
- Discuss work assignments and report cards with your student; request a conference with the teacher if your student receives a failing grade for the reporting period
- Ensure your student's attendance at school tutorials as the need arises
- Cooperate with school personnel when your student is involved in a discipline problem
- Cooperate with school administrators and teachers in their efforts to achieve and maintain a quality school system

- Ensure student safety by adhering to appropriate drop-off and pick-up times (may vary by campus)
- Provide appropriate identification when requested by school personnel
- Cooperate with the school nurse to obtain state-required immunizations, to follow procedures for administration of medication at school and to take/keep the student home when ill
- Parents are encouraged to register and monitor Parent-Self Serve to view student progress and attendance

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Follow state laws as well as district policies and regulations
- Abide by the Code of Ethics as approved by the Texas Education Agency
- Value parents as partners in the educational process
- Attempt to promptly contact parents when there is a change in a student's performance or when an improvement is not sustained
- Respond promptly and appropriately to parent inquiries about their children
- Participate in campus activities that promote parent and/or student involvement
- Work with parents, students and other district professionals to solve problems at the classroom level
- Disseminate grading procedures to students and parents at the beginning of each semester
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward parents and students
- Encourage and assist students to develop effective study habits
- Strive to prepare the child emotionally and socially to be receptive to learning and discipline
- Establish a healthy tolerance level through setting limits and providing options
- Follow the rules and regulations established by the school and district as stated in the Campus Discipline Management Plan

## **How May We Assist You?**

GCA is committed to providing the best service to our students, parents and community partners. No matter how hard we try, a time may come when something in our district doesn't work for you, a time when you question why a certain action was taken or not taken. The following procedure will help resolve your issues:

### **Step 1:**

- Bring your concern to the person closest to the problem. For example, if you have a question about something that happened in your child's classroom, start with the teacher.

### **Step 2:**

- The next level will be to discuss your concern with the person who supervises the individual or department in question. In most cases, this is the principal (additional resources: assistant principal/counselor).

### **Step 3:**

- If you have additional concerns, we want to help you, and we ask that you work with us to resolve issues by contacting the following:

#### **Curriculum/Grades**

Chief Academic Officer

#### **Behavior. Discipline. Attendance.** **Transportation**

Chief Academic Officer

#### **Employee - Related Concerns**

Human Resources

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is the *Student Code of Conduct*? Why do we have this discipline system?**

The *Student Code of Conduct* is designed to promote an orderly, safe and well-managed environment so that every student may receive a quality education. It is the primary job of the school district to teach students in an atmosphere, which is free from disruptions or inappropriate behaviors. In this atmosphere, the best learning will take place.

The *Student Code of Conduct* provides a uniform set of behavioral guidelines and consequences for all students in all grades of the school district. Texas law requires that every school district in Texas develop a system of uniform behavioral rules and consequences. The law also requires that every student and parent receive a copy of the *Student Code of Conduct*.

### **2. Are there different levels of misbehavior and consequences?**

Yes. While it is desirable that students work toward the goal of appropriate behavior in the school setting, there are different levels of inappropriate behavior or misbehavior. The consequences are different according to the nature and seriousness of the behavior.

Accordingly, the *Student Code of Conduct* is divided into four levels of misbehavior, with four corresponding levels of disciplinary consequences.

If a student breaks a Group I behavior rule, the consequence will come from Group I disciplinary consequences. Groups II, III and IV are progressively more serious which require serious disciplinary consequences. The most serious misbehavior will result in removal to an alternative education program or expulsion.

- Group I misbehaviors are the least serious misbehaviors, with appropriate Group I consequences.
- Group II disciplinary infractions are serious misbehaviors than Group I misbehaviors, which require a disciplinary action from Group II consequences.
- Group III misbehaviors are disruptive activities, which severely disrupt the orderly climate of the school; these more serious misbehaviors will receive Group III disciplinary consequences.
- Group IV misbehaviors constitute serious or persistent misbehaviors or illegal acts. Group IV disciplinary consequences are serious and are appropriately tailored to the act of misbehavior. Removal to an alternate education program will occur when a student acts in a manner that meets the criteria noted in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Expulsion is the most serious consequence for acts that require such measures.

The *Student Code of Conduct* utilizes a philosophy known as “progressive discipline.”

**3. What is “progressive discipline?”**

Progressive discipline describes the fact that there are four different levels of student misbehavior, with four corresponding levels of appropriate disciplinary consequences. Simply explained, “the punishment fits the misbehavior”.

Progressive discipline also takes into consideration that a student may repeatedly perform a misbehavior from a lower level and may not respond positively to the disciplinary action appropriate for that lower level. For example, if a student repeatedly performs a Group II misbehavior and receives a Group II consequence repeatedly, but does not change his/her behavior, the repetitive Group II offense may automatically “progress” to become a Group III offense, requiring a more serious discipline consequence.

A student who repeatedly does not respond to the appropriate consequence for a misbehavior “progresses” to the next level of discipline.

**4. Why can two students receive different consequences for the same act of misbehavior?**

It is correct that in a system of progressive discipline, two students who have committed the same offense may receive different disciplinary consequences. The reason for this is that one student may be a first-time offender, having no previous record of misbehavior, while the other student may have a previous history of misbehavior.

Under the progressive discipline plan, repeated violations of the *Student Code of Conduct* at a lower level (Group I, for example) may automatically progress to a consequence from a higher level (Group II, for example).

Every student’s behavior record and behavior progress are unique and individual. Therefore, two students who may have actually committed the same offense together may receive a very different disciplinary consequence.

**5. Who has the authority to decide which consequence is given to the student after an act of misbehavior?**

The classroom teacher and school officials have the legal authority and responsibility to assign an appropriate consequence for a student’s misbehavior. School officials may confer with a parent before assigning a consequence, depending upon the severity of the behavior and consequence.

The staff of the school and the principal will utilize the guidelines set forth in the *Student Code of Conduct* to promote that an orderly educational atmosphere exists for all students.

**6. What are the responsibilities of the students, the parents and the school staff?**

Students, parents and the staff of your school all have the responsibility to work together in cooperation to promote appropriate student behavior.

The school staff has an obligation to all students to provide an educational atmosphere where every student can learn, unhindered by the inappropriate behavior of others. Moreover, the school staff has the responsibility to treat all students fairly and equitably and to select appropriate disciplinary consequences for each individual student when an infraction occurs.

**7. What discipline was given to another student? Why may I not know?**

Often parents become frustrated because they want to know what disciplinary action was given to a student other than their own child. The law prohibits school authorities from revealing student discipline information to anyone other than the minor student's parent or legal guardian.

While it may be frustrating that a school official cannot offer specifics on how another student was disciplined, parents can be assured that the other student's parents will be informed of the misbehavior, and that an appropriate action will be taken.

The confidentiality provisions of the law are in place to protect the rights of every child as an individual.

**8. Explain the confidentiality of students' discipline records.**

Student records are governed by a federal statute, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, also known as the Buckley Amendment) and a state statute, the Texas Public Information Act. FERPA and the Texas Public Information Act limit access to a student's records by anyone other than the student and/or parents. However, the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Texas Education Agency are granted an exception to review student records while conducting investigations of the school district.

**9. How do I appeal a decision by the school that I do not agree with?**

Students and parents do have a right to disagree with a decision made by the school. It should be the goal of the student, the parent and the school staff to resolve the issue at the school level. If the disagreement is with a teacher, it is advisable to discuss the disagreement with the teacher first. If there is no resolution, the next step is to discuss the matter with a campus administrator.

Complaints may be resolved informally. However, the district does have a formal student complaint procedure. This procedure is explained in the *Student Code of Conduct* section pertaining to student rights and responsibilities.

**10. What are my student's rights in the discipline process?**

A student and parent may disagree with decisions involving discipline. There are specific appeal procedures listed for expulsions in the *Student Code of Conduct*. There are no formal appeal processes for other disciplinary actions such as detention, on-campus suspension, or up to three-day out-of-school suspension. School administrators have a duty to maintain a proper educational environment and are authorized to make determinations regarding consequences for discipline infractions. Disagreements should be brought informally to the school principal.

**11. What is “due process of law?”**

Simply put, it is a fairness standard that changes based on the severity of the loss of a constitutional property right. Depriving a student totally of educational services (expulsion) requires due process of law.

The procedure, therefore, is very limited if the school district is placing a student in an alternative education program on a different school campus and is continuing to supply educational services. The formality of due process increases when a student is expelled from receiving educational services.

**12. What is the “due process” standard for a student who has been recommended for expulsion?**

A student being expelled from educational services is entitled to:

- A. Prior notice of charges and the proposed sanctions as to afford a reasonable opportunity for preparation;
- B. Right to a full and fair hearing before the Board or its designee;
- C. Right to an adult representative or legal counsel;
- D. Opportunity to testify and to present evidence and witnesses in his or her defense;
- E. Opportunity to examine the evidence presented by the school administration and to question the administration’s witnesses; and

**13. Is a student entitled to legal or adult representation at any time other than during an expulsion hearing?**

Yes, the student complaint process allows representation at Level One, Level Two and Level Three conferences. The GCA attorney may also be present when a student has legal representation.

**14. Is there a separate set of rules for students who ride the school bus?**

Yes, there is a separate set of behavioral rules for all students who ride an GCA school bus. The school bus is a unique setting, where misbehavior can lead to safety problems for the driver and other students. For detailed information, see the GCA Transportation Code of Conduct in this Student Code of Conduct.

**15. Does GCA have a dress code for students?**

Yes, GCA does have a student dress code, which was developed by a committee of students, parents, teachers and administrators representing all school ages and grade levels. The dress code committee meets periodically to review the appropriateness of the dress code as community standards and fashions change. The dress code is designed to assist students and parents in planning wardrobes, and the ultimate goal is to support the *Student Code of Conduct* in creating an orderly and safe atmosphere for learning. The dress code is included in this *Student Code of Conduct*.

**16. What is the GCA attendance policy? How are absences excused?**

Regular and punctual patterns of student attendance are essential for a student to receive maximum benefit from his/her education. Regular student attendance

is a component in the overall behavior program and supports the *Student Code of Conduct*. The attendance policy is included in this *Student Code of Conduct*.

**17. How long are discipline records kept by the school?**

Discipline records are kept until the end of the current school year. The only records which are kept longer are for those students who have been expelled; those records are kept for three years.

**18. What is criminal trespass?**

To promote the safety and security of students and staff, all visitors must check in at the office of all campuses. The Texas Penal Code §30.05 provides that a person commits criminal trespass if he/she enters or remains on property or in a building of another without effective consent and he/she had notice that entry was forbidden or received notice to depart but failed to do so. For the purpose of this statute, “enter” means the intrusion of the entire body and “notice” means (1) oral or written communication by the owner or someone with apparent authority to act for the owner, (2) fencing or other enclosure obviously designed to exclude intruders or (3) signs posted to be reasonably likely to come to the attention of the intruders indicating that entry is forbidden.

**19. What is the procedure to receive a VOE (TEA) driver’s license form?**

School enrollment and attendance are required as conditions of licensing a student to operate a motor vehicle. This requirement applies to persons under 18 years of age unless a high school diploma or its equivalent has been obtained. (TEC 25.092, absences, states that a student must be in attendance 90 percent of the days the class is offered.) For students in grades 9-12, absences may be aggregated on the basis of a semester. Please allow the school 24 hours to complete the form for the student

**20. What should a student do if he/she believes he/she is being bullied (including cyber bullying), sexually harassed, or is a victim of dating violence?**

The student should immediately notify appropriate school personnel, which would include a classroom teacher, a counselor or an administrator of any such behaviors.

**21. What are Penal Code Title 5 felony offenses?**

Penal Code Title 5 felony offenses include criminal homicide, kidnapping, aggravated kidnapping, false imprisonment, indecency with a child, sexual assault, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual assault or injury to a child.

**22. What does possession mean?**

Possession means:

- A. To have contraband on one’s person, in one’s vehicle, in the vehicle driven by a student to/on campus or in one’s personal effects, such as a coat, purse, bookbag;
- B. To touch or handle contraband;
- C. To have contraband under one’s control;

- D. To have contraband in one's locker; or
- E. To be in a vehicle either as a driver or passenger with the knowledge that contraband is contained in the vehicle.

**23. How does the district define use?**

Use occurs when a student voluntarily introduces a prohibited substance into one's body by any means. Use can be verified if the introduction of the substance is observed or it is detectable by physical appearance, actions, breath or speech.

**24. What are the interview procedures when a violation of the *Student Code of Conduct* is suspected?**

In disciplinary situations, in addition to school discipline, there may be additional action taken by an applicable law enforcement agency. School disciplinary and law enforcement procedures are separate and distinct.

**• School Procedures**

School administrators are obligated to maintain discipline in the schools. Administrators have the right and responsibility to both interview and question students without notifying parents and without one or both parents present. This would include students who are accused of conduct violations and students who may be witnesses to conduct violations. To require the administration to do otherwise would thwart its ability to investigate violations of the *Student Code of Conduct*. The administration may contact the parent after a student has been interviewed. Information obtained through this interview will be shared on request to applicable law enforcement agencies if a violation of the law is believed to have occurred.

When the student is believed to have violated a provision of the *Student Code of Conduct*, which may require mandatory or discretionary expulsion, or referral to any law enforcement agency, the administrator will make all reasonable attempts to contact the parent/guardian. Lesser violations may involve no parental contact during the investigation or administration of consequences. Such determination is within the discretion of the administrator.

**• Law Enforcement (Procedures or Referral)**

After completing the school procedures and in the event that a conduct violation may also constitute a criminal law violation, the administrator will contact the law enforcement officer, school resource officer, the officer assigned to the campus, or call 9-1-1. Once the law enforcement officer has cause to believe that a criminal offense has been committed, the officer will take charge of any interview or investigation. During the investigation, the student may be interviewed by law enforcement agencies without notifying parents and without one or both parents present. The administrator may describe to the law enforcement officer what information has been acquired in the school investigation. However, written student statements taken by the administration in its investigation will not be provided to the officer without the parent/guardian consent, a subpoena or otherwise as required by law.

Once the law enforcement agency has been contacted, the investigation is solely under the control of that agency. If the student is taken into custody, the administrator shall make all reasonable attempts to contact the student's parents.

**25. What is GCA's policy for student ID?**

Students 6th-12th will be issued ID cards, which are used for multiple purposes on campus. ID cards must be worn in full view at all times, in a visible spot above the waist, on the front side of the body. Failure to wear student ID cards will be handled as disciplinary matter. If lost or defaced, the ID must be replaced at student expense.

**26. What are the regulations regarding campus parking and traffic?**

Student drivers and their passengers shall be cautious and observe all traffic regulations. Student drivers or passengers who are found to be in any way endangering the safety of themselves or others will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include loss of the privilege of having a vehicle on campus. Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. The school reserves the right to search any vehicle if reasonable suspicion exists to do so, with or without the presence of the student. Students have full responsibility for the security of their vehicles and should make certain they are locked and the keys are not given to others. Students will be held responsible for any prohibited objects or substances, such as alcohol, drugs and weapons that are found in their cars and will be subject to disciplinary actions.

The following rules are common to parking on any school parking lot:

- A. All cars parked in the lot are required to have a current parking sticker.
- B. All traffic speed limits shall be observed.
- C. All traffic arrows shall be observed.
- D. Students are not to park in reserved or visitor parking spaces.
- E. No tobacco products are allowed in the parking lot.
- F. No alcohol or controlled substances are allowed.
- G. No loitering.

**27. What is Section 504?**

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability. Section 504 is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statute that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met.

**28. What is an "impairment" as used under the Section 504 definition?**

An impairment as used in Section 504 may include any disability, long term illness, or various disorder that "substantially" reduces or lessens a student's ability to access learning in the educational setting due to a learning, behavior or health-related condition. It should be emphasized that a physical or mental impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of Section 504 unless

its severity results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities.

**29. How does one qualify for Section 504 services?**

One must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.

**30. What is GCA's search process?**

The district has the right and the authority to search lockers, bookbags, vehicles and other items for reasons of health and safety.

**31. What is GCA's process for sniff dogs?**

The district has the authority to use sniff dogs to search lockers and other parts of the building and campus property.

**32. What is GCA's policy on laser pointers?**

Students are not permitted to possess or use laser pointers while on school property, while using district transportation, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property. Laser pointers will be confiscated and students will be disciplined according to the *Student Code of Conduct*.

**33. If my child is accused of wrongdoing and the incident was recorded by a school video camera, will I be allowed to view the videotape?**

In some cases, yes. Please contact the campus administrator for further guidance.

**34. Why is my child receiving a ticket or being punished for defending himself/herself in a fight?**

Self-defense is defined as use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself/herself. The privilege of self-defense is limited. A claim of self-defense in the use of physical force will not exempt a student from discipline when:

- The student provokes, invites or encourages the use of physical force by another person.
- The student has an opportunity to avoid physical force or to inform a school official of the threatened use of force.
- The student uses physical force after the other party abandons or attempts to abandon a fight or confrontation.

When there is a report of a fight on campus between two or more students, the school administration conducts an investigation. If the investigation reveals that the students in question have engaged in mutual combat or have intentionally or knowingly fought with another in a public place, the school administrator dealing with the offense will issue a consequence based on the investigation and other factors such as the students' disciplinary histories. The school administrator will also notify law enforcement. Law enforcement may also investigate the matter and issue citations or take other action that law enforcement deems necessary.

**35. What is the RAPTOR system?**

RAPTOR is a visitor registration system that enhances school safety by checking visitors against a sex offender database. This system alerts campus administrators if a registered sex offender is identified. It also prints visitor badges with the visitor's photograph.

- **How does it work?**

Driver license and/or government issued ID information is captured and compared to national databases of registered sex offenders. If a RSO (registered sex offender) is identified, campus administrators and law enforcement personnel can take appropriate steps to keep the campus safe.

- **Why is GCA using this system?**

The safety of our students is our highest priority. RAPTOR will provide a system to track visitors and volunteers while helping to identify people who may present a danger to students and staff members. The RAPTOR system quickly prints a visitor badge that includes a photograph, name of the visitor, time and date of issuance and the visitor's destination.

- **What other information is the school taking from driver's licenses?**

RAPTOR only captures the visitor's name, date of birth and photograph. The information is compared with information in a national database of registered sex offenders. No other personal information is collected or utilized. RAPTOR does not share any visitor information with other companies or vendors.

- **Does the school have the right to require visitors to produce identification before entering the campus?**  
Yes. The school has the right to know who is on the campus, why they are there and confirm that an individual has the authority to have the access to a student. The school can only do this by requesting identification.
- **What if the person refuses to show identification?**  
The campus administrator will be contacted immediately. The administrator will address the individual and explain the process. Based on the situation and information given, the administrator can make a determination to allow entry or refuse access to the facility and/or a student. If access is granted by the administrator, the parent or guardian will be escorted by an administrator or designee while he/she is on campus.
- **What do I do if I do not have a driver's license or Government issued identification?**  
You will need to provide your name and date of birth. It will be manually entered into the RAPTOR system.

# Levels of Student Misbehaviors and Disciplinary Actions

# **LEVELS OF STUDENT MISBEHAVIORS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

## **General Information**

- The GCA does not tolerate behaviors that disrupt the school and/or educational environment, violate the law, and/or present other health or safety risks. The *Student Code of Conduct* is GCA's notification about behaviors that are not tolerated.
- The GCA strives to insure that all of its students are free from bullying and harassment, including violence in students' relationships. All charges of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and dating violence are to be taken very seriously by our students, faculty, staff, administration and parents. We will make every effort to handle and respond to each and every charge and complaint filed by our students and employees in a fair, thorough and just manner. Every effort will be made to protect the due process rights of all victims and all alleged offenders.
- There may be situations that occur on a campus which require a conference that would include the administrator, teacher, student and parent.
- Coaches and sponsors may remove a student from extracurricular activities if the student has committed an infraction in Groups II-IV that results in disciplinary consequences.
- Some offenses are serious enough to warrant expulsion from GCA. Refer to the sections on Misconduct That Requires Expulsion for further information.
- Consequences for disciplinary infractions may vary due to a number of factors. However, when deciding whether to order suspension, corporal punishment, or expulsion, all campuses shall take into consideration:
  - seriousness of the offense
  - student's age
  - student's grade level
  - ability and functioning level
  - frequency and level of prior disciplinary history
  - student's attitude, including but not limited to student's level of truthfulness during initial investigation under the specific circumstances in each case
  - effect of the misconduct on the school environment
  - Legal/statutory requirements
  - self-defense (see Definitions)
  - intent or lack of intent at time student engaged in the misconduct
- The administrators of a school are authorized to administer reasonable corporal punishment to a student if it is judged necessary for enforcing school regulations. Corporal punishment is limited to paddling a student, and occurs only in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - The student is told of the reason corporal punishment is being administered.
  - The administrative designees may administer corporal punishment.

- The instrument to be used shall be approved by the principal.
- Corporal punishment shall be done in the presence of a school employee and out of the view of other students.

### Group I Misbehaviors

Discipline infractions may include but are not limited to:

- Actions or misbehaviors interrupting a student's right to learn
- Failure to abide by published district, campus or classroom rules and procedures
- Repeated incidents of failure to have the needed school supplies and/or materials
- First violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices
- Misconduct, which includes but is not limited to chewing gum, eating candy or food, not being on task, bothering other students, inappropriate or loud talking, cutting in line, throwing paper wads, note writing, sleeping, and minor defacing of school property
- Running or making excessive noise
- Tardiness

### Group I Consequences

Consequences include but are not limited to one or more of the following in accordance with the school's progressive discipline plan:

- Special education student - Refer to Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Section 504 student - If applicable review Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- For first violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices, see Technology Regulation section concerning consequences
- Confiscation of inappropriate item
- Denial of classroom privileges
- Detention hall
- Extended School Detention
- In-class discipline, which includes but is not limited to lower citizenship grades and/or teacher assigned detention
- Misbehavior warning (verbal or written)
- Parent contact, by written message or by phone

- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the principal or assistant principal

### Group II Misbehaviors

Discipline infractions may include but are not limited to:

- Excessive, repetitive misbehaviors from Group I
- Altering records (electronic or hard copy) or forging signature
- Campus possession, distribution or posting of magazines, books, electronic data or printed material not appropriate for school
- Drawings depicting tobacco, drugs, alcohol, gangs, guns, weapons or violent activity on self, notebook or other student materials
- Exhibiting unacceptable physical contact not resulting in injury (i.e., pushing)
- Failing to abide by school rules at extracurricular or co-curricular activities
- Harassing or insulting others
- Horseplay
- Improper dress as defined by the *Student Code of Conduct* dress code
- Improper possession of over-the-counter drugs, supplements or medications
- Inappropriate public display of affection
- Leaving class/campus without school permission which includes before school and during school hours
- Loitering, littering, trespassing or abusing residential property on the way to and/or from school
- Misconduct on the bus and at bus stop (See Transportation Code of Conduct)
- Participating in dishonest, deceitful activities
- Possession of lasers, radios, matches, lighters or items considered as distracters to the classroom environment

- Refusing to follow directions and instructions given by school personnel
- Riding in-line skates, skateboards, roller skates, bicycles, scooters, skate-shoes, etc. on campus
- Second and third violations of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices
- Throwing objects in the classroom, cafeteria, hallways, restrooms or campus
- Unauthorized access of the campus and/or school, or prohibited areas of the campus and/or school
- Violation of the Attendance Policy – unexcused absences and tardies
- Visible tattoos or brandings depicting tobacco, drugs, alcohol, gang identifiers, guns, weapons or violent activity on self.

#### Group II Disciplinary Consequences

Consequences are not limited to but may include one or more of the following in accordance with the school's progressive discipline plan:

- Special education student - Refer to Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Section 504 student - If applicable, review the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- A zero may be given for dishonest or deceitful actions on class assignments
- For second and third violations of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices, see Technology Regulation section concerning consequences
- Confiscation of inappropriate item
- Corrective teaching interaction
- Denial of privileges:
  1. Classroom privileges - by teacher
  2. Other privileges - by administrator
- Detention hall
- Disciplinary reassignment by a principal

- Extended school detention
- In-school suspension/on-campus suspension
- Restitution/restoration
- Short-term removal from the classroom (less than one day) to the building administrator's office
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the principal or assistant principal

### Group III Misbehaviors

Disruptive activities may include but are not limited to:

- Excessive, repetitive misbehaviors from Group II
- Defiance of authority of all school personnel
- Fighting
- Fourth violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices
- Gambling
- Hazing
- Installing unauthorized software on district computer equipment
- Intentional misuse/abuse or distribution of over-the-counter drugs, supplements or medication
- Obscene and/or threatening gestures or actions
- Planning a fight or assault while on campus that occurs off-campus
- Possessing, smoking or using tobacco products in any form at any school-related or school-sponsored activity on or off school property
- Possession of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vaporizers, vape pens or similar vaporizer devices at any school-related or school sponsored activity on or off school property.

- Possession of any object, which could be used for the purpose of a weapon or improvised weapon
- Profane language and/or derogatory statements
- Refusal to be screened during a random metal detector search
- Serious acts of disobedience or disorderly conduct
- Sexual harassment that does not include physical contact
- Slap boxing/Sparring
- Statements or acts demeaning to a person's race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity
- Tampering with computer hardware or software, leading to the disrupting of the learning environment
- Theft of up to \$50
- Threats to students
- Using the electronic communication network for commercial or political purposes

### Group III Consequences

Consequences are not limited to but may include one or more of the following in accordance with the school's progressive discipline plan:

- Special education student - Refer to Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Section 504 student - If applicable, review Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- For fourth violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices, see Technology Regulation section concerning consequences
- Confiscation of inappropriate item
- Emergency removal from school
- In-school suspension/on-campus suspension

- Referral to law enforcement agencies
- Restitution/restoration
- Extended school detention
- Suspension (No more than three consecutive days)
- Corporal Punishment
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the principal or assistant principal and approved in advance by the Chief Academic Officer

#### Group IV Misbehaviors

Serious, persistent misbehaviors or illegal acts may include but are not limited to:

- Excessive, repetitive misbehaviors from Group III
- Activities relating to unapproved organizations (gangs, fraternities, sororities or secret societies)
- Blocking any building entrance, exit or passageway
- Bullying others
- Creating major disruption
- Defacing property with graffiti
- Engaging in an assault
- Engaging in conduct that constitutes dating violence, including the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate or control another person with whom the student has or has had a dating relationship
- Engaging in extortion or blackmail
- Engaging in or identifying with gangs and gang activity (see additional information under Gangs, Secret Societies, Sororities or Fraternities)
- Engaging in sexual conduct on school property or at a school related function

- Engaging in stalking of individuals
- Fifth violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices
- Hit lists targeting school personnel and/or students
- Instigating others
- Intentional exposure of private body parts (mooning, flashing, etc.)
- Possessing look-alike weapons presented as authentic weapons
- Possessing or using drug paraphernalia
- Possessing or using fireworks or other explosive devices
- Possessing knives not meeting the Penal Code definition of “illegal knife” (Penal Code §46.01)
- Possessing, using, selling or being under the influence of alcohol at any school-related or school-sponsored activity on or off school property
- Possessing, using, selling or being under the influence of a controlled substance or look-alike controlled substance on or off school property
- Possessing or using pepper spray
- Possessing or using stink bombs
- Possessing or using weapons including but not limited to stun guns, BB guns, or starter pistols
- Possessing, using or distributing electronic or published material that is pornographic or obscene (for example, Sexting - see Definitions), or which threatens others or incites others to violence (for example, Cyber bullying – see Definitions), including possessing, using or distributing such material on **any telecommunications device**
- Rioting, group disobedience or disturbance
- Sexual harassment that includes physical contact
- Solicitation of immoral or illegal acts

- Tampering or setting off a fire alarm and/or fire extinguisher
- Theft over \$50, robbery or burglary
- Threats or assaultive behavior toward school personnel
- Unauthorized setting of fires
- Unauthorized access of areas of the campus which are prohibited by gender
- Unlawful possession, use, distribution or intentional misuse of a dangerous drug
- Using aerosols improperly
- Vandalism (criminal mischief as defined by Penal Code §28.03)
- Violating copyright laws regarding computer software
- Violation of the GCA Technology Policy

#### Group IV Consequences

Consequences are not limited to but may include one or more of the following in accordance with the school's progressive discipline plan:

- Special education student - Refer to Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Section 504 student - If applicable, review Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- For fifth violation of Administrative Regulations for Telecommunications Devices and Other Devices, see Technology Regulation section concerning consequences
- Confiscation of inappropriate item
- Emergency removal
- Referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies (such as Child Protective Services, police or fire department) for appropriate action
- Restitution/restoration

- Suspension
- Corporal Punishment
- Expulsion
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the principal or assistant principal and approved in advance by the Chief Academic Officer

### **Additional Information**

The discipline of students with disabilities is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the *Student Code of Conduct*. To the extent any conflict exists, state and/or federal law will prevail. In accordance with the Texas Education Code, a student who is enrolled in a special education program may not be disciplined for conduct meeting the definition of bullying, harassment, or making hit lists (see Definitions) until an ARD (Admission, Review, Dismissal) committee meeting has been held to review the conduct. In deciding whether to order suspension, DAEP placement or expulsion, the district will take into consideration a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct.

If a student seeks to transfer into GCA from a private school, another public school or any other facility that provides educational services, the District reserves the right to determine the appropriate placement for that student. If the student is facing possible disciplinary action, then GCA can continue the process and place the student in a disciplinary setting.

## **Expulsion**

### **Misconduct That May Result in Expulsion**

A student may be expelled from GCA for persistent, severe misbehavior, along with the following offenses:

### **Any Location**

- Engaging in the following, no matter where it takes place:
  - Conduct that contains the elements of assault under Penal Code 22.01(a)(1) in retaliation against a school Employee or volunteer
  - Criminal mischief, if punishable as a felony
  
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of one of the following offenses against another student, without regard to where the conduct occurs:
  - Aggravated assault
  - Sexual assault
  - Aggravated sexual assault
  - Murder
  - Capital murder
  - Criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder
  - Aggravated robbery

### **At School, Within 300 Feet, or at School Event**

- Engaging in conduct relating to a false alarm or report (including a bomb threat) or a terroristic threat involving a public school.
- Committing any of the following offenses on or within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property.
  - Selling, giving or delivering to another person, or possessing, using or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance or a dangerous drug, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony
  - Selling, giving or delivering to another person, or possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol, or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, if the conduct is not punishable as a felony
  - Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable volatile chemicals
  - Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of assault under Section 22.01(a)(1) against an employee or a volunteer
  - Engaging in deadly conduct (See Definitions)

**Within 300 Feet of School**

- Engaging in the following conduct while within 300 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line:
  - Aggravated assault, sexual assault, or aggravated sexual assault
  - Arson
  - Murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder
  - Indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, manslaughter, criminal negligent homicide, or aggravated robbery
  - Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children
  - Felony drug or alcohol related offense
  - Use, exhibition, or possession of a firearm (as defined by state law), an illegal knife, a club, or prohibited weapon, or possession of a firearm (as defined by federal law)

**Property of Another District**

- Committing any offense that is a state-mandated expellable offense if the offense is committed on the property of another district in Texas or while the student is attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity of a school in another district in Texas.

**Misconduct That Requires Expulsion**

A student must be expelled for any of the following offenses that occur on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property:

**Federal Law**

- Bringing to school a firearm, as defined by federal law. "Firearm" under federal law includes:
  - Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
  - The frame or receiver of any such weapon
  - Any firearm muffler or firearm weapon
  - Any destructive device, such as any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, or grenade

**Texas Penal Code**

- Using, exhibiting or possessing the following, as defined by the Texas Penal Code:
  - A firearm (any device designed, made or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance or any device readily convertible to that use)

- An illegal knife, such as a knife with a blade over 5½ inches; hand instrument, designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; dagger, including but not limited to a dirk, stiletto and poniard; bowie knife; sword; or spear.
- A club (see Definitions) such as an instrument specially designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument, including a blackjack, nightstick, mace and tomahawk
- A prohibited weapon, such as an explosive weapon, a machine gun, a short-barrel firearm, a firearm silencer, knuckles, armor-piercing ammunition, a chemical dispensing device, or a zip gun. (See Definitions)
- Behaving in a manner that contains elements of the following offenses under the Texas Penal Code:
  - Aggravated assault, sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault
  - Arson (See Definitions)
  - Murder, capital murder or criminal attempt to commit murder or capital murder
  - Indecency with a child
  - Aggravated kidnapping
  - Aggravated robbery
  - Manslaughter
  - Criminally negligent homicide
  - Continuous sexual abuse of a young child or children
  - Behavior punishable as a felony that involves selling, giving or delivering to another person, or possessing, using or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug or alcohol; or committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol
- Engaging in retaliation against a school employee or volunteer combined with one of the above-listed mandatory expulsion offenses, with the exception of a federal firearm offense, on or off school property or at a school-related activity.

#### **Under Age Ten**

When a student under the age of 10 engages in behavior that is expellable behavior, the student will not be expelled but will be withdrawn from GCA pending disciplinary proceedings. A student under age six will not be placed in a DAEP unless the student commits a federal firearm offense.

**Emergency** In an emergency, the principal or the principal’s designee may order the immediate expulsion of a student for any reason for which expulsion may be made on a nonemergency basis.

**Process** The specific process for expulsion hearings is set out in the section on Student Complaint and Appeal Process for Off Campus Placement.

**Withdrawal During Process** When a student has violated the district’s Code in a way that requires or permits expulsion from the district and the student withdraws from the district before the expulsion hearing takes place, the district may conduct the hearing after sending written notice to the parent and student.

If the student then re-enrolls in the district during the same or subsequent school year, the district may enforce the expulsion order at that time, less any expulsion period that has been served by the student during enrollment in another district.

If the appropriate administrator or the Board fails to issue an expulsion order after the student withdraws, the next district in which the student enrolls may complete the proceedings.

**Additional Misconduct** If during the expulsion, the student engages in additional conduct for which placement in a DAEP or expulsion is required or permitted, additional proceedings may be conducted, and the appropriate administrator or the Board may issue an additional disciplinary order as a result of those proceedings.

**Restrictions During Expulsion** Expelled students are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school-sponsored or school-related activities during the period of expulsion.

**Newly Enrolled Students**

The district will not enroll any student who was previously expelled from another district, charter school, or private school during the period of expulsion. continue the expulsion of any newly enrolled student expelled from another district or an open-enrollment charter school until the period of the expulsion is completed.

**Emergency Expulsion Procedures**

When an emergency expulsion occurs, the student will be given verbal notice of the reason for the action. Within 10 days after the date of the emergency expulsion, the student will be given appropriate due process required for a student facing expulsion.

**Registered Sex Offenders**

**Placement and/or Expulsion for Certain Serious Offenses**

This section includes two categories of serious offenses for which the Education Code provides unique procedures and specific consequences.

Upon receiving notification in accordance with state law that a student is currently required to register as a sex offender, the administration must remove the student from the regular classroom and determine appropriate placement unless the court orders JJAEP placement.

If the student is under any form of court supervision, including probation, community supervision or parole, the student may be expelled from GCA to their home district, at which time they may face disciplinary hearings related to their status.

If the student is not under any form of court supervision, the student may be expelled from GCA to their home district, at which time they may face disciplinary hearings related to their status, or the placement may be in a regular classroom. The placement may not be in the regular classroom if the Board or its designee determines that the student's presence:

1. Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
2. Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
3. Is not in the best interests of the district's students.

**Newly Enrolled Student**

If a student enrolls in the district during a mandatory placement as a registered sex offender, the district may count any time already spent by the student in a placement or may require additional time be served in a disciplinary setting outside of GCA prior to enrollment without conducting a review of the placement.

**Appeal**

A student or the student's parent may appeal the placement by requesting a conference between the Board or its designee, the student and the student's parent. The conference is limited to the factual question of whether the student is required to register as a sex offender. Any decision of the Board or its designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

**Certain Felonies**

Regardless of whether placement or expulsion is required or permitted by one of the reasons in the DAEP Placement or Expulsion sections, in accordance with Education Code 37.0081, a student **may** be expelled and placed in either DAEP or JJAEP if the Board or its designee makes certain findings and the following circumstances exist in relation to a felony offense under Title 5 (see Definitions) of the Texas Penal Code. The student must:

- Have received deferred prosecution for conduct defined as a Title 5 felony offense,
- Have been found by a court or jury to have engaged in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as a Title 5 felony offense,
- Have been charged with engaging in conduct defined as a Title 5 felony offense,
- Have been referred to a juvenile court for allegedly engaging in delinquent conduct for conduct defined as a Title 5 felony offense, or
- Have received probation or deferred adjudication or have been arrested for, charged with or convicted of a Title 5 felony offense.

The district may expel the student and order placement under these circumstances regardless of:

- The date on which the student’s conduct occurred,
- The location at which the conduct occurred,
- Whether the conduct occurred while the student was enrolled in the district, or
- Whether the student has successfully completed any court disposition requirements imposed in connection with the conduct.

**Hearing and  
Required Findings**

The student must first have a hearing before the Board or its designee, who must determine that in addition to the circumstances above that allow for the expulsion, the student’s presence in the regular classroom:

- Threatens the safety of other students or teachers,
- Will be detrimental to the educational process, or
- Is not in the best interest of the district’s students.

Any decision of the Board or the Board’s designee under this section is final and may not be appealed.

**Length of  
Placement**

The student is subject to the placement until:

- The student graduates from high school,
- The charges are dismissed or reduced to a misdemeanor offense, or
- The student completes the term of the placement or is assigned to another program.

**Newly Enrolled  
Students**

A student who enrolls in the district before completing a placement under this section from another school district must complete the term of the placement.

**Weapon-Free  
School Zones**

The Texas Penal Code extends the penalties for possession of a weapon on school property to “any grounds or building on which an activity sponsored by a school or education institution is being conducted.” The Texas Penal Code also increases punishment for an offense involving a weapon if it is shown that the individual committed the offense in a place that the person knew was within 300 feet of the school premises; or a college or university; on a school bus; or on premises where an official school function, a UIL activity or a school-sponsored extracurricular activity is taking place.

**Removal by a  
Teacher (Texas  
Education Code,  
Chapter 37.002)**

A teacher may send a student to the principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. The principal shall respond by employing appropriate discipline management techniques consistent with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

A teacher may remove a student from class when the student:

- Is repeatedly interfering with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the student in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn and such behavior has been documented; or
- If the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

Within three class days after the day the student is removed from class by a teacher, the principal or designee shall schedule a conference with the student, the parent or guardian, and the teacher. At the conference, the student is entitled to oral or written notice of the reasons for removal, an explanation of the basis for removal and an opportunity to respond.

If a teacher removes a student from class, the principal may place the student into another appropriate classroom, into in-school suspension or into a disciplinary alternative education program. The principal may not return the student to that teacher's class without the teacher's consent unless the three-member campus committee determines that such placement is the best or only alternative available. The terms of the removal may prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activity.

# Transportation Code of Conduct

# **TRANSPORTATION CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **Parents and Bus Riders**

The goal of this information is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children and adults who ride school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the material in the *Transportation Handbook* with their children. Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the district and should be treated as such.

## **Procedures for Waiting for the Bus**

1. It is the responsibility of the parent to get the student to the bus stop at least five minutes before the route start time to ensure student pickup.
2. Be at the bus stop at least five minutes before scheduled route start time. The driver will not wait or honk. The bus does not stop if students are not present.
3. Stand on the sidewalk or away from the roadway while waiting for the bus.
4. When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load immediately.
5. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
6. If you miss the bus, go home immediately.
7. Parents should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.
8. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to school if a child misses the bus.

## **Load and Unload the Bus Properly**

1. Board and leave the bus at the designated stop only.
2. Do not push or shove.
3. Use the handrail; take one step at a time.
4. Go to your seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
5. Seatbelts must be worn when available.
6. The bus driver has the authority to assign seats to the entire bus and/or individuals.
7. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped.
8. Wait for your turn to leave the bus.
9. Any changes in the daily routine of riding a bus must be arranged through the principal and stated in writing to the driver.
10. Stay clear of the bus when the door has closed or the bus is moving. Do not chase or hang onto the bus. Only school staff or administrators are authorized to stop or redirect the bus.
11. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, do not go after it. Ask the driver for help.

12. When crossing the street or highway, walk in front of the bus and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
13. Check for oncoming traffic in both directions and walk directly across the road.
14. Never cross the road behind the bus.
15. In order for a student to ride a bus other than his/her own, the GCA Transportation Department must have a letter from the parent that is signed by the principal prior to riding. A student who is not eligible to ride a bus in GCA cannot ride under any circumstances.
16. CAUTION: Be alert for vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
17. Once students board the bus, they are not allowed to exit except at school or their assigned stop.
18. Any item such as a class project or musical instrument that cannot be held on the student's lap, placed underneath the student's seat, or placed in the driver's compartment area without blocking the entrance/exit or aisle will not be allowed on the bus.

**Conduct on the Bus  
or at the Bus Stop**

**Minor Discipline**

1. Obey all driver instructions.
2. Do not change seats; remain seated while the bus is moving.
3. Do not disturb the driver; normal conversation is permitted.
4. Do not throw objects in or out of the bus.
5. Arms, head and other body parts are to be kept out of the aisle and inside the bus.
6. Do not cut, mark or scratch any part of the bus. Vandalism costs will be paid by the person who is responsible.
7. Do not bring prohibited items on the bus. Prohibited items include but are not limited to:
  - a. Live animals or insects
  - b. Matches or cigarette lighters
  - c. Skateboards
  - d. Footballs, basketballs, tennis balls or any like item
  - e. Laser pointers
8. The following items are not to be visible or in use: food and/or drinks.

**Major Discipline**

1. Violence or fighting will not be tolerated.

2. Weapons or explosive devices are prohibited.
3. Do not consume or possess alcohol, drugs, tobacco including but not limited to the use of electronic cigarettes, (e-cigarettes), vaporizers, vape pens or similar vaporizer devices, or chemicals of any type.

### **Consequences**

Student may be removed from the bus at the discretion of the principal

1. For regular education students – students may be removed from the bus or otherwise disciplined at the discretion of the principal.
2. For special education students – if transportation is a related service approved by the ARD (Admission, Review, Dismissal) committee, the principal may schedule an ARD committee meeting to discuss the infraction as related to transportation services.

### **Accidents or emergencies**

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
3. The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation:
  - a. The student nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.
  - b. Leave the bus in single file, as quietly as possible
  - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - d. Follow the driver's instructions completely.

### **Extracurricular trips**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building principal and the trip sponsor.
3. Strict loading and unloading time schedules will be followed.

# Student Dress Code

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

A student's conduct is related to his/her clothing. Therefore, the school is directly concerned with students' clothing. The appropriateness of a student's clothing for the school environment should dictate the choice of clothing and grooming practices on each given day. Unless modified by the principal, students, including student spectators, at school activities such as sporting events, musical, field trip, off-campus school events and commencement exercises, shall meet the dress code. The dress code may be modified for students who are officially representing the school in extra-curricular activities and are wearing an official uniform or other appropriate dress for that school activity.

All students are expected to adhere to common practices of modesty, cleanliness and neatness; to dress in a respectful manner within the acceptable standards of the community and in such a manner as to contribute to the academic atmosphere, not detract from it. Students who fail to comply with this dress code may be sent home and may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Any clothing, accessories, symbols, jewelry or other paraphernalia, which depicts or suggests association with a gang, secret society or fraternity, shall not be brought to school, worn at school or in any way be present at any school-sponsored event.

**Any other considerations will be determined by the individual school administrators. The school administration shall have the right to consider any current fashion to determine its acceptability for school wear.**

Clarification regarding apparel should be obtained **prior to wearing it to school**; this can be obtained from the school administration. Students in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the school's administration.

Teachers are charged with the responsibility of enforcing student dress code in their classes as well as on campus. Administrators and other school personnel share the same responsibility. Teachers shall follow building procedure for discipline referral regarding dress code violations.

No attempt will be made to dictate fashion styles as long as they are in keeping with district policies. It should be noted, however, that it is the responsibility of the student and parent that the student adhere to the dress code, as follows:

1. General

- A. Any clothing, jewelry or accessories with decorations, patches, lettering advertisements, etc. that may be considered obscene or offensive are not to be worn to school. This includes any clothing, jewelry or accessories having criminal street gang identifiers, accessories that may be used as weapons, and accessories having drug, sex, tobacco, or alcoholic beverage references or designs.
- B. Form fitting garments such as Spandex may only be worn with another layer of clothing, which meets the dress code.

2. Shirts and Blouses

- A. Crop tops, tube tops, halters, sleeveless shirts, and spaghetti straps are unacceptable. (Anything less than two inches is considered a spaghetti strap.) Strapless dresses without jackets are unacceptable.
- B. The display of cleavage is unacceptable. Low cut blouses, tops, sweaters, etc. with plunging necklines are not allowed.
- C. Shirts must be tucked in at all times
- D. Transparent and/or see-through material is considered unacceptable, unless worn over another article of clothing that meets dress code.
- E. Styles include collared knit button polo style, or Oxford style gold or white. No designs may be visible. Undershirts must be white or the same color as the top shirt.
- F. Turtlenecks may be worn in appropriate school colors

3. Dresses, Skirts, Skorts

- A. The length of a skirt/dress/skort must extend beyond the fingertips when the student's hand is fully extended down the side of the student's leg.
- B. When measuring skirts, dresses or skorts that have slits, the length will be determined by measuring from the top of the slit.

4. Shorts

The minimum length of shorts must be no shorter than the tip of the longest finger with student's hand fully extended down the side of the student's leg.

## 5. Pants

- A. Torn, cut/slashed or frayed material that reveals any area of skin or undergarment above the knee is considered inappropriate.
- B. No pajama bottoms, sleepwear or lounge wear.
- C. Belts must be worn buckled at all times, worn inside the belt loops, and a solid color leather like dress style or canvas belt with buckle. Belts are to be black, brown, navy blue, khaki, or white.

## 6. Sagging Pants

Students shall wear their trousers or overalls properly at the waist. No sagging.

## 7. Accessories

- A. All students must wear closed toe shoes at all times. Students participating in physical education class shall wear athletic footwear to participate. Flip flops, house shoes and slippers are prohibited. Shoes must be brown, black, navy blue, or white and have laces that are either white or match the color of the shoe.
- B. If socks are worn, they must match and be dark brown, black, navy blue, khaki, or white(solid colors).
- C. Hair should be kept neat, clean and reasonably styled, and must not be an unnatural or distracting hair color.
- D. Any type of head covering is unacceptable.
- E. Religious exceptions must be cleared by the principal.
- F. Proper undergarments should be worn but not visible.
- G. Facial hair is confined to mustaches only and should be neat, clean, closely trimmed and not be a distraction to the learning environment. Goatees and beards are not allowed.
- H. Chains or spiked jewelry are unacceptable.
- I. Piercings are limited to the ear, and jewelry must not be considered to be either disruptive or offensive.

## 8. Identification Badges

All middle/high school students shall wear their GCA-issued student ID badges at all times while on a school campus or attending a school-related extracurricular activity. Badges must be visible at all times and cannot be worn underneath clothing or be carried in a student's pocket, backpack, bag, purse, etc.

# Technology Regulation

## **TECHNOLOGY REGULATION**

### *Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Guidelines for Technology Resources*

The following information is provided so that students, parents and staff are aware of the responsibilities involved in the efficient, ethical and legal use of technology resources.

Each student will be required to adhere to all district policies and to the *Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Guidelines* in order to be granted access to district technology resources.

Access to the district's electronic communications system is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of administrative regulations governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to allow monitoring of their use and compliance with such regulations and guidelines.

Access to the district electronic communications systems, including the Internet, shall be made available to students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations.

Noncompliance may result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and other disciplinary action consistent with district policies.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students are not private and may be monitored at any time by designated district staff to ensure appropriate use.

Copyrighted software or data may not be placed on any system connected to the district's system without permission from the holder of the copyright. Only the copyright owner, or an individual the owner specifically authorizes, may upload copyrighted material to the system.

No original work created by any district student will be posted on a Web page under the district's control unless the district has received written consent from the student (and the student's parent if the student is a minor) who created the work.

No personally identifiable information about a district student will be posted on a Web page under the district's control unless the district has received written consent from the student's parent. An exception may be made for "directory information" as allowed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and district policy

**Consent  
Requirements**

**Filtering** All Internet access will be filtered for minors and adults on computers with Internet access provided by the school. The categories of material considered inappropriate and to which access will be blocked will include, but not be limited to, nudity/pornography; images or descriptions of sexual acts; promotion of violence, illegal use of weapons, drug use, discrimination, or participation in hate groups; and instructions for performing criminal acts (i.e. bomb making).

**System Access** Access to the district's electronic communications system will be governed as follows:

1. Students in all grades will be granted access to the district's system as appropriate. Students may be assigned individual accounts.
2. Any system user identified as a security risk or as having violated district and/or campus computer use guidelines may be denied access to the district's system.
3. All users will be required to sign a user agreement annually.

**Individual User Responsibilities** The following standards will apply to all users of the district's electronic information/communications systems:

1. The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use.
2. The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by district policy or guidelines.
3. System users may not disable, or attempt to disable, a filtering device on the district's electronic communications system.
4. Communications may not be encrypted so as to avoid security review by system administrators.
5. System users may not use another person's system account without written permission from the campus or district administrator as appropriate.
6. Students may not distribute personal information about themselves or others by means of the electronic communications system unless instructed to do so by an administrator, counselor, librarian or teacher for instructional purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, personal addresses and telephone numbers.
7. Students should never make appointments to meet people whom they meet online and should report to a teacher or administrator if they receive any request for such a meeting.

8. Users may not use the network for financial or commercial gain, advertising, or political lobbying.
9. System users must purge electronic mail in accordance with established retention guidelines.
10. System users may not redistribute copyrighted programs or data except with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the copyright holder or designee in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy and administrative regulations.
11. System users should avoid actions that are likely to increase the risk of introducing viruses to the system, such as opening e-mail messages from unknown senders and loading data from unprotected computers.
12. System users may not send or post messages that are abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation or illegal.
13. System users may not purposefully access materials that are abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation or illegal.
14. System users should be mindful that use of school-related electronic mail addresses might cause some recipients or other readers of that mail to assume they represent the district or school, whether or not that was the user's intention.
15. System users may not waste district resources related to the electronic communications system.
16. System users may not gain unauthorized access to resources or information.
17. Students who identify or know about a security problem are expected to convey the details to a teacher without revealing the information to other students.

#### **Vandalism**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy district equipment or data or the data of another user of the district's system or of any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of district policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

Vandalism as defined above will result in the cancellation of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, as well as other appropriate consequences.

**Forgery Prohibited**

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users, to deliberately interfere with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail, or to use another person's user ID and/or password is prohibited.

**Information  
Content/Third-Party  
Supplied Information**

System users and parents of students with access to the district's system should be aware that, despite the district's use of technology protection measures as required by law, use of the system may provide access to other electronic communications systems in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material.

A student who gains access to such material is expected to discontinue the access as quickly as possible and to report the incident to the supervising teacher.

A student knowingly bringing prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the district's system and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

**Network Etiquette**

System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette:

1. Be polite; messages typed in capital letters are the computer equivalent of shouting and are considered rude.
2. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs and any other inflammatory language are prohibited.
3. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
4. Transmitting and/or viewing obscene messages or pictures are prohibited.
5. Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail by considering whether a file may be too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system or may be in a format unreadable by the recipient.
6. Using the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users is prohibited.

**Termination /  
Revocation of  
System User  
Account**

Termination of a student's access for violation of district policies or regulations will be effective on the date the principal or district administrator receives notice of student withdrawal or of revocation of system privileges, or on a future date if so specified in the notice.

**Disclaimer**

The district's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The district does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The district does not warrant that the functions or services performed by or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error free, or that defects will be corrected.

Opinions, advice, services and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the district.

The district will cooperate fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's electronic systems.

**Administrative  
Regulations for  
Telecommunications  
Devices and Other  
Devices**

[See Texas Education Code §37.082] The district prohibits the use of telecommunications devices such as cellular phones, pagers, beepers and PDAs (“telecommunications devices”), as well as cameras (digital, video, etc.), MP3 players, CD players, video games or any other device that has the potential to be considered a distraction to the educational environment at all schools and at all school-related activities, both on and off campus, during the school day. Students may possess such devices; however these devices shall not be visible and must remain off during the school day. For students on school campuses, the school day is defined as from the time a student first enters the school building for the day until the last dismissal bell of the day. For students participating in school-related activities off-campus and/or school-related activities that begin before the first school bell of the day or after the last dismissal bell of the day, school personnel supervising such activities have discretion to determine when the school day begins and ends. Students on campus who need to make calls for emergency purposes may ask permission from staff to use district phones. Parents who need to contact a student on campus during the school day must call the school office. Parents who need to contact a student participating in an off-campus school-related activity should do so according to the rules determined by school personnel supervising the activity, which rules may vary.

Students who use a device in any way that violates the law, Board Policy, or the *Student Code of Conduct* shall be subject to disciplinary action. Furthermore, a student's failure and/or refusal to promptly and peacefully relinquish a device will result in more serious disciplinary action. Defiant behavior such as attempting to dismantle a device before relinquishing it (for example, removing the SIM card, battery, etc.) will result in more serious disciplinary action.

The failure to comply with these regulations will result in the following consequences:

First Offense: Group I Misbehavior – Confiscation of the device until a parent retrieves or parent gives permission for student to retrieve the device from the school office and a \$15 return fee/fine is paid for the telecommunication device.

Second Offense: Group II Misbehavior – Two days On Campus Suspension (OCS), confiscation of the device until a parent retrieves or parent gives permission for student to retrieve the device from the school office and a \$15 return fee/fine is paid for telecommunication device.

Third Offense: Group II Misbehavior – Three days On Campus Suspension (OCS), **loss of privilege to have possession of any device on campus**, confiscation of the device at issue until a parent retrieves or parent gives permission for student to retrieve the device from the school office and a \$15 return fee/fine is paid for telecommunication device.

Fourth Offense: Group III Misbehavior – Five days On Campus Suspension, **loss of privilege to have possession of any device on campus**, confiscation of the device at issue until a parent retrieves or parent gives permission for student to retrieve the device from the school office and a \$15 return fee/fine is paid for telecommunication device.

Fifth Offense: Group IV Misbehavior – Three days Off Campus Suspension **loss of privilege to have possession of any device on campus**, confiscation of the device at issue until a parent retrieves or parent gives permission for student to retrieve the device from the school office and a \$15 return fee/fine is paid for telecommunication device.

Depending upon the severity and frequency of the violation, students may be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences set forth in the *Student Code of Conduct* and Texas Education Code, including expulsion.

This handbook serves as notification to parents and students that the District will dispose of confiscated telecommunication devices at the end of the school year if no claim is made and no return fee/fine is paid. The

District assumes no responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen devices once they are confiscated. The \$15 return fee/fine may only be paid with cash or money order.

**Improper Use of  
Technology On and  
Off Campus**

Use of the Internet and/or other technologies in a threatening manner, in a manner that creates or causes a material or substantial disruption of the educational environment, or reasonably forecasts a material or substantial disruption of the educational environment (to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis) may be a basis for school disciplinary consequences even if the conduct did not occur on school property. The following list of prohibited acts is not exhaustive:

1. Attempting to access or circumvent passwords or other security-related information of the district, students or employees or to upload or create computer viruses.
2. Attempting to alter, destroy or disable district computer equipment, district data, the data of others or other networks connected to the district's system.
3. Using the Internet or other electronic communications to threaten district students, employees or volunteers.
4. Cyber bullying – for example, sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, threatening, harassing, and/or damaging to another's reputation. For more information, see Cyber bullying in the Definitions section.
5. Using e-mail or websites at school to encourage illegal behavior or threaten school safety.
6. Sexting – for example, sending or posting electronic messages and/or pictures that are obscene, sexually oriented, and/or potentially illegal. For more information, see Sexting in the Definitions section.

# Assignment and Appeal Processes for Expulsions

## Expulsions

**Level One:** When a student is accused of having committed an expellable offense, a conference before the principal shall be held. At this conference, a determination will be made regarding the recommendation for expulsion. The conference shall be held within seven school days from the date of the offense or the date it is determined that the student allegedly committed the offense. This time can be extended upon request of the parent and consent by the school. The student and the parents shall be notified of the date, time and place of the conference at least three school days prior to the conference to give the student a reasonable opportunity to prepare for the conference.

When necessary to ensure communication, notices will be sent in the language spoken by the parent.

Prior to the conference, the student will be given written notice that includes:

1. The charges and the proposed sanctions.
2. The names of all adult witnesses and the nature of their testimony.
3. The student's right to representation. The student shall notify the school if an attorney will be present.
4. The student's right to examine the school's evidence and question the adult witnesses.

5. The student's right to testify, present witnesses and evidence. Parental permission is required for any student witness younger than 18 to testify.

At the conference before the principal, the school administration will present witnesses and evidence that supports the proposed expulsion. The student's representative may question any adult witnesses. Following the school's presentation, the student may present witnesses and evidence. The school may question the student's witnesses. The principal may ask questions for clarification. In the event that the principal cannot preside over the conference, a central office administrator may hear the case.

The conference is informal. Rules of evidence do not apply. Hearsay is admissible; the principal or his/her designee can assign the proper weight to hearsay evidence. There is no right to subpoena witnesses at this conference. Documents may be obtained in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act. The conference will be tape recorded. Upon request, a copy of the tape recording will be provided to the student at no charge.

The principal shall make a decision based only on the information presented in the conference. The decision shall be communicated to the student and the parent within three school days. The expulsion shall be enforced during the appeal process.

Pending the Level One conference on the expulsion, a student may be placed in home-based instruction and receive assignments for credit. The student is not allowed to appear on any GCA campus or property or to participate in school-sponsored events on or off campus. If the decision is made that the student is not guilty of the offense, the student's record shall be expunged.

**Level Two:** The parent may request an appeal the principal's expulsion decision to the Chief Academic Officer. Such requests should be made to the Chief Academic Officer in writing within three days of receipt of the principal's decision. Within five school days from receiving the request for appeal, a conference will be scheduled and held with the Chief Academic Officer. The decision of the Chief Academic Officer is independent, with the full authority to overturn or modify the principal's expulsion decision. The procedural rules at Level One will also apply to Level Two. The Level Two decision shall be communicated to the student and parent within three school days after the conference.

**Level Three:** The parent may appeal an adverse decision of the Chief Academic Officer to the Board of Trustees. Within three school days from the receipt of the decision, the parent may request in writing a hearing in before the Board of Trustees. The request should be sent to the Superintendent.

Prior to the Board hearing, the parents shall meet informally with the Superintendent to discuss the situation. After the meeting, if a Board hearing is still requested, the Superintendent shall, within five school days, send a notice containing the time, place and date of the Board meeting during which Board hearing will be held.

At the Board hearing, no new evidence shall be presented. A transcript of the conference before the Chief Academic Officer shall be presented to the Board of Trustees prior to the hearing. A copy of this transcript shall be provided to the parent. At the hearing, the parent and the school district may each make a ten-minute statement to the Board. The Board shall base its decision on the evidence contained in the record and the statements made by the parties.

The hearing will be in a closed meeting unless the parents request an open meeting. The Board may determine to either maintain the expulsion, reinstate the student in GCA, or take any other action it deems appropriate.

An appeal of the Board's decision to uphold the expulsion is made to State District Court.

# Volunteer Guidelines

## **GCA Volunteer Guidelines Relating to Students**

The GCA Volunteer Application process is in place with the goal of providing the safest environment for all of our students, staff and volunteers. All volunteer applications are processed through the Human Resources department.

All volunteer applicants for GCA must agree to an annual criminal history record background check. **The requested information regarding sex, race and date of birth is required by the Texas Department of Public Safety for processing and is kept strictly confidential.**

All students volunteering at an GCA facility besides the one they attend are required to complete a student volunteer application. However, if at the campus you attend you are volunteering within any special education program, an application is required. Students who are applying to volunteer must have parent/guardian permission. **The parent/guardian and student must both sign the student volunteer application.** Only one application should be completed every school year. Students must indicate their home campus on the application.

A school can utilize only those volunteers who are on the current list of “approved” volunteers for that campus. **Student volunteers will be placed on an “approved” list when a clear criminal history has been received from the Texas Department of Public Safety.** With all of the steps involved in this process, it may take up to four weeks to receive the results of the background checks.

If the Texas Department of Public Safety returns an **apparent** criminal history for anything other than a minor traffic offense, the applicant will not be approved until the applicant provides official proof that the record is clear or until an appeal is successfully processed. A student or the parent/guardian may contact the Human Resources Director regarding appeal process information. **All information received is private and confidential.**

Please note, Texas Department of Public Safety records are not always updated with a current disposition. This is a good opportunity to clear up records that are thought to no longer exist. The school district does receive juvenile records. A person’s criminal history begins at age 10.

Any questions regarding the volunteer application process should be directed to the Human Resources office.

# Assistance for Students with Learning Difficulties

## **Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Need Special Education Services**

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*. Additional information regarding the IDEA is available from the school district in a companion document *A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

- Texas Project First
- Partners Resource Network

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

- School Counselor (learning difficulties)
- Campus Principal (Special Education)
- Chief Academic Officer( Section 504)

# **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

## **Extracurricular Permission Slip**

Every student must have a signed parent permission slip in the sponsor's office before he/she can participate in an extracurricular activity. This permission slip must be signed yearly.

## **Extracurricular Removals**

Upon notice from law enforcement that a student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense, the student will lose extracurricular privileges.

## **Student Discipline**

- **Extracurricular activities**

Any student who represents the GCA by participating in extracurricular activities or is a member or participant in any GCA sponsored club or organization will be suspended from membership and/or any and all participation if the student is found by the GCA to have engaged in conduct which would constitute a violation of any law related to alcohol, dangerous drugs, marijuana and/or controlled substances, volatile chemicals and abusable glue or aerosol paint, as such substance is defined in the *Student Code of Conduct*, regardless of whether or not such conduct occurs on school property or at school-sponsored or school-related events and regardless of whether or not such conduct occurs while school is in session or during the school year. Off campus, non-school related conduct, which occurs at any time, is subject to these consequences. These consequences affect all extracurricular activities and participation in all activities of the organization or club regardless of whether or not the activities are during the school year. The length of suspension from membership or participation shall be for the remainder of the school year or season whichever is later.

These consequences are incorporated in and are in addition to any other applicable consequences for school-related misconduct as set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, including but not limited to or expulsion.

## **Procedure for Application of Policy**

A student would lose extracurricular privileges if he/she is found to have violated this policy by one of the following means:

1. Student admission through discussion with coaches/sponsors and/or school administrators

2. Legal citation issued or arrested and taken into custody by any law enforcement agency
3. GCA employee witness

This policy would not affect a student who may be with others who are violating the policy, unless the student admits the violation, is issued a citation, or arrested and taken into custody by any law enforcement agency, or is witnessed in violation by an GCA employee.

# ATTENDANCE

## Rationale

More than 95.5% of all GCA students attend school on a regular basis. As a result, these students tend to achieve better grades, seek an active involvement in activities on campus and learn the skills necessary to attain success after leaving our school district.

Punctuality and self-discipline are expected of all students and adults responsible for our students. Know your child's schedule and check with the school if you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance or punctuality.

## Grades Pre-K-12

Students in grades Pre-K-12 must adhere to the 90% attendance law. These classes are not on a block schedule; however, 90% attendance in each class or subject offered is mandatory. Nine absences or more, whether excused or unexcused, per semester exceeds the 90% attendance requirement. If a student fails to attend 90% of the days, credit can be lost and promotion to the next grade may be in jeopardy.

Any students on block schedule who accrue five absences or more in a class per semester may not receive credit for that class. Since block scheduled classes meet on alternate days, each class meets approximately forty-four times each semester. Thus, five absences or more in a class per semester exceeds the 90% attendance requirement. However, students with excessive absences shall be required to continue in each class and assume responsibility for all assignments.

## Compulsory School Attendance

Texas Education Code Sections 25.085(a) and (b) state that a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and has not reached the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided. Upon enrollment in pre kindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school under the same 90% attendance rules as all other students.

## Tardies

Tardiness to individual classes shall be handled by the teacher of that class. At the elementary level, each group of 5 tardies within the same semester will result in administrative action. For students at the secondary level, each group of 3 tardies per class within the same semester will result in administrative action.

## Absences

If any parent of a school age child fails to send the child to school as required by law, a warning shall be issued by the school and/or

the attendance officer that attendance is immediately required. If after a warning the parent fails to send the child to school as required by law and the child has unexcused voluntary absences, the parent commits an offense. Family Code §51.03(b)(2). Education Code §25.093

The parent and/or child shall be prosecuted if the child fails to attend school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year or on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period from school. Education Code §25.094 (a)(1)(2)

The district attendance officer may file a complaint in court against the parent or child when truancy occurs. Fines range from \$120 to \$500 per day that the child remains truant from school. Other results of truancy are:

- Loss of VOE (TEA) forms necessary for driver's education (less than 90% attendance)
- Suspension of a child's drivers license or permit, or if the child does not have a license or permit, to deny the issuance of a license or permit for a period of 365 days or until the child reaches the age of 19, whichever is longer. Family Code §54.042, Education Code §25.094(c)
- Referral to juvenile probation department for a child in need of supervision. Family Code §51.03(b))(2)
- A warrant for the arrest of a parent and/or student may be issued.

A student planning to leave campus during the school day is required to provide written consent from parent/guardian prior to leaving.

**It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to call the school each day of absence** by 10 a.m. to explain the absence of the student. The purpose in notifying the school is to promote that both the school and the family are aware that we can account for each student. **All absences not cleared within 24 hours are unexcused.** Upon the student's return, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of a secondary student to call the school by 10:00 a.m. to explain the absence. If the student had a medical appointment, the note shall be turned into the appropriate attendance office. The parent or guardian of an elementary student is encouraged to send a written note on the first day the student returns to school.

An unexcused absence/tardy is subject to disciplinary action. The decision of determining excused and unexcused absence/tardies rests solely in the hands of the campus administration.

Parental Consent  
Required

Decisions on  
Absences/Tardies

Any absence or tardy, regardless of the number, will be considered and dealt with on its own merit.

**Attendance  
Committee Hearing**

Classroom teachers shall comprise a majority of the attendance committee. The attendance committee shall hear each case in which a student's attendance falls below the 90% threshold and a petition by the student or his or her parent or legal guardian has been filed. The committee may give class credit to a student because of extenuating circumstances according to policies adopted by the Board that establish ways for a student to make up work or regain credit lost because of absences.

**Imposing Conditions  
for Awarding Credit**

The committee may impose any of the following conditions for receiving credit lost because of excessive absences:

1. Completing additional assignments, as specified by the committee or teacher.
2. Attending tutorial sessions as scheduled.
3. Attending Saturday classes.
4. Maintaining the attendance standards for the rest of the semester.
5. Taking an examination to earn credit.

In all cases, the student must also earn a passing grade in order to receive credit.

**Unexcused  
Absences – Grading**

Students who miss school without having an excused absence may not receive credit for work in the class missed during the unexcused absence.

**Penalties**

Students in grades 7-12 who fail to comply with this attendance policy may not receive credit for the year. An elementary student may receive a zero for all courses during the six-weeks period of that semester that the 90% rule is invoked. Continued attendance violations may affect promotion status. Succeeding unexcused absences will be addressed by the local school Attendance Review Committee.

**Make-Up Work**

A student whose absence is excused shall be allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed. **It is the student's responsibility to secure assignments and to make up all work due to excused/extenuating circumstances.** Failure to complete such assignments within a reasonable time will result in a zero for such assignments. The GCA defines a reasonable length of time to be one day for each day missed with an excused absence.

## Denial of Privilege

Parents who fail to pick up the requested assignment may be denied this courtesy by the building principal or designee.

Students should complete a reasonable amount of the assignments by their return to school and fully complete all make-up work within the allotted time. Parents and students should know that if a reasonable amount of work sent home is not completed, this courtesy may be denied by the building principal or designee.

Students who have work assigned to them on a scheduled basis, such as term papers, projects, etc., should have the work ready on the due date even with an excused absence. An academic penalty (the deduction of points) may be imposed for work not submitted on the due date

Parents should understand that certain types of school work cannot be assigned to the home because of explanations by the teacher needed by the students

## Extenuating Circumstances

1. Observing religious holy days, including travel, when such absence is required for the exercise of a student's religious beliefs. The parent/guardian or person having control of the student should contact the school in accordance with the district attendance policy. The extenuating circumstance provision applies to holy days, which are tenets of the religion. This provision does not apply to retreats, conventions, youth group activities, etc., unless such activities are required by the tenets of the student's religion.
2. Temporary absence resulting from health care professionals, if the student returns on the same day of the appointment with documented re-entry slip from the doctor's office.  
NOTE: The GCA requests that parents make every effort to schedule doctor's appointments either before or after normal school hours; otherwise, a student should schedule appointments with the goal of minimizing time lost away from academic instruction. The attendance office is to receive an entry permit.
3. Legitimate days of illness. Excessive days or more than three consecutive days of illness require a physician's statement.
4. Days out on school-sponsored activities.
5. Serious family emergency.
6. Death in the immediate family.
7. Participation in court proceeding or a child abuse/neglect investigation in accordance with §37.056 of the Texas Education Code (relating to court-related students).

8. Disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment or other calamity resulting in the closing of schools.
9. Documented days of college visitation (limited to two days for seniors). Additional days for college visitation may be granted by the principal for seniors who have a counselor recommendation. Principals may grant days for college visitation to juniors who have a counselor recommendation. Such absences shall be considered extracurricular activity absences and shall be subject to the same limitations as appropriate for those absences.
10. Days missed by a runaway as defined by Texas Family Code §51.03 (relating to Delinquent Conduct; Conduct Indicating a Need for Supervision). A police runaway case number is required.
11. The absences of a teen parent due to caring for his/her child.
12. Other unusual circumstances acceptable to the building principal or Superintendent.

**Vacation/Business  
Trips**

**Vacation or business trips are not recognized by the state as acceptable reasons for students being out of school and will be treated as unexcused.** Therefore, these days should be planned only for school holidays that do not disrupt student learning or cause loss of credit.

**Transfer of Students Who Are Victims of or Have Engaged in Bullying - see Texas Education Code section 25.0342 for more information.**

On the request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim of bullying, the board of trustees of a school district or the board's designee shall transfer the victim to:

- Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
- A campus in the school district other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred.

The board of trustees of a school district may transfer the student who engaged in bullying to:

- Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
- A campus in the district other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred, in consultation with a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of the student who engaged in bullying. Texas Education Code section 37.004 (concerning students with disabilities who receive special education services) applies to transfers under this section.

The board of trustees or the board's designee shall verify that a student has been a victim of bullying before transferring the student under this

section. The board of trustees or the board's designee may consider past student behavior when identifying a bully. **The determination by the board of trustees or the board's designee is final and may not be appealed.**

A student or parent shall make a request to the Superintendent or designee for a transfer for one of the reasons above within 30 calendar days after notice of the incident. The district shall respond to the transfer request within 10 school days.

GCA has no schools identified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as persistently dangerous campuses.

# Notices

## **NOTICES**

**§504 Child Find Notice:** Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the district has a duty to identify, refer, evaluate and if eligible, provide a free, appropriate public education to disabled students. For additional information about the rights of parents of eligible children or for answers to any questions you might have about identification, evaluation and placement into Section 504 programs, please contact your campus principal, or the district's Chief Academic Officer

**Asbestos – Annual AHERA Asbestos Notification:** The GCA Management Plan notebooks which contain all pertinent asbestos information, including inspections and periodic surveillances, are located in the administrative office at each district building.

**Confidentiality Statement:** The GCA, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), restricts access to protected student records as required by law. Directory information on students will be released upon request without a parent's consent unless the parent elects in writing to restrict directory information. The form on which parents can indicate their election is sent home each year.

**Disclosures Under the Directory Information Exception:** FERPA allows a school the ability to share directory information from educational records with juvenile justice agencies and others who request this information.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to the following data about the student:

- Name, address and telephone
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance ("from and to" dates of enrollment)
- Photographs, school honors, participation and extracurricular activities

Parents who do not want their child's directory information to be disclosed must notify the school in writing.

**Dismissal From Campus at Lunch:** All GCA campuses are closed campuses for lunch dismissal. Once students arrive on campus, they are expected to remain there for the remainder of the day, unless signed out by a parent or guardian, or under consent of an administrator.

**Graduation Ceremonies:** Participation in the graduation ceremony is optional and is considered a privilege . Graduating seniors are advised that conduct judged by the principal to be disruptive to the graduation ceremony will subject them to immediate removal from the ceremony and/or withholding of their diploma pending a parent conference. Students will remain seated at all times unless directed to stand. Possession or use of certain items is not permitted at graduation exercises. These items include, but are not limited to the following:

- Air horns
- Balls of any kind
- Whistles
- Signs
- Clappers
- Frisbees
- Electronic devices
- Inflatable devices

Male students are required to wear dress shirts with neckties, and female students are to wear dresses, skirts and blouses or pants that are in compliance with the GCA dress code. The principal is empowered to state standards for dress and behavior both prior to and during the ceremony and to take action when necessary.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:** The GCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or disability in educational programs, admissions/enrollment decisions or activities that it operates as required by Title VI, Title IX, Title II and Section 504.

**Pesticide:** The GCA uses pesticide in its schools to control insects and also uses bait stations for rodents (refer to 72<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, Texas Pest Control Act, 1356-6).

**Response to Intervention (Rti) Notice:** In order to provide the most effective education for *all* children, the GCA believes we must start with providing an effective education for *each* child. The GCA uses the process called Response to Intervention (RTI). It is a school wide, district wide, three-tiered model for identifying and providing high quality instruction and early intervention to all students falling behind their grade level peers in reading and mathematics. The GCA utilizes the three tier approach with varying levels of support beyond that used as the core curriculum.

**Student Success Initiative (SSI):** The GCA follows the grade advancement requirements of the Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI), which is to ensure that every student makes the academic progress necessary to show a sufficient understanding of the knowledge and skills taught and tested at each grade level. The amended SSI requires that grade 5 and grade 8 students must meet the passing standard on the State Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests in reading and mathematics before they can be promoted to the next grade level. Questions concerning the SSI should be directed to your school. In addition, a brochure which includes an explanation of the state law, suggestions for how families can help and available resources for further information is also available online (<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/ssi/parentguide05.pdf>).

**EVENT GUIDELINES:** Students in pre-kindergarten through fourth grade (also includes preschool age children) will not be admitted to any athletic event without adult supervision.

The Board or its authorized representatives may remove or have proper law enforcement personnel remove from the contest site those persons whose behavior creates the potential for jeopardizing either school's good standing in the UIL and/or violates the normal standards of good conduct for the public school function.

A person who has been removed from the contest site under the guidelines of this policy shall be informed that they shall be banned from all future contests until a meeting with the Superintendent or the Campus principal results in the banishment being lifted. That person may be placed on probation for a term not to exceed the end of the school year. This banishment and/or probation includes out-of-town contests.

If any person has demonstrated illegal or disruptive behavior at extra curricular or school-related activities on more than one occasion, the Board or its authorized representatives may refuse to allow that person the privilege of entering on school property where such activities are conducted, but such suspension shall not extend beyond the current school year.

For purpose of this policy, disruptive behavior means any activity that impeded or interferes with the conduct, progress or continuation of the extra curricular or school related activity. Disruptive behavior shall include the use of profane language in an obstructive manner directed towards spectators, officials, school personnel or participants in the activity.

# Definitions

## **Definitions**

**Arson** is a crime that involves starting a fire or causing an explosion with intent to destroy or damage:

Any vegetation, fence or structure on open-space land; or

Any building, habitation or vehicle:

- a. Knowing that it is within the limits of an incorporated city or town,
- b. Knowing that it is insured against damage or destruction,
- c. Knowing that it is subject to a mortgage or other security interest,
- d. Knowing that it is located on property belonging to another,
- e. Knowing that it has located within it property belonging to another, or
- f. When the person starting the fire is reckless about whether the burning or explosion will endanger the life of some individual or the safety of the property of another.

**Assault:** Offense defined in part by Texas Penal Code §22.01(a)(1) as intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to another. Texas Penal Code §22.01(a)(2) defines assault as intentionally or knowingly threatening another with imminent bodily injury. Texas Penal Code §22.01(a)(3) defines assault as intentionally or knowingly causing physical contact with another when the person knows or should reasonably believe that the other will regard the contact as offensive or provocative.

**Burglary:** The entering of a habitation or building with the intent to commit theft.

**Bullying:** Bullying is when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and a school district's Board of Trustees or the Board's designee determines that the behavior: defined as engaging in physical conduct and/or written or verbal expression that the district determines: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or (2) is to be sufficiently severe, persistent, and or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student. This conduct is considered bullying if it: (1) Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator who is engaging in bullying and the student victim through the written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and (2) Interferes with a student's education or substantially

disrupts the operation of a school. See also, the definition of Cyber bullying below.

**Canine Unit:** The district is authorized to use dogs to sniff for illicit drugs, alcoholic beverages, pharmaceutical medication, explosives and firearm ammunition. The district's use of dogs is intended to minimize dangerous drugs, alcohol, explosives and firearms being brought to a campus.

**Class Re-assignment:** Class re-assignment is the removal of a student from his/her assigned classroom to another class on the same campus for serious or persistent misbehavior or an illegal act. To the extent possible, the student should continue to receive instruction in the courses he/she was enrolled in when the removal became effective.

**Club:** An instrument specially designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious bodily injury or death by striking a person with the instrument including a blackjack, mace and tomahawk as defined by Penal Code 46.01(1)

**Conference:** A procedure in which the student shall be advised of the conduct with which he/she is charged. The student shall be given the opportunity to explain his/her version of the incident.

**Conspiracy:** An agreement formed between or a concerted effort by two or more persons for the purpose of committing a criminal act or a violation of the *Student Code of Conduct*. The conspiracy and the resulting consequences may continue even if one of the actors drops out of the initial act.

**Contraband:** The possession of property that is inappropriate for school or forbidden by law or by Board policy.

**Controlled Substances:** Drugs whose general availability is restricted; any one of a number of drugs or other substances which are strictly outlawed because of their potential for abuse or addiction. Such drugs include those classified as narcotics, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens and cannabis.

**Criminal Mischief:** A person commits an offense if, without the consent of the school or school district, he/she intentionally or knowingly tampers with, damages or destroys school property.

**Criminal Street Gang:** Three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

**Criminal Trespass:** Texas Penal Code §30.05 defines conduct constituting a criminal trespass. While GCA shall rely on the provisions of §30.05 to determine whether a criminal trespass has occurred, a general description of the prohibited conduct appears below:

Prohibits entry into or remaining on school property without consent after being notified that entry was forbidden or notified to depart.

**Cyberbullying:** Use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation. Please refer to page 87.

**Dangerous Drug:** A medication/illegal drug classified by the Texas Penal Code and/or Physician's Desk Reference as being a dangerous drug.

**Dating violence** is the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate or control another person with whom the student has or has had a dating relationship, as defined by Section 71.0021 of the Family Code.

**Days:** Unless otherwise noted, days shall mean school days.

**Deadly conduct:** When a person recklessly engages in conduct that places another in imminent danger of serious bodily injury, such as knowingly discharging a firearm in the direction of an individual, habitation, building or vehicle.

**Deferred Adjudication:** Alternative to seeking a conviction in court that may be offered to a juvenile for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Deferred Prosecution:** May be offered to a juvenile as an alternative to seeking a conviction in court for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision.

**Defiance:** To challenge, confront, resist or refuse to follow directions, requests or instructions given by school personnel. Defiance is considered a serious act by the GCA.

**Detention:** Detention Hall is an on-campus setting designed for deprivation of a student's personal time as a disciplinary consequence.

**Discipline Management Technique:** Any action at the campus level, taken by a teacher or administrator, which is intended to promote proper behavior and/or discourage misconduct other than expulsion or removal to a disciplinary alternative education program, including but not limited to student-teacher conferences, suspension

of extracurricular activities, detention and in-school suspension for three days or less.

No hearing is required prior to the use of any discipline management technique.

**Drug Paraphernalia:** Fully defined in the Health and Safety Code §481.002 and includes but is not limited to meaning anything that is and/or could be used to prepare or process any controlled substances for introduction into the human body.

**Emergency Removal:** A principal or the principal's designee can recommend immediate placement of a student in an alternative education program if the principal or the principal's designee reasonably believes the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in a class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn. The terms of the removal may prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

**Extended School Detention:** A discipline technique requiring students to attend school **during times other than normal school hours or school days**.

**Extracurricular:** Any school activity including membership in any club or organization that is not a part of the required curriculum or course of studies.

**Felony:** A major crime for which the law statute provides a greater punishment than for a misdemeanor.

**Fighting:** Fighting is defined as mutual combat between students that results in physical contact and/or bodily injury. It can also be a case of one student knowingly and intentionally assaulting another student. The administration on each campus may notify law enforcement when there is a fight or assault. Once law enforcement has been notified by the administration, it will be at the discretion of the officer who responds as to whether an arrest should be made and/or a ticket should be issued. Should the officer make the decision to arrest one or more students or to issue a ticket(s), each ticket can range up to \$500 for each student.

**Gambling:** Shall mean a bet as defined by §47.01 of the Texas Penal Code and/or any other agreement between two or more persons that a sum of money or other valuable thing may be won or lost.

**Gangs, Secret Societies, Sororities or Fraternities:** Three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of violation of the *Student Code of Conduct* or (2) An organization composed wholly or in part of students that seeks to perpetuate itself by taking additional members from the students enrolled in school based on a decision of its membership rather than on the free choice of a qualified

student. Educational organizations listed in Section 37.121(d) of the Education Code are excluded from this definition. (See also, definition of Criminal Street Gangs.)

**Graffiti:** Making markings, drawings or paintings on tangible property while on school grounds without the consent of the school, school district or owner.

**Harassment:** Threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.

**Hazing:** Fully defined in the Texas Education Code §37.151 and includes but is not limited to an act against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of being initiated into or affiliating with an organization.

**Hit List:** A list of people targeted to be harmed.

**Homebound Instruction:** Instructional services for currently enrolled students who provide a licensed physician's report that gives a diagnosis and describes why the enrolled student will be confined to home for 4 or more weeks. The medical condition should impede the student's ability to attend school activities, classroom instruction, or part-time employment (when applicable) for 4 or more weeks due to the severity of the health restrictions.

**Horse Play:** To engage in mutual pushing and shoving, chest bumping, tussling, etc.

**Illegal Knife:** As defined by law, a knife with a blade over 5 ½ inches; hand instrument designed to cut or stab another by being thrown; dagger, including a dirk, stiletto and poniard; bowie knife; sword; or spear, or is a defined by local policy. Penal Code 46.01(6); Education Code 37.007(a) (1) (B)

**In-school Suspension/On-campus Suspension:** A special classroom designated as the in-school suspension room where a teacher is always on duty. In this setting, the student receives assignments/instruction in each course to the extent possible, with little or no opportunity for social interaction with peers. A student on in-school suspension shall not be allowed to participate in extracurricular or after-school activities.

**Instigate:** To provoke or incite; to encourage toward a criminal act or a violation of the *Student Code of Conduct*.

**Leaving Campus:** After arriving on campus, students are not permitted to leave without administrative approval. Students are **required** to go to the office so parents can be notified of the student's intent to leave campus. Leaving campus before or during school without permission may result in disciplinary action.

**Metal Detectors:** The district is authorized by the Board of Trustees [FNF(R)] to use metal detectors to screen for weapons and other contraband. The district's use of metal detectors is to minimize the risk of weapons on campus and is determined to be a desirable technique for campus security. No student, employee or visitor should be subject to the dangers inherent in a knife, firearm or other weapon being carried onto the campus by another person. Metal detectors are randomly used on buses, during school hours and upon entering buildings for extracurricular activities.

**Obscene:** Something which is considered indecent or lewd; something which is objectionable or offensive to the accepted standards of decency.

**Offensive:** Something which is considered to be disagreeable, distasteful, obnoxious or objectionable by a reasonable person.

**Paging Device:** A telecommunication device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. (TEC 37.082)

**Parent/Guardian:** Means the biological/genetic mother or father of a child, a court-ordered guardian of a minor child or a person who has accepted responsibility for the child in writing in a form acceptable to the school district.

**Persistent misbehavior:** Two or more violations of the *Student Code of Conduct* in general or repeated occurrences.

**Pornography:** Explicit depiction or description of sexual acts.

**Possession:**

- To have contraband on one's person, in one's vehicle, or in the vehicle driven by a student to/on campus, or in one's personal effects, such as a coat, purse, book bag;
- To touch or handle contraband;
- To have contraband under one's control;
- To have contraband in one's locker; or
- To be in a vehicle either as a driver or passenger with the knowledge that contraband is contained in the vehicle.

**Profane Language:** Profane language is any language directed to another person with the intent to incite a breach of the peace. Profane language may result in a citation issued by the police.

**Progressive Discipline:** The system of discipline infractions and consequences which are listed in Groups I, II, III, IV. Group I includes the least serious offenses, while Group IV is a serious level of offense with serious consequences. Under progressive discipline, a student who repeatedly violates a lower level of discipline rules without changing their undesirable behavior may automatically progress to a more serious level of consequence.

**Prohibited Substance:** Means any substance that when introduced into the body impairs or has the potential to impair the normal use of one's mental or physical faculties; a prescribed or legal substance that is taken in an amount greater than the recommended dosage or that is prescribed for a different person or purpose.

**Prohibited Weapon:** As defined by the Texas Penal Code §46.05 and also means any object that is used or intended to be used as a weapon to inflict pain or injury upon another.

**Public Display of Affection:** The only appropriate public displays of affection at school are hand holding, walking arm-in-arm, and/or a brief hug, as in a greeting between any two persons, that does not disrupt the learning environment.

**Racial Slurs:** A racial slur is any statement that degrades or demeans any person's racial, ethnic, cultural or national origin.

**Retaliation:** The act or threat of doing harm or taking action toward another person because the person exercised legal authority over the student, disciplined the student or reported the student.

**Robbery:** Causing injury or fear of imminent injury or death while stealing or committing theft.

**School Day:** The time a student first enters a school building for the day until the last dismissal bell for the day. For students participating in school-related activities off-campus and/or school-related activities that begin before the first school bell of the day or conclude after the last dismissal bell of the day. School personnel supervising such activities have discretion when the school day begins and ends.

**Section 504:** Having physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities.

**Self Defense:** The use of force against another to the degree a person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect himself/herself. The privilege of self-defense is limited. A claim of self-defense in the use of physical force will not exempt a student from discipline when:

- The student provokes, invites or encourages the use of physical force by another person.
- The student has an opportunity to avoid physical force or to inform a school official of the threatened use of force.
- The student uses physical force after the other party abandons or attempts to abandon a fight or confrontation.

**Serious Misbehavior Means:**

- Actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities
- Bullying
- Coercion, as defined by Section 1.07 of the Texas Penal Code

- Criminal mischief, under Section 28.03 of the Texas Penal Code
- Extortion, or blackmail
- Deliberate violent behavior that poses a threat to the health or safety of others
- Falsification of records, passes or other school-related documents
- Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse
- Hazing
- Harassment, under Section 42.07(a)(1) of the Texas Penal Code, of a student or district employee
- Indecent exposure, under Section 21.08 of the Texas Penal Code
- Insubordination
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Murder
- Personal hazing, under Section 37.152 of the Texas Penal Code
- Possession of or conspiracy to possess any explosive or explosive device
- Possession or distribution of pornographic materials
- Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures
- Public lewdness, under Section 21.07 of the Texas Penal Code
- Refusal to accept discipline assigned by the teacher or principal
- Robbery or theft
- Sexual harassment of a student or district employee
- Vandalism

**Serious or Persistent Misbehavior** includes but is not limited to:

- Behavior that is grounds for permissible expulsion or mandatory DAEP placement
- Behavior identified by the district as grounds for discretionary DAEP placement

- Actions or demonstrations that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school activities
- Refusal to attempt or complete school work as assigned
- Insubordination
- Profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Falsification of records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Refusal to accept discipline assigned by the teacher or principal

**Sexting:** Taking, sending or forwarding obscene, sexually oriented or sexually explicit nude or partially nude images of oneself or others, or sending or forwarding texts that are obscene, sexually oriented or sexually explicit. In some instances, such acts have been classified as illegal, e.g., child pornography.

**Sexual Conduct:** When a student touches the private body parts of himself/herself or engages in sexual contact with another person. An offense of sexual conduct may result in notification of Child Protective Services and/or local law enforcement agencies.

**Sexual Harassment:** To engage in unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually abusive or vulgar language or other verbal, visual or physical conduct if such conduct with a student or staff creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment.

Sexual harassment may result from an intentional or unintentional action and can be subtle or blatant. It can be verbal or physical and can occur in any setting. The context of events can be important in determining whether particular acts constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can range from nonverbal remarks to physical assault and includes but is not limited to:

### **Verbal**

1. Slurs, name calling
2. Sexual innuendo and other suggestive, offensive or derogatory comments
3. Humor or jokes about sex
4. Remarks about someone's body or apparel
5. Catcalls

## **Nonverbal**

1. Leering
2. Suggestive or insulting sounds or gestures
3. Offensive printed or written material

## **Physical**

1. Unnecessary and unwanted physical contact
2. Impeding or blocking movements, which suggest sexual advances
3. Physical assault

The considerations listed above are not all inclusive but rather serve as examples.

Consequences for a student who is found to have engaged in sexual harassment may range from parent contact to an assignment to an alternative education program depending on the nature of the inappropriate behavior.

**Slap Boxing/Sparring:** To engage in motions of attack or defense with the arms, hands, legs or feet.

**Stalking:** To engage in the unwelcome pursuit of someone, including but not limited to giving notes, cards, gifts, or vile and/or offensive objects to someone whom you know or should know does not and/or will not welcome or appreciate the attention or the note, card, gift or objects. Also refer to the section on Harassment and Sexual Harassment and to Penal Code §42.072.

**Suspension:** The principal or other appropriate administrator may suspend a student who engages in conduct for which the student may be placed in an alternative education program. Each suspension may not exceed three days. A student may have more than one suspension per semester; however, the total days of suspension shall not exceed six days per semester unless approved by the Superintendent or designee. Assignments completed during the suspension shall receive a grade adjustment of no higher than 70.

**Telecommunication Device:** A device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor.

**Terroristic Threat:** A threat of violence to any person or property with intent to:

- Cause a reaction of any type by an official or volunteer agency organized to deal with emergencies;
- Place any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury;
- Prevent or interrupt the occupation or use of a building, room; place of assembly, or place to which the public has access; place of employment or occupation; aircraft, automobile or other form of conveyance; or other public place;
- Cause impairment or interruption of public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, power supply or other public service;
- Place the public or a substantial group of the public in fear of serious bodily injury; or
- Influence the conduct or activities of a branch or agency of the federal government, the state or a political subdivision of the state (including the school district).

**Theft:** When a person commits an offense that unlawfully appropriates property with the intent to deprive the owner of the property.

**Threats:** An expression of intention or warning that one will inflict harm, evil, injury or damage.

**Title 5 offenses:** Those that involve injury to a person and include murder; kidnapping; assault; sexual assault; unlawful restraint; coercing, soliciting or inducing gang membership if it causes bodily injury to a child; indecency with a child; injury to a child, an elderly person or a disabled person; abandoning or endangering a child; deadly conduct; terroristic threat; aiding a person to commit suicide; and tampering with a consumer product.

**Under the Influence:** Lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties. Impairment of a person's physical or mental faculties may be evidenced by a pattern of abnormal or erratic behavior, the presence of physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use, or by admission. A student "under the influence" need not be legally intoxicated to trigger disciplinary action.

**Vandalism:** Willful or malicious acts that are intended to damage or destroy property and/or reckless acts that result in the damage or destruction of property.

**Volatile Chemical:** Anything used for other than its intended purpose that may alter one's mood.

**Weapon:** Any instrument or device used for fighting either in an attack or defensive mode.

**Weapon Free Zone:** As defined in the Texas Penal Code §46.11.

**Zip gun:** A device or combination of devices, not originally a firearm, but adapted to expel a projectile through a smooth-bore or rifled bore barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance.

Student and Parent  
Acknowledgment of *Student Code  
of Conduct* and Notice Concerning  
Bullying and Harassment

GATEWAY CHARTER ACADEMY  
**STUDENT AND PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE *STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT*  
AND NOTICE CONCERNING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Dear Student and Parent:

As required by state law, the Board of Trustees has officially adopted this *Student Code of Conduct* in order to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for every student. It has been developed to help your son or daughter gain the greatest possible benefit from his or her school experience. The school is in need of your help and cooperation. Please read this *Student Code of Conduct* thoroughly and discuss it with your family. It is important that every student understand the Code and be encouraged by his or her parents or guardians to follow the rules and regulations set forth in the Code.

The GCA strives to ensure that all of its students are free from bullying and harassment including violence in students' relationships. All charges of bullying, harassment, and dating violence are to be taken very seriously by our students, faculty, staff, administration and parents. We will make every effort to handle and respond to each and every charge and complaint filed by our students and employees in a fair, thorough and just manner. Every effort will be made to protect the due process rights of all victims and all alleged offenders.

Bullying is when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and a school district's Board of Trustees or the Board's designee determines that the behavior: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student. This conduct is considered bullying if it: (1) Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator who is engaging in bullying and the student victim through the written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and (2) Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

Harassment is defined as threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety.

Sexual harassment means to engage in unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually abusive or vulgar language or other verbal, visual or physical conduct if such conduct with a student or staff creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment.

Dating violence is the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate or control another person with whom the student has or has had a dating relationship, as defined by §71.0021 of the Family Code.

A student or parent who has a complaint alleging bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or dating violence should immediately report the complaint to a campus administrator, teacher or counselor for investigation.

---

**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING AND SIGN BELOW:**

**AS THE STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE STUDENT LISTED BELOW, WE  
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE HAVE REVIEWED AND READ THE ONLINE VERSION OF THE  
GATEWAY CHARTER ACADEMY STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE 2015 - 2016  
SCHOOL YEAR.**

---

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO YOUR CAMPUS**