



Graduation Achievement

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Parent and Student Handbook
Revised May 2017

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Message from Graduation Achievement Charter High School’s Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer:

Welcome to Graduation Achievement Charter High School (“GACHS”), where learning is *anywhere, anytime, anyplace*. On behalf of the administration, faculty, and staff, I extend you warm greetings. In this handbook, you will find information about school policies and practices that will be useful to you and make your educational experience rewarding. **It is essential that you take the time to read and understand the handbook.** Should you have issues, the handbook will be the guiding document in determining how to proceed to resolve them.

The GACHS administration, faculty, and staff look forward to getting to know you and your family. We have created a virtual environment for learning and networking that we hope will make your high school experience memorable. GACHS’s goal is for you to experience a relevant, stimulating education, using e-learning capabilities to their maximum effectiveness. Our school is all about **you** and **your** learning. Our staff is always available to help you. We will seek your ideas and solicit your input on how we can make this year your best year ever in high school.

We encourage you to get involved and help us make GACHS the best virtual high school in the nation. GACHS is your school. Take advantage of all the opportunities you will have as a member of this learning environment. Challenge yourself to be the best student that you can be.

At the same time, the administration, faculty, and staff are challenging ourselves to make GACHS the best school it can be in Year Five of operation. Throughout the school year, we listen to and read your comments, concerns, and suggestions. Some of them we act on immediately, and others we compile to help create improvements for the next school year. If you ever feel that you are not getting the best quality education you should have, or that your requests are not being acknowledged and answered promptly, **you can feel free to let me know** and I’ll make sure you get the service and answers you need.

Best wishes for a successful 2017–2018 school year! Welcome to your 21st Century classroom without walls—the place for 21st century students.

Dr. Monica Henson
Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer
Monica.Henson@gradgeorgia.com

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Graduation Achievement Charter High School 2017-18 Academic Calendar

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Academics Calendar

The school academic requirements are based on a minimum of 180 days, with an additional 10 days added to the end of each semester as “grace periods” for completing semester requirements, extending the school calendar to 200 instructional days. This gives students 20 days of flexibility surrounding the school calendar. To ensure that students may complete their coursework within 200 instructional days, they have access to their course content 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Therefore, they may complete assignments on weekends and holidays.

Vision

To empower our students to be college and career ready through individualized alternate paths to high school graduation.

Mission

GACHS prepares Georgia’s non-traditional students for high school graduation by providing them tools to become successful and engaged adults in a global society through a rigorous and flexible curriculum. We will do this by being fiscally responsible, focusing on the personal and professional development of our students and staff, and empowering young people to achieve college and career readiness.

Guiding Principles

1. GACHS will support our students and their families on an individual level by providing regular and clear feedback through effective and encouraging college and career advice.
2. GACHS will strive for flexibility and compassion when dealing with the unique circumstances of each of our students and their families.
3. The staff of GACHS will commit to an environment of professional learning that emphasizes communication and collaboration to best meet the needs of our students.
4. GACHS will create lasting relationships with Georgia school districts through the success of our alternative pathway to a high school diploma.
5. GACHS will strive, in every action, to meet the expectations outlined by its contract with its charter school authorizer, including fiscal responsibility and student achievement.

Attendance

Students are expected and required to:

- Log in to the system a minimum of five days during a seven-day period
- Check and respond to Announcements and Messages on a daily basis
- Log into each course daily for at least one hour per day for at least five days of every seven-day period
- Commit a minimum of five hours per course, per week
- Stay on pace or ahead of pace in all coursework.
- Participate in all required assessments/testing, including district-mandated benchmark tests (and state-mandated tests
- Communicate with their teachers and school counselor regularly in a professional and respectful manner

Students who are 18 years of age or older may notify the school themselves when they anticipate being absent or return from having been absent.

Excused Absences

The following are valid excuses for absences and tardiness:

- **Participation in a school-approved activity.** To be excused, the absence must be authorized by an administrator, and the affected teacher must be notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly impossible to provide such notice.
- **Absence due to illness, health condition, family emergency.** In case of illness or emergency, the parent is expected to notify the teachers and school counselor on or before the morning of the absence with an explanation of the absence.
- **Temporary absences for agreed activities upon parental request and verification.** Upon parental request, the school counselor and/or his/her designee may temporarily excuse a student for agreed upon reasons. The request should be submitted in writing in advance and should state the reason and duration of the requested absence. An absence may not be approved if it is likely to cause a serious adverse effect on the student's educational progress. Parental verification that a student was excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday should be submitted in writing as soon as possible after the absence.
- **Absence resulting from disciplinary actions or suspensions.** Absences due to disciplinary actions are deemed excused for attendance purposes.

Assignments and/or activities not completed because of an excused absence may be made up in the manner determined by the teacher(s) affected. The success coach will assist the student in determining how to schedule the makeup work.

Extended Illness

If a student is confined to home or hospital for an extended period, the school shall arrange for the accomplishment of assignments when practical. The student must anticipate being absent from school a minimum of ten consecutive or intermittent school days due to a medical or psychiatric condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical reasons, both physical and psychiatric, must be certified by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychiatrist.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy

Any absence where a legitimate excuse, as defined above, is not adequately documented shall be deemed unexcused.

A student's academic grade or credit in a particular subject or course may be adversely affected by reason of tardiness or absence to the extent and upon the basis that:

- The student's attendance and/or participation is related to the instructional objectives or goals of the particular subject or course, and
- The student's attendance and/or participation have been identified by the teacher pursuant to policy of the school as a basis for grading, in whole or in part, in the particular subject or course.

Graduation Achievement Charter High School has outlined a process to support those students that are accruing unexcused absences. That process is outlined below.

Purpose:

The purpose of this process is twofold. First, it is designed to identify those students who are not actively and consistently making progress in their courses and who are not communicating with their success coaches, school counselors, and teachers. In addition, it will outline steps to help re-engage those students, and their parents, back into their education by increasing their activity in courses and their level of communication with staff. This process is not punitive in nature; rather, it is helping students be as successful as possible at GACHS.

Define Minimum Adequate Attendance

Courses are divided into semesters. Students are expected to make continual progress in every enrolled course during a 7-day period in order to stay on track and complete all scheduled courses within an 18-week period.

Define Unexcused Absences

Graduation Achievement Charter High School defines an unexcused absence as not logging into the Portal **in each class** at least once daily for at least one hour for five days during a seven-day period.

Process to Identify and Track Unexcused Absences

The Attendance Clerk will track and document students' attendance on a daily and weekly basis. Based on this tracking, success coaches will be aware of how their students are progressing through their courses. It will also assist school counselors in their identification of students who are not making adequate progress and accruing unexcused absences.

Attendance Support Team (AST)

GACHS and each Graduation Achievement Center will establish a team which will be chaired by an administrator. The team should include the success coach, Attendance Protocol Manager, and other designated professionals as deemed appropriate by the Chief Development Officer. The team will meet at least once per month during the school year to review individual attendance policies and conduct parent conferences. The AST is responsible for implementing and monitoring policy to reduce truancy. The AST is directly responsible for reviewing all cases of students with 5 or more unexcused absences and all cases of students with 10 or more total absences.

- a. **Daily:** The school will contact parents each day a student is absent from class/es. Designated school staff should contact parents each time a student has an **unexcused** absence from class/es. Graduation Achievement Charter High School utilizes an electronic calling system to notify parents of absences or missed portions of the school day. It is important that parents update all phone numbers as needed so that they can be contacted.
- b. **Three (3) days absent:** The Attendance Protocol Manager will make direct contact with the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child when he/she has missed three total days of school. The Attendance Protocol Manager will contact the family to inquire about the reason for the absence and to offer support and encouragement as well as to remind students and parents of possible consequences of unexcused absences.
- c. **Five (5) days absent:** The Attendance Protocol Manager will contact the parent(s) to inquire about the reason for the absence and offer support and encouragement, as well as remind student and parent of possible consequences. If the child has five (5) unexcused absences, a formal notification letter will be

sent by the school requesting that the parent, guardian or other person in charge of the student attend a conference with the Attendance Support Team to discuss the reasons for the absences and to develop an attendance contract. The contract should outline the school's expectations for attendance as well as specify the consequences for continued unexcused absences. These consequences include the possibility of a referral to the Department of Family and Children Services for educational neglect, or to the Juvenile Court for a formal truancy hearing. A copy of the contract will be given to all parties present at the meeting. Failure of the parent or guardian to attend the scheduled conference will result in the school establishing the conditions of the contract and mailing a copy of the contract to notify the parent or guardian of expectations and consequences regarding attendance and that the contract is now in effect.

Please note the following conditions from the Georgia Mandatory Attendance Law: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1: After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of five unexcused days of absence without response, the school system shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested. Public schools shall provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each child enrolled in public school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance under this Code section for children and their parents, guardians, or other persons having control or charge of children. The parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child or children shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties; children who are age ten years or older by September 1 shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. After two reasonable attempts by the school to secure such signature or signatures, the school shall be considered to be in compliance with this subsection if it sends a copy of the statement, via certified mail, return receipt requested, to such parent, guardian, other person who has control or charge of a child, or children. Public schools shall retain signed copies of statements through the end of the school year.

d. Ten (10) days absent: The Attendance Protocol Manager will notify the Attendance Support Team of all cases in which a student has missed ten (10) days of school. Based on relevant information shared at the time of the AST meeting, the AST may (1) request that the parent submits doctors' excuses for additional absences or (2) make a referral to the Hearing Officer if the absences are unexcused and the parent is already under an attendance contract.

If the 10 days are unexcused and consecutive, the Attendance Protocol Manager should make an effort to contact the parent to discern the reason for the absences before withdrawing the student. *The superintendent shall use her best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person if the school system plans to withdraw such student. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall document a minimum of three (3) attempts to contact the parent, guardian, or "other person" for the explicit purpose of holding a withdrawal conference. See Georgia Department of Education State Board Rules – School for the Student Enrollment and Withdrawal Rule 160-5-1-.28.*

In the event that the 10 absences are unexcused and the parent is under an attendance contract, it may be determined that the Attendance Protocol Manager sends a formal letter of notification to the parents/guardian and makes a personal contact or visit to inquire about the reason for the absences and offer support and encouragement, as well as remind the student and parent of possible consequences. Having ten unexcused absences will constitute a violation of any prior attendance contract. In this scenario, the Attendance Protocol Manager will take the action provided for by the contract. In any

event, if a child accumulates ten (10) or more unexcused absences in any school year, the Attendance Support Team (inclusive of an administrator and the Attendance Protocol Manager) may discuss and make a recommendation to file a juvenile complaint and/or coordinate a warrant charging the parent with educational neglect.

Tardiness

When a student's tardiness becomes frequent or disruptive, online-only students shall be referred by the teacher/s to the teacher(s); center students shall be referred to the Program Coordinator. If counseling, parent conferencing, and/or adjusting the student's school program is not effective, the student may be placed on a remedial attendance plan.

Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy for Students

Students must contact their school counselor within the first trimester to notify him/her of the anticipated due date so that any necessary accommodations can be made. Once the student delivers her baby, mother/father must have someone contact his/her school counselor within 72 hours documented by phone or email. Graduation Achievement Charter High School wants to ensure that proper and timely notification is made so that supports for the student are put into place. Once the student has given birth, mother/father will be provided two weeks (10 school days) of paternity/maternity leave. These means the student will not be expected to complete assignments. After the 10 school days, the student will have a reduced course workload for four weeks (20 school days), if needed, as identified by his/her school counselor. The student will be responsible for all content in each course.

Grade Level Classification

The school will place students in the appropriate grade level supported by any or all of the following criteria: age, previous academic standing, academic performance, local assessment, specific curriculum testing, and personal interview.

New students entering from public schools and private schools accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission and/or Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (AdvancED) shall be placed in grades and classes on the basis of their grade placement/credits earned in the school from which they are transferring.

School administration, through academic achievement tests and other evaluation measures, shall determine the appropriate grade level/credit status of students transferring from home schools or private schools that have not been accredited by AdvancED or the Georgia Accrediting Commission. Such students may be asked to demonstrate proficiency in the content standards in order to determine their appropriate placement level and credit status.

Students will be promoted based on the earned credits:

Freshman	0-5 Credits
Sophomore	6-11 Credits
Junior	12-17 Credits
Senior	18+ Credits

Promotion of a student to a higher grade level is based on the student’s achievement of established criteria in the current grade. Retention is the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year based on earned credits.

Grading Policy

Students and parents will have access to the student’s grades at all times by logging on to viewing the grades through the portal (<http://www.edgenuity.com/sis-login/>). As such, parents have daily reports of their child’s progress. Official and unofficial transcripts will be available upon request and the school’s Registrar will be responsible for processing transcripts.

Class work is designed to show mastery of content area concepts and is supported by projects and rigorous tasks. All assessments that are teacher graded should be graded within 72 hours of completion. Assessments that are in the form of multiple choice, true/false, matching, or other types of objective questions will be automatically scored by the computer program, which allows the student to have instant feedback on the assessment.

Graduation Requirements

In order to be a full-time student, high school students in grades 9-12 must carry a minimum of five (5) classes each nine-week instructional term. Full-time students can take no more than seven classes during each nine-week instructional term without administrator approval. Part-time students may carry three (3) classes each nine-week instructional term.

Upon enrollment, every student will partner with their school counselor and parents/guardians to develop an Individual Graduation Plan. The student, parents/guardians, and school counselor must sign off on the Individual Graduation Plan on an annual basis. The purpose of the Individual Grade Plan is to monitor a student’s progress towards graduation as well as identify post-secondary goals they are working towards. The school encourages parents to monitor their child’s progress toward meeting graduation requirements in between the annual review of the Individual Graduation Plan. Parents must help the school to ensure that all graduation requirements are met by the student’s senior year.

In order to graduate from the school, students must complete the following credit requirements:

Georgia Graduation Requirements for all students enrolling in the 9th grade in 2008-2009 and subsequent years
<i>23 total units required for all students</i>
4 units of English Language Arts required for all students
4 units of Mathematics required for all students
4 units of Science required for all students (the 4th science unit may be used to meet both the science and elective requirements)
3 units of Social Studies required for all students, all courses are specifically identified
1 unit of Health and Physical Education required for all students
A total of 3 units required from: CTAE, STEM, Foreign Language and/or Fine Arts for all students (<i>students planning to enter or transfer into a University System of Georgia institution or other post-secondary institution must take two units of the same foreign language</i>).
4 additional elective units

Students are required to earn two STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Math) elective credits prior to being awarded a diploma from GACHS. CTAE electives that fall within the STEM categories can be used to meet the STEM elective requirement. Students that have earned 23 credits to meet the Georgia Graduation Requirements, but have not earned two STEM elective credits will be required to earn additional credits prior to participating in the graduation ceremony and receiving a diploma. Students who entered the 9th grade prior to August 2014 are exempt from this requirement. The Superintendent can waive certain graduation requirements based on individual student circumstances. State testing requirements and core academic course requirements cannot be waived. All requests must be made in writing and must be included in the student's Individual Graduation Plan.

Enrollment Dates

Enrollment is open Fall Semester through October 31st and will re-open for Spring Semester the day after the fall grace period ends, at which time prospective students will only be allowed to register for Spring Semester. After the 3rd Friday in March, enrollment will be closed to the general public for the current School Year and admissions requests will be accepted for seats available at the beginning of the next School Year.

Lottery Policy

If the number of qualified applications completed during open enrollment to Graduation Achievement Charter High School exceeds capacity, the Charter School shall ensure that such applicants have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process. The lottery is a random selection process and is held on the first Monday in May, and will be held via video conferencing. After all student seats have been selected, a waiting list will be formed (see Waitlist Priority Standing).

Waitlist Priority Standing

If an applicant is not selected during the initial lottery, he or she will be placed on our waitlist. If seats become available after the lottery, they are filled by applicants, in order, on the waiting list. The waiting list will offer rolling admissions, as additional openings arise.

Enrollment Priorities

- Enrollment priorities will be applied to enrollment applications received during open enrollment. The school may give enrollment priority to the following categories of applicants and in the following priority.
- A sibling of a student enrolled in the school.
- A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the school.

Letter of Intent (LOI)

The enrollment process for the following school year begins with a "pre-enrollment period" for returning students. ALL students who wish to return as active students should submit a Letter of Intent prior to the first Monday in April. Letter of Intent form allows for scheduling for the next school year. The pre-enrollment period (LOI) form will be available from the first Monday in February until the last business day of March. Once the LOI's have been received, the school will determine how many open seats they have for the upcoming school year.

All non-active students must submit a re-enrollment application. Application provides minimal demographic information and intended grade. If a student has attended any school between leaving

GACHS and re-enrollment, we require all transcript, grade reports, and withdrawal paperwork to be provided accordingly.

Email response of Admissions acceptance letter or Waitlist number will be electronically sent to the enrollees email. The acceptance letter will have an admissions number that will give access to the Enrollment documentation and supplemental forms and application.

Incomplete enrollment packets will not be accepted. All packets must include every form completed (listed on the checklist) and supplemental forms as required. We appreciate your thoroughness in completing and submitting all required forms and documentation.

Required Documentation

As part of the enrollment process, prospective families are requested to provide the following documentation:

GACHS PREFERS two proofs of residence:

- The photo idea of the parent or guardian if under 18 or the student if over 18 (whoever is the responsible party enrolling the student).
- 1. A second document, preferably a current, *opened* (not the outside of an envelope, we must see the date) utility bill, pay stub, tax form, or other government issued mailed within the last 30 days verifying residence.

Failure to provide both of these items will not prevent a student from enrolling, but the student MUST provide at least one of these items:

The full list of documents accepted are listed below:

- Current lease/rental agreement
- Most recent tax return
- Current Paycheck stub
- Current Medicaid card
- Current residential property tax statement or bill
- Current warranty or quick claim deed
- Current homeowner's insurance policy
- Current home purchase agreement
- Affidavit of Residency
- **Proof of legal guardianship and/or special custodial instructions (if applicable)**
- **Copy of current Immunization Records or a signed exemption waiver**
- **Copy of Hearing, Vision and Dental**
- Copies of the student's Birth Certificate
- Copies of the student's Social Security card OR Social Security Waiver
- Copy of current progress reports, unofficial transcripts, and/or most recent report card
- Copy of most recent vision and hearing screening report
- Copy of special education records, literacy plan, evaluation plan, current 504 plan, and/or current IEP (if applicable)

[Items listed in **bold** are required by Georgia statute in order for your child to be enrolled in a public school.]

In order for a student to be enrolled in the school, parents must submit satisfactory evidence that required immunizations have been or are in the process of being completed, or must file a certificate of exemption. As a charter school, we follow the same mandates as other public schools as set by the Department of Health.

Immunization Exemptions

Parents with strong moral or ethical beliefs against immunizations must complete a religious exemption form, which must be notarized. Students with medical exemptions must return a form signed by a physician.

Define Adequate Communication

Students and parents are expected to provide Graduation Achievement Charter High School with functioning email addresses and phone numbers. If there are changes to email addresses and phone numbers, parents and students must inform their school counselor within 24 hours of the change, or the next school day. Graduation Achievement Charter High School is not responsible for a failure of communication between school and home when current contact information is not provided, filters prevent the delivery of emails from GACHS staff, parent/student phones lack the ability to receive calls or accept voice mails, phones are disconnected or nonfunctioning, parent/student do not consistently check communication platforms, etc.

Parents are expected to check their email daily and respond to any that warrant a response within the next school day. Students are expected to check their school Messaging and Announcement tool as well as their personal email at least once a day and respond within *the* next school day. Parents and students are expected to respond to a voicemail left by a staff member within the next school day. Teachers, school counselors, success coaches, as well as administrators and any other school staff, are expected to respond to parents and students' communications within the next school day.

Forms in Multiple Languages

During the initial enrollment process the Enrollment Specialist will assess the language needs of a parent using the Home Language Survey (HLS). If the answer is no or if the conversation cannot be followed due to a language barrier, then the Enrollment Specialist will refer the applicant to the Lead Enrollment Specialist for further assistance. All GACHS communications are available in multiple languages. Please contact your child's school counselor for more information or the ESOL Coordinator.

Overview of Graduation Achievement Charter High School

Definitions

Parent: For the purpose of this handbook, the term "parent" means a custodial parent, legal guardian, or other person having legal custody of a child, or, in the case of adult students (those 18 or older) and emancipated students (those over 16 who have been emancipated by court action), the student himself or herself.

Counseling and Advisement: The school counselor serves as the primary point of contact for the student and family and is responsible for the student's global educational well-being. School counselors remain with a student for their duration in our instructional program and have the primary responsibility of guiding the student towards academic success, social development, and overall preparation for their post-secondary choice.

Success Coach: The success coach plays a crucial role for the school as they examine and analyze student needs from a cross-functional approach (academic and personal). They will serve simultaneously as a coach, mentor, and motivator, ensuring that each student under their care receives a customized learning experience by utilizing all available instructional resources to ensure success. The success coach is responsible for monitoring student performance across all subjects and helps the student with course pacing. As the primary contact, it is important that the success coach keeps track of all student information, personal as well as educational, as home situations may affect the way that the student completes work and attends class. Success coaches are expected to return all communications by parents and students within one business day. If a success coach will be unable to answer email or return a phone call within one business day, the success coach will post a statement to that effect in their email auto-replies and voice mail greetings.

Teacher: This subject-specific teacher is responsible for managing the online teaching environment. This may include group lectures, as well as subject-specific open tutoring as necessary. Teachers will utilize technology to deliver content in an engaging way and will employ best practices in lesson design to help them engage and differentiate instruction for each student. Teachers use best practices in online teaching to work with students who are struggling to meet proficiency levels and need additional concept reinforcement including tutoring. Tutoring can also serve as an intervention for students that have been identified as not meeting proficiency levels. Teachers provide meaningful feedback to student-submitted work and manage all discussion forums and blogs. Best practices for providing instructional feedback will be used by responding to the student's work when grading assessments and managing the forums. Students, success coaches, and school counselors will have access to the written feedback at any time. In addition, the grading system allows standards to be mapped to daily assessments in online coursework and generates real-time alerts and intervention when students fall behind specified levels on a given content area.

Professional Qualifications of Teachers

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) statute, parents are entitled to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher.

The following information may be requested:

- 1) Certification;
- 2) College major/graduate certification or degree held by the teacher; and
- 3) Qualifications of the paraprofessional, if paraprofessional services are provided.

If you wish to request information concerning the qualifications of your child's teacher and/or paraprofessional, please contact the Director of Federal Programs, Gerda Louizi by email at Gerda.Louizi@GradGeorgia.com or by telephone at 470-234-1199.

Parent Guidelines

Parents of online students have a unique opportunity and responsibility to participate in the education of their children. Parents are expected to:

- Directly supervise the child’s education at home
- Provide a physical environment conducive to their child’s educational needs
- Assist the student in complying with all rules, policies, and procedures of the school
- Assist the student in the submission of all forms, applications, and documentation to the school in a timely manner
- Instruct the student on the correct procedure for logging in to record daily attendance
- Maintain regular contact with the school by telephone and email
- Monitor the student’s computer use to assure that school-issued computer equipment and software are used for educational purposes and in accordance with school policy
- Provide the student with the technology necessary to access courseware, Live Learning Sessions and other educational resources (if not using school provided technology)
- Consistently monitor student progress to ensure successful completion of the curriculum within the allowable timeframe
- Assure that all work submitted by the student was completed solely by that student
- Notify the school immediately of any change in a student’s contact information or academic status
- Provide the student with transportation as needed to participate in standardized testing
- Return all instructional materials and equipment to the school as requested

Parents are expected to interact with Graduation Achievement Charter High School personnel in a professional and courteous manner. This includes using appropriate language, being solution-oriented, and avoiding hang-ups and lack of communication. Parents are expected to check their email daily and voicemail and respond to those messages that warrant a response within 24 hours or the next school day. Students and parents are expected to provide Graduation Achievement Charter High School with functioning email addresses and phone numbers. If there are changes to email addresses and phone numbers, parents and students must inform their school counselor within 24 hours of the change, or the next school day.

Parent Conferences

Parent and family engagement in education is essential to every student’s success. Parents may request a conference at any time to address academic issues by contacting their child’s school counselor. Once the parties agree on the time and place of the conference and who should attend, the school counselor will make the necessary arrangements.

Title I Program

The Board and all Graduation Achievement Charter High School Centers and the virtual school shall abide by and support all rules and regulations pertaining to Title I, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged (No Child Left Behind) Act of 2001, Public Law 107-110, and Georgia’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver approved Feb. 9, 2012. Students and teachers receive benefits from federal funding that help support academic achievement.

The U.S. Department of Education provides federal funds through the Georgia Department of Education to local educational agencies, (LEAs), and public schools with high percentages of economic need to help ensure that all children meet and/or exceed challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards.

Annual Parent Meetings

A parent survey is conducted annually to assess the effectiveness GACHS and its teachers. Parents are encouraged to share their thoughts on the following: parent-teacher communication, level of academic support provided, outings and resources provided, scheduling, and opportunities for greater parent and family engagement. At an end-of-the-year parent meeting, parents and GACHS staff come together to review successes and plan for ways to strengthen areas of weakness. Parents will have the opportunity to make suggestions for the planning and implementation of the 2017-18 Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan. Notification for all parent meetings will be announced in the Parent Portal and included on the school website.

The research is clear that when schools and families support each other, students of all backgrounds and various abilities achieve at higher levels. As part of Title I, the Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator (PFEC) will work in conjunction with the administrative team and faculty members at GACHS to increase student achievement while educating the whole child. The PFEC will meet frequently throughout the school year to review and provide feedback on GACHS policies and procedures.

Parent Advisory Council

Graduation Achievement Charter High School invites all parents to join the Title I Parent Advisory Council to share ideas. The team will meet three times during the school year, but parents can also submit their ideas or suggestions during all activities and meetings as well as through our parent surveys and website. If you would like to learn more about the Parent Advisory Committee, please contact the Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator at Deonia.Young@gmail.com, or complete the interest form.

School-Parent-Student Compact

GACHS and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. This includes the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the state's high standards. Parents will be invited to work with GACHS staff to develop the compact for the 2017-18 school year.

Title I, Parent and Family Engagement Policy

All schools receiving funds from the Title I grant are required to have a Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The written plan establishes programs and practices to encourage family engagement at each local school. The plan is jointly developed by parents and school staff to reflect the needs of the school, students, and families. In addition to a Parent and Family Engagement Policy, each Title I school creates a School-Parent Compact. This compact articulates the role of the school, the student, and parent to ensure academic success for the student. The district also has established a Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee annually reviews the Graduation Achievement Charter High School's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. This policy also is developed jointly with, approved by, and distributed to parents. The Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy establishes Graduation Achievement Charter High School's expectations for parental and Family Engagement and describes how GACHS will:

(1) Involve parents in development of the plan required under 20 U.S.C.A. § 6312 and the process of school review and improvement;

(2) Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance;

(3) Build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family engagement;

(4) Coordinate and integrate family engagement strategies under Title I with family engagement strategies under other instructional 9–12 programs;

(5) Annually evaluate, with the engagement of parents and families, the content and effectiveness of the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy in improving the academic quality of the school served under this part, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background), and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy; and

(6) Involve parents in the activities of the school served under this part

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Consistent with section 1118 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), GACHS will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for parent and family engagement. These activities will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation by parents of participating children. The Superintendent or her designee shall supervise the development and annual review of GACHS's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy to be incorporated into the plan developed pursuant to 20 U.S.C.A. § 6312.

Title I regulations state that school staff and parents must be involved in the planning, revision and monitoring of certain components of a Title I program. Annual surveys and parent meetings conducted in May elicit parent feedback of our programs, activities and parent and family engagement opportunities. Parents are invited via weekly newsletter and event calendar to the bi-monthly parent meeting also. Attendees at these parent meetings will assist in the review of data, Title I budget decisions, review and revision of parent and family engagement; school wide Title I and other school plans.

GACHS builds capacity for strong parent and family engagement in order to ensure effective of parent and family participation and to support a partnership among the school, parents, families and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities:

1. Assist parents in understanding the State's academic content standards, student academic achievement standards and academic assessments
2. Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, to foster parent and family engagement
3. Educate school personnel, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach, communicate and work with parents

4. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other organizations such as EL, Special Education, and other programs
5. Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to parents in a format and language that parents can understand
6. Provide reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities as parents and families may request

In-person events:

- **Information session-** A representative from the school presents information about school policies and procedures. Q&A finishes up the hour-long session.
- **Meet 'n Greet-** Casual events for current and prospective families.
- **Q & A sessions-** A new way to learn about GACHS! Drop in to a location and ask questions about GACHS. Information packets available.

Online information:

- Pre-recorded Information sessions
- Live Online sessions
- Parent Orientations – All newly enrolled families are invited to attend a Parent Orientation.

In-person sessions and online sessions (live and recorded) will be available for your convenience.

Code of Conduct

Graduation Achievement Charter High School exists to educate its students. The school will not tolerate any actions from students, parents, staff, or visitors that in any way interfere with the delivery of educational services, jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school community, or threaten the integrity and stability of the school itself.

School administration will use professional judgment in determining which disciplinary action will be most effective in dealing with the student's misconduct, taking into account the following factors:

- The student's age and maturity level;
- The nature and seriousness of the infraction and the circumstances which led to the infraction;
- The student's previous disciplinary record;
- The effectiveness of other forms of discipline;
- Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate;
- The student's attitude; and other relevant factors.

Offenses and Consequences

Consequence	Description	Can be Assigned by:	Level
Warning	The student is formally warned that such behavior is prohibited by the School's Discipline Code.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	1
Informal Talk	A school official will talk to the student regarding the student's behavior.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director	1

		of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	
Deprivation of Privileges	Extracurricular activities are special privileges offered to enhance the student’s overall learning experience. Access to the research center, or chat rooms, field trips and other in-person activities are privileges, not rights. Any or all of these privileges may be revoked.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	2
Student Conference	A formal conference held between the student and one or more school officials. Actions taken and the results of the conference are recorded and placed in the child’s file. The parent/guardian will be notified of the conference and encouraged to attend.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	2
Behavior Contract	The teacher and/or administrator, in consultation with the parent and student, will develop a behavioral contract. A behavioral contract identifies a specific behavior, describes how the student should behave, and clearly specifies the consequences of misbehavior. Violation in the terms of the contract may result in long-term suspension.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	3
Short-Term Removal from Live Peer Interactions	A temporary removal of a student from live school interactions with other students (virtual and/or face-to-face, academic and/or social). The length of a suspension may range from 1 day up to 30 days and/or up to three social events depending on the seriousness of the violation. The student will retain access to online courses and recorded virtual sessions. After the removal, parents/guardians must attend a conference to readmit the student to the school.	Program Coordinator, Learning Director, Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	4
Short Term Suspension	A temporary suspension of a student from all electronic/online systems other than academic coursework, as well as interactions with other students online or in person. The length of a suspension may range from 1 to 10 days depending on the seriousness of the violation. The student will retain access to online courses and recorded virtual sessions. After a suspension, parents/guardians must attend a conference to readmit the student to	Director of Special Education, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	5

	electronic/online systems and interaction with other students online or in person.		
Long Term Suspension	A removal of a student from live school interactions with other students (virtual and/or face-to-face, academic and/or social) for more than 30 days up to the remainder of the school year depending on the seriousness of the violation. The student will retain access to online courses and recorded virtual sessions. After the removal, parents/guardians must attend a conference to readmit the student to the school.	Chief Academic Officer, Chief Development Officer, Superintendent	6
Expulsion	Permanent dismissal of a student from the regular school program.	Board of Directors	7

Infractions Leading to Suspension or Expulsion

The following infractions in the Code of Conduct may subject the student to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, if the infraction occurs during the presentation of any learning opportunity or at any school event, activity, or function:

- **Assault**--A physical attack that attempts to cause or causes personal injury to another student, staff member or another person. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Bomb Threat**--Making a false report regarding the possession or location of explosive materials. This applies to threats made verbally, physically, in writing, or by any other method including 911 calls and electronic mail. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 6
- **Bullying Behavior**--Using physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse or aggression to take advantage of others. Engaging in intimidation, coercion, or extortion or threatening violence, injury or harm to another or others. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Cheating**--Illicitly sharing or learning of specific questions on an exercise or test before it is given. Illicitly sharing or obtaining information during an exercise or test. Plagiarism, *i.e.*, submitting another's work or ideas as one's own. This includes copying from another student's work, from print sources, or from any electronic source including the Internet. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 3
- **Disorderly Conduct**--Includes but is not limited to, running, pushing, shoving, or engaging in horseplay. Excessive verbal or physical interaction that results in disruption is also considered disorderly conduct. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 4
- **Displaying inappropriate symbols of gangs**--Clothing, jewelry, electronic communication, or other object that may reasonably be perceived by a teacher or administrator as evidence of membership in or affiliation with any gang. Gang symbol graffiti will be treated as vandalism. Symbols must not be protected as religious expression or free speech. The term "gang" means a group of two or more persons whose purposes or activities include the commission of illegal acts or violations of the school's code of conduct. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 6
- **Endangerment of self or others**--Engaging in or causing behavior which can be demonstrated to affect negatively the educative process or which presents a danger to the safety or welfare of the school community. If the activity in question occurs outside of the school environment, a

link between the act and the school community must be demonstrated. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 7

- **Extortion**--Obtaining or attempting to obtain money, property, or services by threats or forcing someone to do something against his/her will by force or threat of force. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **False alarms**--Activating an emergency alarm or response when no emergency exists. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Felony Act**--Any act that constitutes a felony under applicable law. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Fighting**--Physical contact or other acts of violence where all parties have physically contributed to conflict. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Gambling**--The playing of games for money or possessions. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 4
- **Hazing**--Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act meant to induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights or that creates physical or mental discomfort. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Identify Theft and Impersonation**--Determining the login credentials of another student and logging in to the system as that student. Minimum = 3 and Maximum = 7
- **Incitement** - Encouraging or coercing another to engage in activity that is prohibited under this code. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 7
- **Possessing, posting or distributing prohibited material**--Prohibited material is material that is obscene, libelous, defamatory, or that contains a threat of violence, injury, or harm. This includes written and electronic communications. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 6
- **Possession of drug paraphernalia or other proscribed equipment**--Student possession of drug paraphernalia such as rolling papers, bongs, or roach clips, or other prohibited items. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Possession or use of controlled substances, without authorization, or of illegal drugs or alcohol**--Use or possession of a prescription drug belonging to another; alcohol or illegal substances including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Possession of a weapon**--Weapons are defined as items that can cause serious injury or death when used as a weapon. This list includes but is not limited to, knives, bb guns, pepper spray, or other item of no reasonable use to the student at school. Minimum = 6 and Maximum = 7
- **Possession of a firearm**--Firearms include any item that is capable of firing a projectile and using an explosive as a propellant including rifles and pistols. Minimum = 7 and Maximum = 7
- **Possession of a dangerous object**--Dangerous objects include but are not limited to, knives, razor blades, explosives, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student at school. Minimum = 6 and Maximum = 7
- **Possession and Use of Tobacco** - Possession and use of electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, or tobacco products is prohibited at all times on school property. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 3
- **Sale or distribution of controlled substances or illegal drugs or alcohol**--Sale or distribution, of a prescription drug belonging to another; alcohol, or illegal substances including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin. Minimum = 6 and Maximum = 7
- **Sexual Harassment**--Sexual harassment is defined as inappropriate or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other inappropriate or unwelcome verbal, physical, or electronic-based contact of a sexual nature. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7

- **Sexual Misconduct**--Inappropriate physical contact of a sexual nature such as touching, patting, pinching, etc. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Tampering with school records**--Altering or destroying any record or document of the school by any method. Minimum = 3 and Maximum = 7
- **Theft**--Taking of school or personal property, receiving stolen items or being in possession of stolen items or knowingly being in unauthorized possession of property belonging to another. This includes unauthorized copying of computer software. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Under the influence of illegal substance**--Being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance not prescribed by a physician for such student. Minimum = 4 and Maximum = 7
- **Using profane or obscene language or gestures** - Applies to oral, written or electronic communications. Should not be construed to prohibit protected speech. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 4
- **Vandalism**--Malicious destruction of or damage to school or personal property. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Verbal Harassment**--Using slurs based upon race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Minimum = 2 and Maximum = 7
- **Violation of Internet Acceptable Use Policy**--Internet Acceptable Use Policy is included in the policy section of this handbook. Minimum = 1 and Maximum = 7

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

GACHS prohibits the possession and/or use of drugs, alcohol, illicit substances, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, or tobacco products at all times on school property, at school-sponsored events, and/or in school-owned or school-rented vehicles by all individuals, including, but not limited to, employees, students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Violators face a full range of disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from school and/or school property or school-sponsored events. They may also be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Weapons

Graduation Achievement Charter High School prohibits the possession of any weapon(s) on school property or at school-sponsored events. Violators face a full range of disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from school. They also may be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 states that any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school, as defined by 18 USCA sec. 921, shall be expelled from the regular school program for at least one year. This shall be modified on a case-by-case basis as permitted under applicable law. Such modifications may include placement in alternative educational programs. In addition, any student bringing a firearm to school shall be referred to the local law enforcement and/or juvenile justice system as appropriate. The possession of a weapon in violation of O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1 will trigger the reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. 20-2-1184.

Searches of Students and School Property

The School respects the civil rights of the students attending its school and will uphold those rights, but will not tolerate violations of law, Board policy, or school rules. Searches are used to ensure the safety of ALL individuals at the School. The teacher, principal, school security guard, or administrator may search the person or personal effects of a student when, based on the circumstances at the time of the search,

there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated the law, a school rule, or a School policy. School officials are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of students, staff and visitors pursuant to applicable law. When reasonable suspicion exists, school officials may search students whom they believe have either violated a particular law or rules of the school. The scope of the search will be reasonably related to the purpose of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and gender of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction.

Any teacher, principal, school security guard, or administrator in the school may search any building, desk, locker, area, grounds, or vehicle parked on school property for evidence that the law, a school rule, or School policy has been violated. The School is the exclusive owner of all buildings, all desks and lockers and all are subject to be searched. The permission granted to park an automobile or vehicle on any School property constitutes consent of the owner and/or operator to allow a search of the vehicle.

School computers and school technology resources, as defined below, are not private and are open to school review at any time.

All school and classroom storage areas are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. These areas are not private. Periodic general inspections of these areas may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, and without student consent.

If a search yields illegal or unauthorized materials, such materials should be turned over in person to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

Harassment

Graduation Achievement Charter High School requires all employees, students, and other individuals in the school environment to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect of all employees, students, and other members of the school community. Harassment in any form or for any reason based on religion, ethnicity, race, gender or sexual orientation is strictly prohibited.

Harassment includes remarks, gestures, or physical contact, writing placed on school property or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or to an individual's sexual orientation. What constitutes sexual harassment is based upon reasonable perceptions of the complainant rather than the intent of the alleged harasser. Students who believe they are victims of harassment should report such occurrences to a GACHS school official.

Students engaged in any act of harassment that is in any way connected to anyone associated with GACHS will be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions:

- Conference with parent or guardian
- Removal from participation in extracurricular activities
- Short-term suspension (up to 10 days)
- Long-term suspension (the remainder of the school year)
- Referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency
- Permanent expulsion from GACHS

Bullying

Bullying is a form of harassment. Bullying is defined as the repeated intimidation of others by real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted (cyber bullying), or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another. It may include but is not be limited to actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling, and put-downs, including ethnically based or gender-based verbal put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, and exclusion from peer groups within the school. Such conduct is disruptive to the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in Graduation Achievement Charter High School and is prohibited.

Cyber Bullying takes many forms, which may include:

- **Flaming**--sending angry, rude, or vulgar messages
- **Harassment**--repeatedly sending a person an offensive message
- **Cyber stalking**--harassment, threats of harm, intimidation
- **Denigration**--sending or posting harmful, untrue, or cruel statements
- **Masquerading**--hiding one's identity when sending messages
- **Outing**--sending or posting private material about a person
- **Phishing/Trickery**--engaging in tricks to solicit embarrassing information
- **Exclusion**--intentionally excluding a person from an online group
- **Bashing**--routinely posting racist remarks or gossip online
- **Spamming**--flooding the Internet with multiple copies of the same message

Students engaged in any act of bullying that is in any way connected to any activity sponsored or supported by will be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions after initial contact of the parent or guardian by phone (when possible) or by written notice as the next option:

- Conference with parent or guardian
- Removal from participation in extracurricular activities
- Short-term suspension (up to 10 days)
- Long-term suspension (the remainder of the school year)
- Referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency
- Permanent expulsion from GACHS

Hazing Prohibited

Soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in hazing on any school property at any time or in connection with any activity supported or sponsored by Graduation Achievement Charter High School, whether on or off school property is strictly prohibited.

Hazing means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act meant to induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights, or that creates physical or mental discomfort, and is directed against a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization or club, or athletic team sponsored by GACHS and whose membership is totally or predominately other students from GACHS.

Students engaged in any hazing-type behavior that is in any way connected to any activity sponsored or supported by Graduation Achievement Charter High School will be subject to one or more of the

following disciplinary actions after initial contact of the parent or guardian by phone (when possible) or by written notice as the next option:

- Conference with parent or guardian
- Removal from participation in extracurricular activities
- Short-term suspension (up to 10 days)
- Long-term suspension (the remainder of the school year)
- Referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency
- Permanent expulsion from GACHS

Consequences for Engaging in Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

If the investigation determines that harassment, intimidation, or bullying has occurred, the administration shall take reasonable and effective corrective action. Examples of corrective action include, but are not limited to disciplinary action against the aggressor, up to and including termination of an employee or expulsion of a student, special training, or other interventions, apologies, dissemination of statements that the school does not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying, independent reassessment of student work, and/or tutoring.

Individuals, including students, employees, parents, and volunteers, may also be referred to law enforcement officials. The school will take all other appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

Consequences for Retaliation or False Accusations

The school prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against a student or employee who has filed a complaint or report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school also prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for such conduct will be determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and may range from positive behavioral interventions to disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Reporting

Any student who believes he/she has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying should file a complaint with the Superintendent or his or her designee. Such a complaint may also be filed by a student's parent. If an employee receives a complaint of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or observes any behavior which could amount to harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the employee must transmit the complaint to the school's Superintendent or other designated contact person within one business day.

Although reports by students or employees may be made anonymously, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely based on an anonymous report.

The school will be responsible for ensuring that reasonable efforts are made to prevent public disclosure of the names of all parties involved in harassment, intimidation, or bullying allegations, except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation and comply with statutory obligations.

Procedure for Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

Prior to any contemplated long-term suspension or expulsion of any student, the following procedure shall be followed.

General Notice

The Superintendent shall provide written notice of such proposed action to be delivered to the student and his/her parent, guardian or legal custodian with a reasonable time prior to the date of contemplated action. Such delivery may be in person or by registered United States' mail and shall be deemed to be completed, when handed to the addressee or the notice is deposited in the United States mail addressed to the last known address of the student or his/her parent or guardian.

Contents of Notice

The notice shall contain the following basic information:

- A statement of the allegations leading to the contemplated denial of admission or expulsions;
- The nature of the evidence supporting the charges;
- A statement of the date, time, and place of a hearing on the question of expulsion, supplemental extension of suspension, or denial of admission;
- A statement that the student may be present at the hearing during the presentation of all information, shall have an opportunity to present relevant information, and may be accompanied and represented by the parent, guardian, legal custodian and/or an attorney; and, a statement that failure to participate in such hearing constitutes waiver of further rights in the matter.

Hearing

- The Superintendent prior to any recommendation to the Board for expulsion shall conduct a hearing for expulsion.
- Hearings shall be closed except to participants and witnesses, or, upon agreement by both parties, may be open to such individuals as the parties may specify.
- Testimony and information shall be presented, the Hearing Official may consider and give appropriate weight to such information or evidence, as he/she deems appropriate. The student or his/her representative may question individuals presenting information.
- The Hearing Official shall render a decision within five (5) days after the hearing. All decisions rendered must be submitted in writing to the appropriate personnel, student, and parent or guardian.
- Every effort shall be made, when appropriate, to administer discipline so that the student will not suffer a substantial loss of the educational program.

Right to Appeal an Expulsion

- An appeal may be taken from the decision of the Superintendent to the GACHS Board.
- The appeal to the Board may be taken by filing a notice of appeal within two (2) weeks of the date of the notice of recommendation for expulsion or date of expulsion hearing, whichever is later.
- When a student is expelled by GACHS for the remainder of the year, the parent, guardian, or legal custodian is responsible for seeing that the compulsory school attendance statute is complied with during the period of expulsion from school. Expulsion from GACHS does not necessarily constitute expulsion or exclusion from any other schools.

Judicial Charges

If GACHS receives information that a petition or charges have been filed on a student regarding commission of an offense, which would constitute a crime of violence, the student may be suspended for investigation of the circumstances surrounding the matter. The GACHS Board of Directors shall meet in executive session for the purpose of conducting a hearing to determine whether the student has exhibited behavior that is detrimental to the safety, welfare, and morals of the other students of GACHS and GACHS personnel, and whether educating the student in the school may disrupt the learning environment in the academy, provide a negative example for other students, teachers, and other academy personnel.

Technology

Technical Support for laptops will be provided to all Graduation Achievement Charter High School students that are provided a Technology Package by the school. Limited Technical Support may be provided to enrolled students for personal technology only as it relates to the core functions of accessing and completing their school work. Edgenuity will provide technical support for the online courses portal. OwnItU will provide technical support for the Own It! online ramp-up course. The Technology Support Centers can be reached using numbers and email addresses listed on the school website in the "Contact Us" tab.

Parents and students are expected to inform their teachers and success coaches of all technology issues they are experiencing that may influence the student's ability to complete their work in a timely manner. Teachers and success coaches will work with students to make adjustments to due dates when technology issues persist. Parents and students must make all efforts to resolve technology issues as quickly as possible.

The school provides a subsidy for Internet access for families that meet income qualification guidelines. You may notify your school counselor if you wish to apply for the subsidy.

All use of the Internet and school provided computer technology must be related to or in support of the educational goals of the student as stated by the school. Use of the Internet and school provided computer technology for any illegal or prohibited activity including but not limited to profit purposes, lobbying, gambling, advertising, transmitting offensive materials, hate mail, discriminating remarks or obtaining obscene or pornographic material is strictly forbidden.

Use of the school technology or the Internet for fraudulent or illegal copying, communication, taking, or modification of material in violation of all applicable laws is prohibited. Such action or the illegal use of copyrighted software is prohibited and will be referred to the applicable local, state, or federal authorities for prosecution.

Students, parents, or any third parties not under the school's direction are strictly forbidden from installing any software or additional hardware on computers that are property of the school's, nor shall anyone remove installed software or hardware from that computer.

Students provided with a computer and related equipment by Graduation Achievement Charter High School are loaned this equipment on a temporary basis and are required to return it immediately upon completion of the program or, if a student leaves the school prior to completing the program, immediately upon disenrollment. GACHS will hold students and their parents and/or guardians liable for

returning such equipment promptly and in good operating condition and reserves all of its rights under the law to seek redress where equipment is not returned in this manner.

Computer Use Policy

GACHS students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer systems, just as they are in a brick-and-mortar classroom or at a school event. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. The use of the school issued computer and computer systems is a privilege, not a right. Students should have no expectation of privacy when using the school's computer systems.

Students are personally responsible for their actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. Students are advised never to access, keep, or send anything they would not want their parents or teachers to see. With regard to privacy, computer storage areas may be treated like the "traditional" school lockers.

GACHS administrators reserve the right to monitor any student email communication that passes through school servers. Administrators may review communications files to maintain system integrity. This will insure that students are using the computer system responsibly.

Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto their computers unless they have documented permission from the technical support staff at GACHS.

Students should not use profane, abusive, or impolite language when communicating online. They should not access any materials that are in violation of school rules and policies. If students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their parents immediately who should then contact GACHS with this information.

GACHS expects students to observe the following rules of online behavior:

- Students will only access the Internet for educational purposes
- Students will restrict their access to material deemed appropriate by staff and parents
- Students will use appropriate conduct toward others
- Students will observe and respect license and copyright agreements
- Students will keep passwords and personal information confidential. (Student names, telephone numbers, and addresses should not be revealed over the Internet.)

The following types of access are considered to be inappropriate uses:

- Accessing profane or obscene material, material suggesting illegal acts and material advocating violence or discrimination
- Using the access for illegal or prohibited acts
- Attempts to access any resources that are restricted, confidential or privileged
- Posting chain letters
- Internet Relay Chat, newsgroups, or mailing list participation unless directed and supervised by a staff member for a classroom assignment
- Granting Internet or Network access to unauthorized persons intentionally or unintentionally, or failing to notify a teacher or administrator if you suspect someone of using your password

- Posting personal contact information
- Agreeing to meet someone met online without parental approval and under the supervision of a teacher or authorized adult
- Attempts to disrupt access
- Causing damage to or changing function, operation or design of the technology
- Using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening language
- Harassing another person
- Posting false or defamatory information
- Plagiarizing information found on the Internet
- Disregarding the rights of copyright owners on the Internet
- Posting Web pages without the consent of a teacher or authorized adult
- Buying or selling any products or services

Parents must monitor their children's compliance with these standards. Students who violate these standards may face disciplinary measures and/or legal action.

Computer Set-Up

Students and/or parents are responsible for set-up of the school-issued system when the hardware arrives at the student's residence. Support will be available as needed from the school helpdesk. The technical support staff can assist the student/parent with activation of the computer system and can provide systematic telephone instructions and assistance.

The student/parent should report any malfunction of computer hardware to the technical support staff at the school as soon as possible. The staff will discuss the specifics with the student/parent to determine if the problem is hardware specific or software related and will determine a plan of action.

Lost/Damaged Property

The student/parent must notify the school within five days of the occurrence or discovery of any theft, damage, destruction, or other loss of any school-owned computer equipment. The student/parent may be responsible for any costs associated with repairing or replacing lost, stolen, or damaged equipment while in the student's possession.

Families/students are generally financially responsible for their equipment as evidenced in their signed contract. In most circumstances where there has been loss or damage, parents will file a claim with their homeowner's insurance carrier.

The school will assist with this process by submitting all information related to cost and value of the equipment. The family/student must immediately forward copies of the police report, fire report, insurance claim, and any other applicable reports to the student's school counselor, who will then forward the information to the Superintendent's Office.

Replacement Equipment

The school will issue replacement equipment after:

- Copies of all applicable reports and claims have been received in the Superintendent's office.

- Appropriate arrangements have been made by the student/family to compensate the school for the loss, if applicable.
- The family/student signs a revised agreement that reflects the issue of new equipment.
- The damaged equipment is returned, if applicable.

Acceptable Use

The school's information technology resources, including email and Internet access, are provided for educational purposes. Please note network email accounts are not private; they remain the property of GACHS and may be reviewed by the school at any time. Adherence to the following policy is necessary for continued access to the school's technological resources. Students must:

- Respect and protect the privacy of others.
- Use only assigned accounts.
- Not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
- Not distribute private information about others or themselves.
- Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
- Observe all network security practices, as posted.
- Report security risks or violations to a teacher or network administrator.
- Not destroy or damage data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
- Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
- Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
- Not infringe copyrights (no making illegal copies of music, games, or movies).
- Not plagiarize.
- Respect and practice the principles of community.
- Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
- Report threatening or discomfoting materials to a teacher or school counselor.
- Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
- Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
- Not use the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct.
- Not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
- Not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business unless approved as a school project.

Students may, if in accord with the policy above:

- Design and post web pages and other material from school resources.
- Use direct communications such as IRC, online chat, or instant messaging with a teacher's permission.
- Install or download software, if also in conformity with laws and licenses, and under the supervision of a teacher, school counselor, or GACHS technology support center staff.
- Use the resources for any educational purpose.

Consequences for Violation

Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources.

Supervision and Monitoring

School and network administrators and their authorized employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy.

Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement.

Every school-issued computer is preinstalled with an Internet content filter pursuant to federal regulations. The filter is not to be removed because it blocks access to sites deemed inappropriate as well as sites that have no educational value. Social networking sites, pornography, gambling, and proxy sites are blocked through the filter. Uses of instant messenger applications are not permitted on the school computers and are also blocked.

Parents must monitor their children's compliance with these standards. Students who violate these standards may face disciplinary measures and/or legal action.

Internet Subsidy Policy

As a prerequisite to attending GACHS, it is essential that students have reliable Internet connectivity to access GACHS's curriculum, Live Learning Sessions, as well as a means to connect to its staff and services.

To assist parents with the provision of Internet access, GACHS will provide each qualifying household a subsidy to be applied to their Internet costs. Families that believe they meet income qualification guidelines should contact their school counselor to request an application form. Each subsidy payment will be up to \$50.00 per semester. Payments will be prorated based on the enrollment date of the student(s) in the household. Payments will be issued to the primary contact listed in the school's student information system at the time of disbursement. GACHS will process subsidy payments at the end of each semester (twice per year) in February and July. Student must be actively enrolled at the time of disbursement in order to receive a subsidy payment. Families may be asked to provide documentation of internet in the household (i.e., a bill).

Households that do not have Internet access must contact an Internet provider and order service ensuring Internet access is available before the student begins school. Failure to meet this date may result in your child missing valuable classroom instruction. Parents and guardians who need financial assistance with this process should notify the school counselor, who will provide the qualification paperwork and will mobilize resources to ensure that Internet access is available for the student.

In order for a qualifying household to receive a subsidy payment, students must comply with the follow guidelines:

- Student(s) in the household must be enrolled and active at the time of disbursement.

- Families requesting the subsidy must meet income qualification guidelines and have submitted the appropriate forms for approval.

Enrollment Requirement

Student(s) in the household must be enrolled and active at the time of disbursement. Families should reference the school calendar, found in the Parent & Student Handbook, to determine the last day of the semester.

Income Qualification Guidelines

Families must meet income qualification guidelines in order to be eligible for an internet subsidy. Eligibility will be determined by review of the Free and Reduced Lunch Qualification form.

Academic Standing Requirement

If any student in a household has ten or more unexcused absences, the student is truant and the household will forfeit the next internet subsidy.

Student Services

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to Intervention (RTI) serves as a guide for instructional decision-making at Graduation Achievement Charter High School. RTI is a multi-tiered intervention strategy process that facilitates early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. RTI allows educators to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. RTI assists educators in identifying and addressing academic and behavioral areas of concern. RTI is the process wherein identified and eligible students receive interventions during which progress is monitored and evaluated. There are four tiers to the RTI plan, as developed by the Georgia Department of Education:

- **Tier 1** – Universal screenings are used for reading and math for all students at all levels. Classroom teachers use frequent common formative assessments to measure progress. Educational staff use student performance data from formative assessments centered around benchmark criteria as tools to derive instructional approaches, design learning opportunities, and address individual needs. Progress monitoring data is purposefully collected, organized, and reviewed. Then it's shared with students and parents, and is the driving force of the instructional program.
- **Tier 2** – Students identified for Tier 2 interventions receive interventions in a determined area of need or concern and are regularly transfer of learning to core courses. The progress monitoring process used for the intervention is pre-identified by the school data team based on the intervention components and should include curriculum based measures and/or other standardized assessments. Benchmarks for expected progress are set, and student progress toward these benchmarks is closely monitored through assessments. Graphs of these purposeful data points are used to illustrate progress toward benchmark goals. These data graphs support the data team in monitoring individual student growth as well as efficacy of the intervention and fidelity of its implementation.
- **Tier 3** – Students identified for Tier 3 interventions continue to receive Tier 2 interventions with additional supports and/or interventions as determined by the Student Support Team. At this level, clear documentation of progress monitoring data continues. Graphs of data may be used

to show progress and reflect the efficacy of the intervention identified as the transfer of learning to academic courses.

- **Tier 4** – Students identified for Tier 4 interventions meet the criteria for special education services and/or supports and will be involved in deep, systematic, and formalized progress monitoring, data collection, and targeted instruction. Tier 4 interventions are individualized based on student assessment data. Documentation of progress is comprehensive and robust.

Services for Students Found Ineligible for Special Education

Students who are not eligible to receive special education services may qualify as students with disabilities and, therefore, be protected under federal statutes and regulations intended to prevent discrimination (in particular, 34 CFR Part 104 and 28 CFR Part 35). The school must ensure that qualified students with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the extent appropriate for each individual student. GACHS will provide, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected student with a disability, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

The services for protected students with disabilities may be distinct from those applicable to eligible or thought to be eligible students. The parent may initiate an evaluation if the parent believes a student is a protected student with a disability. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services for students with disabilities, parents should reach the Special Education Contact.

A key piece of the RTI process is the training of all staff to encourage the students to follow the interventions that the Student Support Team has in place. This training will foster the ability of educators to:

- Communicate
- Assist
- Refer

Through this process, we address the needs of students who are not meeting or exceeding the proficiency standards.

Student Assistance Process

The primary goal of the Student Assistance Process is to help students overcome barriers in order that they may achieve, remain in school, and advance.

The Student Assistance Process uses techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core is a Student Support Team that includes school staff and may also include liaisons from community agencies. Student Support Team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the Student Response Team will assist the parent and student in identifying services and

resources within the community. The Student Support Team members do not diagnose, treat, or refer to treatment, but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

There are four phases to the student assistance process:

Referral--Anyone can refer a student to the Student Support Team when they are concerned about a student's academic progress or behavior: any school staff, a student's friend, a family member, or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the Student Support Team to ask for help.

Team Planning--The Student Support Team gathers objective information about the student's performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent. The team meets with the parent to discuss the data collected and also meets with the student. Together, a plan is developed that includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student's academic and personal success to includes strategies and interventions aimed at promoting the student's.

Intervention and Recommendations--The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities.

Support and Follow-Up--The Student Support Team continues to work with and support the student and his/her family. Follow-up includes monitoring and mentoring for academic success. It is the parent's right to be involved in the process and to have full access to all school records under the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Engagement of parents in all phases of the student assistance program underscores the parents' role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting their children's education and is key to the successful resolution of problems.

For those students receiving treatment through a community agency, Student Support Team, in collaboration with parents and the agency, can assist in helping plan in-school support services during and after treatment.

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Notification of Rights
It is the responsibility of the Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities in the state, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

The IDEA requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents, in newspapers or other media, before any major identification, location, or evaluation activity. The IDEA requires this notice to contain certain information. Another federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality, requires educational agencies to notify parents annually of their confidentiality rights. The school fulfills the above duties with this annual notice.

Special Education Services and Programs

The School is required by the **IDEA** to provide a free appropriate public education to school-age children with disabilities who need special education and related services. School-age children with disabilities

who need special education and related services are identified as eligible for special education if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- **Autism**
- **Deaf-blindness**
- **Deafness**
- **Emotional Impairment**
- **Hearing Impairment**
- **Mental Retardation**
- **Multiple Disabilities**
- **Orthopedic Disabilities**
- **Other Health Impairment**
- **Specific Learning Disability**
- **Speech or Language Impairment**
- **Traumatic Brain Injury**
- **Visual Impairment**

Each educational agency must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate school-age students suspected of being eligible for special education services. Students can be referred for testing to determine if they qualify for special education services by RTI teams, teachers, and/or parents.

When referral indicates that a student may be eligible for special education services, the school will seek parental consent to conduct further evaluation.

Evaluation means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. The term procedure, used selectively with an individual child, does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

This evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team which includes a teacher, other qualified professionals, and the parents. The process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection in evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request at any time that the school conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. Requests for a multidisciplinary evaluation should be made in writing to the Special Education Contact person. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation, the school shall provide the parent with a form for that purpose. If the school decides not to test the student, the school must provide the parent with prior written notice.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent education evaluation at public expense if they disagree with the evaluation conducted by the school. The school must provide to parents on request information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained.

Child Find

Child Find is a process that districts use to identify, locate, and evaluate all children who live in the district's zone of residence or attend school in the district's zone, ages birth through 21, who are suspected of having disabilities that may result in a need for special education and related services. School districts must have policies and procedures in place to ensure the identification, location, and evaluation of these children; and public notification must be given before any significant Child Find activities are implemented.

Because GACHS has a state-wide attendance zone, it has overlapping responsibility with local city and county school districts to find students who are suspected of having disabilities. School districts have Child Find responsibility of all children suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This includes:

- Children ages birth through 3. Any children in this age range suspected of a disability will be referred to the state's early intervention program, Babies Can't Wait;
- Preschool children, ages 3 through 5, who may not be enrolled in a Georgia-funded pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, including children who are parentally placed in private preschools or daycare centers outside the district;
- Children who are enrolled in a public school within the district, including public charter schools;
- Children who are parentally placed in private and home schools (refer to the Private Schools Chapter of this manual for additional information on private school Child Find responsibilities);
- Children who are attending charter schools within the district or in the area if it is designated as an individual district;
- Highly mobile children, including migrant, homeless, and children who are wards of the state;
- Children served in community programs such as rehabilitation centers, daycare centers, etc.;
- Children, ages 18 through 21, who are incarcerated in facilities operated by the local sheriff's office or other municipalities; and
- Any other children suspected of having disabilities.

Child Find Procedures

GACHS will employ a variety of strategies to ensure that children and students who may need special education and related services are identified and, if appropriate, evaluated. As a virtual school, GACHS largely focuses its Child Find activities via an on-line format that meets its target audience. Thus, GACHS will announce its Child Find activities to the public through its Website, Social Media posts, as well as Site-based Postings. GACHS will also target the Private School population and Home School population through notifications to organizations for Private Schools and Home Schools in Georgia. Finally, GACHS will notify community organizations such as Babies Can't Wait, Parent to Parent, Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, and Georgia Division of Family Children Services.

GACHS will hold informational meetings twice a year for parents/students that suspect a disability may require special education or related services.

Additionally, GACHS will host a meeting once a year with representatives from Private Schools, Home Schools, and Community-Based organizations to address its Child Find activities.

Child Find Services

Because GACHS only serves students in grades 9-12, its obligations to Child Find for students age birth through 21 should not be confused with its obligation to provide services for such students. Children from birth to age 3 will be referred to Babies Can't Wait for an evaluation. Children from age 3 through age 21 may be evaluated by GACHS if reasonable grounds exist to suspect a disability. While GACHS will fulfill its obligation to "find" children and student from birth through age 21, it is only obligated to offer a Free and Appropriate Public Education for high school students with disabilities through age 21.

Educational Placement

The determination of whether a student is eligible for special education is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is exceptional. The IEP team must include at least two members in addition to the parent(s). Other required members include at least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment), at least one special education teacher, or where appropriate, at least one special education provider, and a representative of the school. If the student is determined to be eligible for special education, the IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP shall be based on the results of the multidisciplinary evaluation. The IEP team may decide that a student is not eligible for special education. In that instance, recommendations for educational programming in regular education may be developed.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives, and the individualized programs and services that the student will receive. IEP's are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

The school will arrange for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

Discipline of Students with a Disability or Suspected of Having a Disability

Suspensions or expulsions for students with disabilities follow all appropriate state and federal policies, regulations, and laws. The school will not discipline students with disabilities protected under Section 504

of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (**IDEA**) unless the school complies with the requirements of those acts.

No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability. Any special education student whose disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability may be disciplined pursuant to the school's code of conduct, except that the disabled student shall continue to receive educational services as provided in the **IDEA** during any period of expulsion.

A special education student may be suspended for periods of no more than 10 consecutive or cumulative school days in response to separate incidents of misconduct, regardless of whether the student's gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disabling condition, as long as the repeated removals do not constitute a pattern that amounts to a change in placement (considering factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another) and provided that such student receives educational services to the extent required by the **IDEA** during such removals.

If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, no long-term suspension or expulsion can be implemented. The IEP team may modify the student's placement or IEP as appropriate, for educational, not disciplinary reasons and develop or revise an appropriate behavioral intervention plan.

Any special education student may be temporarily excluded from school by court order or by order of a duly appointed hearing officer changing the student's placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days, if the district demonstrates that maintaining the student in his or her current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

A special education student who has carried a weapon to school or to a school function or who knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function may be removed from his or her current placement. Such a student shall be placed in an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for no more than 45 days in accordance with the **IDEA**.

Section 504 Information

If you believe that your student requires accommodations due to a physical or mental impairment, please contact Graduation Achievement Charter High School. It is helpful to have a physician complete a medical evaluation prior to a 504 meeting. The school will provide a medical evaluation form upon request.

What is Section 504?

Section 504 protects all qualified students with disabilities, defined as those persons having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. Section 504 covers all students who meet this definition, even if they do not fall within the IDEA (Special Educations) categories and if they are ineligible for specially designed instruction.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against individuals whose physical or mental impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities, including:

- **Caring for one's self**
- **Performing manual tasks**
- **Walking**
- **Seeing**
- **Hearing**
- **Speaking**
- **Breathing**

- **Working**
- **Learning**

If a school district has reason to believe a student may have a disability as defined under Section 504 and may require special accommodations in the general education setting, the district must evaluate the student. If the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, the district must develop and implement a plan for the delivery of all accommodations.

The determination of the accommodations needed must be made in accordance with evaluation data by a group of persons knowledgeable about the student. The team should review the nature and presence of the disability, how it affects the student's access to the educational process, whether accommodations are needed to prevent discrimination, and how to provide eligible accommodations.

Taken from:

Overview of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Georgia Department of Education

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your system's Section 504 Coordinator.

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.

8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

1. **Overview:** Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

2. **Hearing Request:** The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. The name of the student.

- b. The address of the residence of the student.
- c. The name of the school the student is attending.
- d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- e. The requested reasons for review.
- f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- b. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.
- c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.
- d. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
- e. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. §104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.

- f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
- g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
- h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
- i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
- j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
- k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.

McKinney-Vento (Homeless) Act

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act ensures the educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This law identified any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence as homeless. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to immediately enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and qualifying public preschool programs. It further provides provisions for student records maintenance and transfer, school of origin transportation, and appropriate dispute resolutions for homeless students. In accordance with this law, Graduation Achievement Charter High School affords homeless children and youth equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including comparable services, such as Title I support, special education, gifted, English Learners (EL), and vocational/technical, as provided to other non-homeless students. Homeless children and youth will have access to needed services to support their academic achievement as they work to meet the same challenging standards to which all students are held.

GACHS participates in the education of homeless students by providing specific support and supplies to help with their education. A “homeless” student is any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This could mean that a child is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship, is living in motels, etc. due to the lack of alternative accommodations, or is living in emergency or transitional shelters. If you are currently experiencing homelessness and are in need of assistance, please contact the district homeless liaison in the Office of Federal Programs at Deonia.Young@gradgeorgia.com, or 470-259-5918.

Foster Care

GACHS aims to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care, and enable them to have access to needed services to support their academic achievement as they work to meet the same challenging standards to which all students are held. To facilitate this effort, GACHS has designated a Foster Care Liaison who acts as the point of contact for students in foster care, their families, and the Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS) within the Georgia Department of Human Services

(DHS). Please contact the district Foster Care Liaison in the Office of Federal Programs by emailing Deonia.Young@gradgeorgia.com, or by dialing 470-259-5918.

Migrant Education Program (MEP)

GACHS also participates in the Migrant Education Program. Migrant students in GACHS are also provided additional support and supplies to help with their education. GACHS receives the names of migrant students from the MEP regional office.

Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) requires the school to list all records kept concerning students in which a student may be personally identified. In order to comply with this regulation, a requirement of federal law, no such records will be kept except as authorized in this regulation. School personnel who find that the maintenance of additional records is essential to the performance of school functions should request amendment of this regulation to incorporate such records. The title of the persons(s) ultimately responsible for the maintenance of certain records is set forth throughout this regulation.

Statement of Policy

A cumulative record shall be maintained for each student from his entrance into school through the twelfth grade. This record shall contain only verified information of educational importance and may be used only for the benefit, promotion, or welfare of the student. All material in each student's file shall be confidential and access thereto strictly limited as set forth in this policy.

Security of Records

A system for supervision, security, and protection of the records both during hours when school office is open and closed is in place at the school. This system shall designate a staff person to be responsible for student record maintenance and access in accord with these policies. All school personnel shall receive periodic training with regard to the implementation of these policies with particular emphasis upon rights of privacy for students and parents. All cumulative records for students who have graduated or left school shall be maintained in the school for a period of time that follows State law.

Parent and Student Access to Records

Either parent or the legal guardian of a student under 18 shall be allowed to inspect and review the student's cumulative record. When a student reaches 18 the parent or guardian's right to review and inspect the student's record is terminated, and the student or former student shall then be allowed to inspect and review his own record. In the case of a divorce or separation, both parents retain their right of access to student records unless the custodian has been served with a court order extinguishing such rights. A copy of any such court order shall be maintained with the student's records.

School officials shall reply to reasonable requests for explanations of material contained in student records and shall provide copies of such records, if necessary. Requests to review student records should be made to the office of the Superintendent.

Requests for Amendment of Records

Parents of students under 18 or students over 18 may request amendments to portions of student records that they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or maintained in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student. All such requests shall be considered by the Superintendent who shall determine

the validity of the challenged data and grant or deny the request. If the request is denied, the person making it shall be so informed and notified of his or her right to appeal the decision.

If such appeal is made, the Superintendent will hold a due process hearing. The parent or student making the appeal will be given reasonable advance notice of the time and place of such hearing. At the hearing, the person making the appeal may be represented by counsel and be given a full and fair opportunity to present pertinent evidence. If the person making the appeal elects to be represented by counsel, sufficient advance notice must be given to allow the school to be similarly represented.

Within 15 days of such hearing, the hearing officer shall make a written decision, based solely on evidence presented at the hearing, which includes a summary of such evidence and the reasons for the decision.

If the decision is unfavorable to the person making the appeal, such person shall be informed of his right to insert into the education records in question a statement commenting upon the contested data and/or setting forth grounds for disagreeing with the decision to retain it. Such statement shall become part of the record in question so long as the disputed data is maintained and shall be disclosed to any party to whom the disputed data is disclosed.

Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information from Student Education Records

Except as provided below, written consent of a parent or guardian of a student under 18 or of a student or former student over 18 is required before personally identifiable data from a student's record may be disclosed to any person. Such written consent must include a specification of the records to be disclosed, the purpose(s) of the disclosure, and the party or parties to whom disclosure may be made. Upon request, the person requesting such disclosure shall be given a copy of the material to be disclosed. Whenever personally identifiable data from a student record is disclosed, the party to whom it is disclosed must be notified that the information is confidential and shall not be re-disclosed to third parties without consent of the parent or guardian of a student under 18 or the student or former student if over 18.

Personal, identifiable information concerning students may be disclosed without consent as set forth below:

1. To professional staff of the school that has a need for such information arising out of their duties. Whenever the educational need of the staff member requesting access to a student record is not clear to the records custodian, the custodian should consult with the principal before granting access to a student's records.
2. When required by court order or lawfully issued subpoena. However, before releasing student records under court order or subpoena, reasonable efforts must be made to notify the parent or student, as appropriate, that the information is to be released.
3. To officials of another school or school system in which the student seeks or intends to enroll upon receipt of a written request for the transfer of student education records from such officials. Upon request the parent or student as appropriate shall be given a copy of all records transferred.
4. To Federal and State officials as provided in the Family Educational Rights Act of 1972 and regulations promulgated there under. Any such disclosures must be cleared with the Superintendent.

5. To appropriate parties in the case of an emergency when disclosure is required to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons. In determining whether to disclose data under such circumstances, the following factors must be taken into account:
 - a. The seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or others;
 - b. The need for the information to meet the emergency;
 - c. The capacity of the persons to whom the information is to be released to deal with the emergency; and
 - d. The extent to which time is of the essence in dealing with the emergency.
6. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. In addition, federal laws require the School to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents or eligible students have advised the School in writing that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent.

The School has designated the following information as directory information:

- **Name**
- **Address**
- **Telephone number**
- **Email address**
- **Photo**
- **Athletic information**
- **Honor roll status**
- **Grade level**
- **Activities and clubs**
- **Awards**

If there are certain items the School has chosen to designate as directory information that you do not want disclosed from your child's education records, without your prior written consent, please send an e-mail identifying the information you do not want disclosed and the student's name to the Superintendent. This e-mail must be sent within 30 days of enrolling in GACHS.

Change of Address

Parents are required to inform the school of any changes in address, telephone numbers, email addresses, or other contact information. Please inform the school counselor immediately of any such changes.

Official Transcripts

Official transcripts are available to agencies and institutions that submit a formal request and will reflect the student's current academic status. Agencies and institutions can request an official transcript from the school's Registrar. Parents and students can also request official transcripts. Parents and students can request an official transcript through their school counselor, who will notify the Registrar's Office. All transcripts, official and unofficial, are issued by the Registrar. Transcript requests will be fulfilled within seven to ten business days.

Unofficial Transcripts

An unofficial transcript indicates the courses, grades, and credits for the student's work completed and/or in progress. Parents and students can request an unofficial transcript at any time to ensure that all student course work has been accurately recorded. Parents and students can request an unofficial transcript through their school counselor, who will notify the Registrar's Office. All transcripts, official and unofficial, are issued by the Registrar. Transcript requests will be fulfilled within seven to ten business days.

Annual Notice of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

GACHS protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its eligible, thought to be eligible, and protected handicapped students (if not protected by **IDEA**) in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and implementing regulations as well as **IDEA** and its implementing regulations.

Education records are records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or by a party acting for the agency.

"Educational agency," for purposes of this notice, means GACHS. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records, which include but are not limited to:

- a. Personally identifiable information is confidential information that includes but is not limited to the student's name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student's family, and personal information or personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable.
- b. Directory information is information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records:

Parents have the right to inspect and review a child's education record. GACHS will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or any due process hearing, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the school principal or other designated school official. Parents have the right to a response from the school to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While GACHS cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.

If parents think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing

and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. GACHS will decide whether to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing of its decision.

If GACHS refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

GACHS will inform parents when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to a child. Such information must be destroyed at the request of the parents. Parents have a right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed. However, a permanent record of a student's name, address, and telephone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without the limitation. "Destruction" of records means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable.

The school will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

Parents have the right to consent or refuse to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Consent means: the parent (s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time, information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school, supervisor, teacher, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); state agency representative, person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Directory information may be released without parent consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information.

Upon written request, GACHS discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by GACHS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- **Consent**, before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- **Receive**, notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

- **Inspect**, upon request and before administration or use –
 1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

GACHS will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. GACHS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. GACHS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the

specific activity or survey. GACHS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

*Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202*

Asbestos Management Plan

All public schools are required to provide the parents of their students a notification of its Asbestos Management Plan on an annual basis. This section of the Parent Student Handbook serves as that annual notification. GACHS Asbestos Management Plan can be requested by contacting the school headquarters.

Student Information

Regular Contact

In addition to students maintaining a regular schedule of completing schoolwork, it is important for to maintain regularly scheduled communication between school staff, student, and their parents/guardians. The instructional staff will make regularly scheduled contact to students and parents via telephone and/or email. Both parents and students must make every effort to maintain consistent contact with the school.

Soon after a school counselor is assigned to them, the school counselor will contact the family to identify the preferred contact method (*e.g.*, phone, email, portal messaging, etc.). Should this preferred contact method change, students must notify both school counselor and teachers.

Students and parents are expected to provide GACHS with functioning email addresses and phone numbers. If there are changes to email addresses and phone numbers, parents and students are expected to inform their school counselor within 24 hours of the change, or the next school day. GACHS is not responsible for a failure of communication between school and home when current contact information is not provided, filters prevent the delivery of emails from GACHS staff, parent/student phones lack the ability to receive calls or receive voice mails, phones are disconnected or nonfunctioning, parent/student do not consistently check communication platforms, etc.

Parents are expected to check their email daily and respond to email that warrant a response within the next school day. Students are expected to check their school Messaging and Announcement tool as well as their email at least once a day and respond within the next school day. Parents and students are expected to respond to a voicemail left by a staff member within the next school day. All school staff, including administrators, are expected to respond to parents' and students' communications within the next school day.

Daily Computer Activity

Students are required to check their school Messaging system daily and respond to their school Messages and messages in a timely manner, within 24 hours if possible, or the next school day. Students and parents must log into the school's site daily for Announcements and attendance.

Mastery Tiers

Teacher checks student data once a week to update mastery interventions/tiers.

- Tier 1: >10% complete, Overall Grade below 70%.
- Tier 2: >15% complete Overall Grade below 70% and the Tier 1 intervention already took place.
- Tier 3: >20% complete Overall Grade below 70% and the Tier 2 intervention already took place.
- Tier 4: >25% complete Overall Grade below 70% and the Tier 3 intervention already took place.

De-escalation: If a student raises their grade to 70% or higher and maintains their good grade for two weeks, teacher may remove the tier alert.

Pacing Tiers

Teacher checks student data once a week to update pacing interventions/tiers.

- Tier 1: More than 10% behind.
- Tier 2: More than 15% behind and the pacing Tier 1 intervention already took place.
- Tier 3: More than 20% behind and the pacing Tier 2 intervention already took place.
- Tier 3 Follow-up: More than 25% behind pace and the pacing Improvement plan is in place.

De-escalation: If a student gets back on pace and maintains their good pacing for two weeks, teacher may remove the tier alert.

Review the Attendance section of the Handbook for more information on attendance expectations.

Grading Scale

The school's grading scale and grade point average calculations is outlined in the table below. Regular courses will be based on a 4-point scale, while AP and Dual Enrollment courses will be weighted on a 5-point scale. Students that earn an F in a class do not receive any credit for that class. GACHS does not rank students by class. As a result, GACHS students do not qualify for any scholarship that is based solely on class rank.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Non-weighted Scale	Weighted Scale (AP & Dual Enrollment)
A	100-90%	4.0	5.0
B	89-80%	3.0	4.0

C	79-70%	2.0	3.0
F	69% & below	0.0	0.0

Grade Improvements

Students are permitted to retake any Unit Exam that they have failed. The higher score earned from the two attempts is automatically recorded in the grade book and the lower score removed (not averaged). If a student needs to retake a failed weekly quiz, his/her success coach will contact the grader and ask to have the quiz reset after discussing the need with the student.

When the EOC is required of dually enrolled students, scores will be counted as follows:

- The college instructor must issue a numeric grade for the student. A letter grade may also be issued, but the high school must receive a numeric score for the course.
- The college issued grade will be used on the college transcript.
- For high school credit, the course grade will be determined using the State Board approved calculation as defined in State Board Rule 160-4-2-.13.

The school academic requirements are based on a minimum of 180 days, with an additional 10 days added to the end of each semester as “grace periods” for completing semester requirements, extending the school calendar to 200 instructional days. This gives students 20 days of flexibility surrounding the school calendar. To ensure that students may complete their coursework within 200 instructional days, they have access to their course content 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Therefore, they may complete assignments on weekends, holidays, or Professional Learning (non-teacher contact) days if they choose to do so.

Students are encouraged to assess their progress and performance consistently in relation to the school calendar so that they can make adequate progress toward graduation. It is strongly recommended that students use staff resources and guidelines when planning their weeks.

Parents and students are expected to inform their and success coach of any technology issues they are experiencing that may impact the student’s ability to complete their work in a timeline manner. Teachers and success coaches will work with students to make adjustments to due dates when technology issues persist. Parents and students must make all efforts to resolve technology issues as quickly as possible.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic work. Examples of plagiarizing in an online course include, but are not limited to:

- Using unauthorized aids on an assignment, essay, quiz, or test; having someone, other than the student, complete an assignment, essay, quiz, or test; submitting another person’s work; or rescheduling a deadline on a false excuse.
- Submitting the same work for more than one course or assignment without prior written approval from the teacher(s).
- Using copyrighted material without appropriate citation or copying software or media files (such as music, movies, etc.) without permission.

- Destroying, tampering, or altering another student’s work to impede academic progress.
- Signing in to a live session for another student who is not present and/or leaving a session without logging off or without indicating that you have “stepped away.”

To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks, or by appropriate indentation, and must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline. Acknowledgment is also required when material from any source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. Information that is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be cited; however, the sources of all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, other materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography.

Sometimes, plagiarism can be a subtle issue. Students should be encouraged to discuss any questions about what constitutes plagiarism with the faculty member teaching the course. All instructional staff are required to post an announcement on the plagiarism policy in their course. The educators responsible for monitoring the student’s coursework can help to clarify any confusion concerning the topic of plagiarism.

- **First Offense:** Teacher sends snapshot proof of plagiarism on plagiarized content back to the student with cc to the parent, reminds the student of consequences, and offers the opportunity to redo the assignment **as long as course deadlines permit**. The parent and student will be reminded that another offense in this course will result in a zero without an opportunity to redo the assignment.
- **Second Offense (in the same course):** Teacher will request that the school counselor schedule a conference with the parent and student. The plagiarized assignment is assessed a zero grade without opportunity to redo the assignment. The student and parent will submit a signed contract acknowledging their understanding that a third offense will result in a zero for the course.
- **Third Offense:** Student will be locked out of the course. The Chief Academic Officer will schedule a conference call with the student and parent to notify them that a zero will be assessed for the course.

Note: Repeat plagiarism offenses by the same student in the same course or in multiple courses are taken very seriously and could result in expulsion from the School.

Schedule Changes and Dropping Courses

Changes will be made for the following reasons only: the wrong level of a course, the student did not pass the prerequisite for a course, student does not have enough classes, or student is missing a required class from the schedule. Available space in the desired class must be present at the time of the request.

Students may drop a course during the first 15 school days that they are enrolled in the course with no penalty for dropping. The course grade will not be placed on the transcript. If a student wishes to drop a course after that point, a WP (Withdraw Pass) or WF (Withdraw Fail) will be placed on the transcript depending on their grade at the time of the request, which will include zeroes for any assignments not

completed by the date of the withdrawal. After the 25th day of the semester the student will receive an F on the transcript for the dropped course. Requests for course and schedule changes should be made through the student's school counselor.

Graduation Ceremony

Students must meet all graduation credit and State testing requirements in order to participate in commencement/graduation ceremonies. They must also satisfy all other school requirements and comply with all school policies. They must return all school property at least 48 hours before commencement. All school fees must be paid in full to participate in the graduation ceremony as well.

It is the policy of the GACHS Board of Directors that only those seniors who meet all of the above requirements before the graduation date may participate in the commencement ceremony. There is no option to march in the ceremony, receive an empty diploma case, and make up the requirements later. There are no exceptions to this policy. They can arrange to receive their diploma by mail or pick it up in the school office when they have complied with all requirements. If a student requests an additional diploma, GACHS may impose a reprint fee.

All students scheduled to graduate during Winter or Spring Graduation will be assigned a graduation fee, which will help offset the school's cost associated with the graduation ceremony and event(s). This fee will include the cost of the student's cap and gown. Twelfth grade students who withdraw before the graduation ceremony, do not graduate due to their own action or lack of action (i.e., neglect to attend State testing, incomplete coursework, etc.), or choose not to participate in the graduation ceremony after having paid fees will not be refunded their fee payment. The school will notify all potential graduates of the time and place of the commencement ceremony within a reasonable amount of time.

Student Progress

At GACHS, students, parents, and school staff must work together towards academic progress. Students are expected to complete all assignments promptly according to curriculum instructions and in a manner consistent with all school policies. This amount of work usually equates to approximately 30 – 40 hours per week. Parents must monitor and assist students daily.

Members of the instructional staff are available by email or phone as needed for assistance. If students prefer, they can arrange a personal visit with the student's school counselor at the school office. Additionally, as required by school policy, school counselors communicate with students and parents on a consistent basis to develop goals, monitor progress, and plan for the future.

Review the Attendance section of the Handbook for more information on attendance and progress expectations.

The instructional staff will intervene if a student does not:

- Fulfill assignments on a regular and consistent basis.
- Communicate as required on a regular basis with instructional staff.

State Required Assessments

All public-school students are required by the Georgia Department of Education to participate in the State Assessments, and all other assessments mandated by the state. This includes, but is not limited to, ACCESS for ELLs testing to determine English proficiency for English language learners, Georgia Alternate

Assessment (GAA) for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and the Georgia Milestones End of Course (EOC).

There are three main administrations of the EOC: Winter, Spring, and Summer. GACHS students are required to participate in all state required assessments listed above that apply their grade or language status. GACHS will make reasonable efforts to minimize the impact that travel time and cost may have on a student and their family.

Students will take an end-of-course assessment in the following courses:

- **Ninth Grade Literature and Composition**
- **American Literature and Composition**
- **Coordinate Algebra**
- **Analytic Geometry**
- **Algebra**
- **Geometry**
- **Physical Science**
- **Biology**
- **United States History**
- **Economics/Business/Free Enterprise**

Milestone Exam Credit Policy

Students enrolled in any of the ten core courses identified by the State Board of Education are required to participate in the Georgia Milestones EOC measure at the end of each course. The End of Course (EOC) measures serve as the final exam, and comprises 20% of a student's final course grade. The final grade in the course will be calculated using the teacher grade as 80% and the EOC score as 20% of the final grade. Students must earn a 70 or higher as the final course grade to pass the course and earn course credit. Students who repeat an EOC course, would participate in the EOC at the end of the repeated course given that the EOC serves as the final exam. Schools that award 0.5 credit at the end of the first semester, and 0.5 credit at the end of the second semester, should average the EOC in as 20% of the final second semester course grade. If a student is not present for an EOC administration (main or mid-month), the system may issue an Incomplete and allow the student to test during a future testing window (main or mid-month). This Incomplete may remain as the student's course grade until their testing requirement is fulfilled. If, after attempts have been made to have the student test in a future window, the student does not take the EOC, the course grade shall reflect that the student did not participate in the test. The system may issue a zero as 20% of the final course grade.

EOC Retest

If a student fails an initial Georgia Milestones EOC with a grade conversion score below 80 and participates in remediation via intervention and tutoring, they have the option of participating in a Retest administration. Per the Georgia Department of Education, a student may retake a test only once per academic year, and the higher of the two test scores stands. In addition, a score of 80 or higher can award a student credit for the Milestone Course, and change a student's final grade.

Question: Do you have to retake the course in order to retake the assessment?

Course Outcome	Test Outcome	Retest Requirements
Student Passes Course	Student Passes Test	Retest Not Offered
Student Passes Course	Student Fails Test	Retest Offered
Student Fails Course	Student Passes Test with a score of 80 or higher	Receive credit for course, and retest not offered
Student Fails Course	Student Passes Test with a score below 80	Retake Course and Retest
Student Fails Course	Student Fails Test	Retake Course and Retest

Milestone Administration	Retest Eligible
December (Winter Administration)	March (Winter Mid-Month)
May (Spring Administration)	September (Fall Mid-Month)
July (Summer Administration)	September (Fall Mid-Month)

Dual Enrollment/Move on When Ready (MOWR)

Students who are dually enrolled in a post-secondary course are required to take the EOC. However, a student shall be exempt from taking the end-of-course assessment for a core subject course if he or she earns a post-secondary credit in that course through Dual Enrollment/Move On When Ready (MOWR) pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-149.2 or 20-2-161.3. Postsecondary course grades earned, in this situation, shall be used in the state accountability system. This exemption does NOT apply to the following courses: Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Coordinate Algebra, and Biology. All students enrolled in Ninth Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Coordinate Algebra, and Biology must take the EOC regardless of the course grade awarded by the post-secondary institution. Further, Geometry and Analytic Geometry are not allowable as Dual Enrollment/MOWR options; as a result, students enrolled in these courses must take the EOC as well. The table below summarizes the courses and that are, and those that are not, eligible for this exemption:

Required of All Standards	Allowed Exemption
9th Grade Literature & Composition	American Literature & Composition
Coordinate Algebra / Algebra I	Physical Science
Analytic Geometry / Geometry	US History
Biology	Economics

When the EOC is required of dually enrolled students, scores will be counted as follows:

- The college instructor must issue a numeric grade for the student. A letter grade may also be issued, but the high school must receive a numeric score for the course.
- The college issued grade will be used on the college transcript.
- For high school credit, the course grade will be determined using the State Board approved calculation as defined in State Board Rule 160-4-2-.13.

To ensure high schools are not negatively impacted, use the college-issued grade in the CCRPI for remaining EOC-related courses, *for example*:

A = Distinguished Learner

B = Proficient Learner

C = Proficient Learner
D/F = Beginning Learner

Student Assessments and Testing

The school recognizes that the regular assessment of student progress is an integral and essential component of the teaching/learning process. Regular and systematic measures of learning are useful guides for parents, teachers, administrators, students, and community members as indicators of individual and group attainment of state and district standards. All assessments shall be designed so that the results are used by educators to evaluate instructional practices and to initiate appropriate educational support for students. Accommodations shall be made in tests or testing procedures based on the needs of students and as allowed and appropriate for the test. Assessments shall provide an opportunity for students to be measured. Student assessment data is used to establish and revise the school's goals for improving student learning. Assessment results will be reported to the state, parents and community as appropriate.

Student assessment and testing shall be carried out in school in order to:

- Improve the instructional program.
- Assess the progress of individual students in relation to standards.
- Assess the progress of the students within the curriculum.

Students will be assessed in a comprehensive system developed in support of state requirements and the school's mission and vision statements. Assessments will include those required by the state and others developed or selected by a team of teachers, parents, students, community members, and administrators, as appropriate, and reviewed prior to use with students. Assessments will be subject to periodic review and revision.

No written or oral test, survey, questionnaire, or examination will be used to elicit personal beliefs or practices of a student or his parents as to sex or religion except with the written consent of the custodian parent(s) or guardian(s) having legal custody of the child. Parents or legal guardians of students who want to become acquainted with the nature of tests and their uses in helping children can receive that information by contacting their school counselor.

GACHS may administer a quarterly benchmark assessment in the EOC subjects. These benchmark assessments are completed online. Participation is an expected and required part of a student's academic progress. The results of these assessments provide information on student growth, and identify areas where teachers can support students.

Extracurricular and Interscholastic Activities

Due to the inherent challenges of serving a statewide student body, traditional extracurricular activities such as interscholastic sports, dances, and prom are not offered by GACHS. Students are encouraged to contact their homeschool associations, recreation departments, and other local entities that offer opportunities in their geographic region.

Field Trips

The school offers field trips to a variety of attractions throughout the school year. These trips, which may be academic or social in nature are extracurricular activities and are not mandatory. Students are

encouraged to attend whenever possible. Students who plan to attend a specific event must make a prior reservation and provide a completed permission slip, unless otherwise specified. Parents are responsible for any costs incurred while attending a GACHS-sponsored event, including, but not limited to transportation, entrance fees, and meals.

Students must meet the following criteria before they are permitted to attend a field trip:

- The student must comply with all school policies.
- The student must not be under any conduct restrictions.

Students are expected to dress appropriately. It is unsuitable for students to wear immodest, suggestive, unclean, vulgar, obscene, or distracting attire.

Students should remember that when they are on a field trip or in any other public place in a school-related capacity, they are representatives of the school community. They should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times, as their conduct is a direct reflection on themselves, their families, and their school. Students must comply with all school policies and must follow the direction of the school staff who is supervising the event.

Visitors Policy

The school welcomes students and parents to visit the school headquarters and regional Graduation Achievement Centers during the school year Monday-Thursday and specific hours for Friday visits. Monday-Thursday visitation hours are between 8 AM and 5PM, Friday's hours are between 8 AM and noon. Visitors requesting to meet with a specific staff member are required to make an appointment in advance to ensure that the person they have requested to see will be available in the building when they arrive. Visitors are required to check in at the front desk with proper ID. Free parking validation is provided to all guests of GACHS. The school is permitted to regulate visitors and conduct for the maintenance of public order and the safety of the school community.

Availability of Teachers/Staff

The school strives to provide excellent customer service to students and parents. If the staff member contacted cannot answer your questions or provide needed information, the inquiry will be referred to someone who can answer. Email can be sent at any time, and all email will be answered as soon as possible, but should always be acknowledged within the next school day.

Books and Related Materials

All books and course materials, provided by the school, are the property of the school. The school may mail necessary materials to students specific to the courses in which they are enrolled. Students/parents are responsible for the replacement costs of any lost or damaged books or materials. Students/parents should return all books and materials immediately when the year's coursework is completed. If the student withdraws or transfers from a course, the parent must contact the school for specific instructions on returning course materials.

Restitution of Instructional Resources

The accountability for textbooks, media materials, other instructional materials, and portable equipment, including but not limited to, laptops, camcorders, digital cameras, cell phones, pagers, PDAs, and PCs, purchased through public and/or school funds (instructional resources) is the responsibility of

the person to whom these items are issued. For students, this means the student and his/her parent/guardian; restitution for instructional resources that are not returned or are not in a condition suitable for continued use shall be the responsibility of the person to whom the item was issued to reimburse GACHS the replacement cost of the items.

Grievance Policy

Primary resolution of disciplinary and other matters are handled by GACHS administration and the parent. The first avenue to address concerns should be through direct contact with the person closest to the issue in question. In addition, any individual or individuals may bring complaints or concerns to the Superintendent of the GACHS School for any reason. The Superintendent will work to fairly resolve conflicts as quickly as possible. Any formal complaint brought before the Superintendent should be made in writing and will be addressed within a reasonable period of time, no more than ten days, from the time the complaint is made. If the Superintendent is unable to resolve the complaint to the individual's or group's satisfaction, or if the complaint is about the Superintendent, the individual(s) may bring the complaint before the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors.

It is the policy of the GACHS Board that these complaints must be formally submitted to the Governance Committee of the Board in writing at least five business days in advance of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting in order to be heard at that meeting. Complaints not submitted in this timely fashion will be heard at the subsequent meeting of the Board. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responding at or prior to its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board, as necessary, will direct the Superintendent or other party it delegates to act upon the complaint and report to the Board. The Governance Committee will respond in writing. Complainants will have the opportunity to appeal this decision to the entire board if they are not satisfied with the determination. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level, the complainant has the right to request review of the decision by the Georgia Department of Education. The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the Superintendent's decision and include a complete statement of the reasons supporting the appeal.

The complaint must be addressed to:
Georgia Department of Education
Office of Legal Services
2052 Twin Towers East
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Board retains the right and responsibility to meet in Executive Session, consistent with applicable law, to discuss sensitive issues as needed.

Graduation Achievement Charter High School Federal Programs Complaint Procedures under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Grounds for a Complaint

Any individual, organization, or agency ("complainant") may file a written complaint with Graduation Achievement Charter High School (GACHS) if that individual, organization, or agency believes and alleges that GACHS is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Complaint Form for Federal Programs Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 can be found in the Appendix of this handbook on page 63. The complaint must allege a

violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date the complaint is received, unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

Federal Programs for Which Complaints Can Be Filed

1. Title I, Part A, Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
2. Title I, Part C, Education of Migrant Children
3. Title I, Part D, Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
4. Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
5. Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education Through Technology
6. Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement
7. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1: Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities
8. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1: Section 6111: State Assessment Program
9. Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children
10. Title X, Part C, The McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987

Investigations

All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially. The investigation shall include appropriate steps to determine what occurred and to take actions reasonably calculated to end any reported misconduct and prevent such misconduct from occurring again. The student and his/her parent(s) shall be informed that appropriate actions were taken and shall be advised how to report any subsequent problems.

Non-Discrimination Statement

School is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs or employment practices as required by Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. No person shall be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, any service; or be subjected to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. Please direct all inquiries or complaints regarding these policies or practices to the Human Resources Department at (844) 776-8678.

Opt-Out Provisions

Parents of minor students, and students of legal age, may opt out of the following by signing and dating relevant sections of this page, then returning it via email, fax, or U.S. mail to the school:

Sex Education

Health and physical education instruction may include sex education. I do not wish for

_____ My student, _____

_____ Myself (if a student of legal age)

to participate in this portion of the health and physical education curriculum.

Parent/adult student signature

Date

Provision of Information to the Military

Under state and federal law, members of the military have specified access to high school campuses and information to the same extent that prospective employers and representatives of higher education may have. For purposes of recruitment, the military may request from the school and receive the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of students age 17 and 18, unless the parent/adult student has informed the school that this information should not be released.

I do not wish for information about

_____ My student, _____

_____ Myself (if a student of legal age)

to be released to the military.

Parent/adult student signature

Date

The School is not responsible for omissions in the handbook. The Superintendent reserves the right to amend the contents, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, and reissue this book at any time. Final authority on all matters rests with the school administration and Board of Directors when applicable. It is the responsibility of the student and parents/guardian to review this student handbook periodically.

****PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM****



2017-2018 Parent and Student Handbook Signature Page

Please sign below acknowledging that you have received and read the Parent and Student Handbook. Please return this form to your GACHS Center Director. Virtual students should return this form to the Virtual Program Manager at Marie.Laukhuf@gradgeorgia.com, or by mailing it to Marie Laukhuf at Graduation Achievement Charter High School, 100 Edgewood Avenue NE, Suite 915, Atlanta, GA 30303. Thank you.

I have received a copy of the 2017–18 Parent and Student Handbook. The contents of the handbook (including information on attendance, discipline, extracurricular activities, responsible use of technology, and rights under FERPA) have been reviewed with me by school officials. I understand my rights and responsibilities as a student enrolled in Graduation Achievement Charter High School and consent to the terms of the Student and Parent Handbook.

_____ Date _____
Student Name

I acknowledge receipt of the Student and Parent Handbook for my student. I have reviewed the contents of the handbook with my student and consent to the terms of the Student and Parent Handbook.

_____ Date _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX

**COMPLAINT FORM FOR FEDERAL PROGRAMS UNDER THE
THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OF 2015 (ESSA)**

Name (Complainant):	
Mailing Address:	
Phone Number (home): Phone Number (work):	
Agency/agencies complaint is being filed against:	
Date on which violation occurred:	
Statement that the Georgia Department of Education, local school district, other agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program (include citation to the Federal statute or regulation) (attach additional sheets if necessary):	
The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (attach additional sheets if necessary):	
List the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.	
Has a complaint has been filed with any other government agency? If so, provide the name of the agency.	
Please attach/enclose copies of all applicable documents supporting your position.	
Signature of Complainant:	Date:
Mail this form to: Georgia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement Federal Programs Division 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE 1854 Twin Tower East Atlanta, GA 30334	