GCA District Student and Parent Handbook

2025-2026 School Year

This handbook provides general guidance for parents and Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) students. GCA is a charter school subject to all Georgia public schools' laws, rules, and regulations. The charter school guidelines for GCA and the GCA District Student and Parent Handbook are available for all stakeholders on our website: georgiacyber.org.

Last amended 6/16/2025

Welcome to Georgia Cyber Academy!

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WELCOME AND SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Welcome to the 2025 - 2026 Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) school year. GCA is focused on student achievement and building a strong community among our students, parents, faculty, and staff. Working together, we will help all students at GCA rise up, aim high, and soar!

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Georgia Cyber Academy operates a schoolwide Title I Educational Program serving, on average, approximately 10,000 students per year. Our program is available to any student who resides in Georgia and typically has a student population that encompasses every county in the state. Our goals for this school year are for students to build a firm academic foundation from which they can move forward to the next grade level successfully or graduate and to create a strong school community. Our rigorous curriculum, coupled with supportive school programs, is designed with these goals in mind. Our entire faculty and staff are eager to support our students on their journey to academic excellence and assist students in reaching their goals.

ACCREDITATION

Georgia Cyber Academy is accredited by Cognia (formerly AdvancED). Accreditation means that our programs and curriculum meet rigorous standards recognized by colleges, universities, and employers.

DISTRICT STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Providing support to students and families is a priority at Georgia Cyber Academy, and every faculty and staff member is focused on helping students succeed. The District Student and Parent Handbook is one of our many forms of support. This handbook contains important calendars, contact information, and district and school-specific policies and descriptions of the various programs offered at GCA. Please read this handbook and become familiar with the contents.

MISSION STATEMENT

Georgia Cyber Academy is a K through 12 charter school committed to providing students with a flexible, high-quality, and interactive virtual learning environment.

VISION STATEMENT

Through the collaboration of all stakeholders in our learning community, Georgia Cyber Academy aims to create a nationally recognized, high-quality learning environment that develops and empowers our students to become career or college-ready leaders in society.

SCHOOL BELIEFS

Georgia Cyber Academy…

- Is deeply committed to the success and welfare of our students, families, and their communities.
- Engages students in rigorous academic standards through a virtual connection.
- Is committed to individualized learning paths and the growth of each student.
- Is constantly evolving and changing to better meet the needs of our students and families.

We believe…

- Quality education begins with a partnership between the student, parents, and teachers.
- All students are on different paths. We meet them where they are and support them in their endeavors.
- High standards and rigor lead to student academic success.
- We are accountable for student success.
- We must adapt to our students' needs.

The Learning Environment Is…

- Virtual
- Rigorous
- Data-Driven
- Connected
- Engaging
- Individualized

Our students are…

- Unique
- Engaged
- Motivated
- Innovative
- Inspiring
- Capable

Our teachers are…

- Student Centered
- Caring
- Engaging
- Data Driven
- Adaptive
- Progressive

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTORY

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent: Michael Kooi, mkooi@georgiacyber.org
Chief Academic Officer: Dr. Ahoba Arthur, aarthur@georgiacyber.org
Chief Financial Officer: Andre Hopewell, ahopewell@georgiacyber.org
Operations and Compliance District Director: Jennifer Mitchell, jmitchell@georgiacyber.org

INSTRUCTIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Director: Dr. Deirdre Daniels, ddaniels@georgiacyber.org
Primary Grades K-2 Principal: Ingrid Bailey, ibailey@georgiacyber.org
Elementary Grades 3-5 Principal: Jamie Burke, jburke@georgiacyber.org
Middle Grades 6-8 Principal: George Wilkerson, gwilkerson@georgiacyber.org
Secondary Grades 9-12 Principal: Bekah Zimmerman, rzimmerman@georgiacyber.org
Instructional Support Services Director (504, ESOL, MTSS, PBIS, Speech): Kascha Adeleye, kadeleye@georgiacyber.org
Special Education Director: J. Brock Tarno, jtarno@georgiacyber.org
Special Education Instruction Assistant Director: Martell Shavers, mshavers@georgiacyber.org
Advanced & Gifted Program Assistant Director: Marchele Nelson, mnelson@georgiacyber.org
Assessment Manager: Kevin Goldberg, kgoldberg@georgiacyber.org

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Accountability Director: Dr. Audrey Lewis, alewis@georgiacyber.org
Counseling and Student Support Services Director: Amina Ross, aross@georgiacyber.org
Family Engagement Director: Michelda Watson, mwatson@georgiacyber.org
Federal Programs & Grants Director: Julie Ferrer, jferrer@georgiacyber.org
Transitional Student Liaison: Ja'Net Crayton, jcrayton@georgiacyber.org
Transitional Student Liaison: Michelle Dalton, mdalton@georgiacyber.org
Transitional Student Liaison: Sophia Sutherland, ssutherland@georgiacyber.org

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Communications, Marketing, and PR Director: Maria Blencowe, mblencowe@georgiacyber.org
District Registrar: Amber Rhodes, arhodes@georgiacyber.org
Technology Director: Rachel Gunn, rgunn@georgiacyber.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Chair: Kenneth Asher, ktennysonasher@georgiacyber.org
Alisha Birthá, abirtha@georgiacyber.org
John Brooks, jbrooks@georgiacyber.org
Dr. Brittny James, brjames@georgiacyber.org
Dr. Juliann Sergi McBrayer, jmcbrayer@georgiacyber.org
Mark Peevy, mpeevy@georgiacyber.org
Dr. Adria Welcher, awelcher@georgiacyber.org

For more information on the Georgia Cyber Academy Board of Directors, including meeting schedules, agendas and minutes please visit our website.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Stakeholder feedback and suggestions: feedback@georgiacyber.org
General Inquiries: info@georgiacyber.org
School culture initiatives and GCA community involvement inquiries: champ@georgiacyber.org
Enrollment inquiries: enrollment@georgiacyber.org
Attendance Questions: attendance@georgiacyber.org
Software feedback (including chrome extension and application requests): Student and Family Help Center
Curriculum or instructional platform issues (courses, Canvas, Class, Infinite Campus): Student and Family Help Center
Hardware issues and inquiries: call (404) 334-4790 Ext. 8
Testing (Milestones, AP, SAT, PSAT, Access, NWEA) inquiries: testing@georgiacyber.org
Student Records: records@georgiacyber.org
Special Education Records: specialeducationrecords@georgiacyber.org
Address Changes: Student and Family Help Center
Human Resources: gcahr@georgiacyber.org

More contacts can be found at: https://www.georgiacyber.org/contact-us

TRANSLATION SERVICES

Translation services are available. If you speak another language, language assistance services are available free of charge. Email translations@georgiacyber.org

English: If you speak another language, language assistance services are available free of charge. Email translations@georgiacyber.org

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Por favor de enviarme un correo electrónico translations@georgiacyber.org

Vietnamese: CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. translations@georgiacyber.org

Korean: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. translations@georgiacyber.org

Hindi: ◌ान द: य द आप हदी बोलत ह तो आपक ◌ि लए म◌ म भाषा सहायता सवाए उपल◌ ह translations@georgiacyber.org

Urdu: اگر آپ کوئی دوسری زبان بولتے ہیں تو، زبان کی امداد کی خدمات مفت دستیاب ہیں۔ translations@georgiacyber.org

Portuguese: Se você fala outro idioma, os serviços de assistência linguística estão disponíveis gratuitamente. translations@georgiacyber.org

Polish: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. translations@georgiacyber.org

Somali: Haddii aad ku hadasho luqad kale, adeegyada kaalmada luqadda waxaa lagu heli karaa bilaash. translations@georgiacyber.org

Bangla/Bengali/Bangali: আপিন যিদ অন◌ ◌েকানও ভাষায় কথা বেলন, ভাষা সহায়তা পিরেষবা◌ি◌ল ◌িবনামূেল◌ পাওয়া যায় translations@georgiacyber.org

Japanese: あなたが他の言語を話すならば、言語援助サービスは無料で利用可能です。E メール translations@georgiacyber.org

Arabic: ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم translations@georgiacyber.org اتصل

Microsoft Translator can be used to translate class sessions and presentations, group project conversations, documents, Zoom conferences, and real-time conversations. It can be added to a smartphone or tablet for free.

For students: https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/translator/education/for-students/
For parents: https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/translator/education/for-parents/

RIGHT TO KNOW

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

At Georgia Cyber Academy, we are very proud of our teachers. We feel they are ready for the coming school year and are prepared to help your child do their best in school.

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

1. Whether the student's teacher –
    a. Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
    b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived; and
    c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

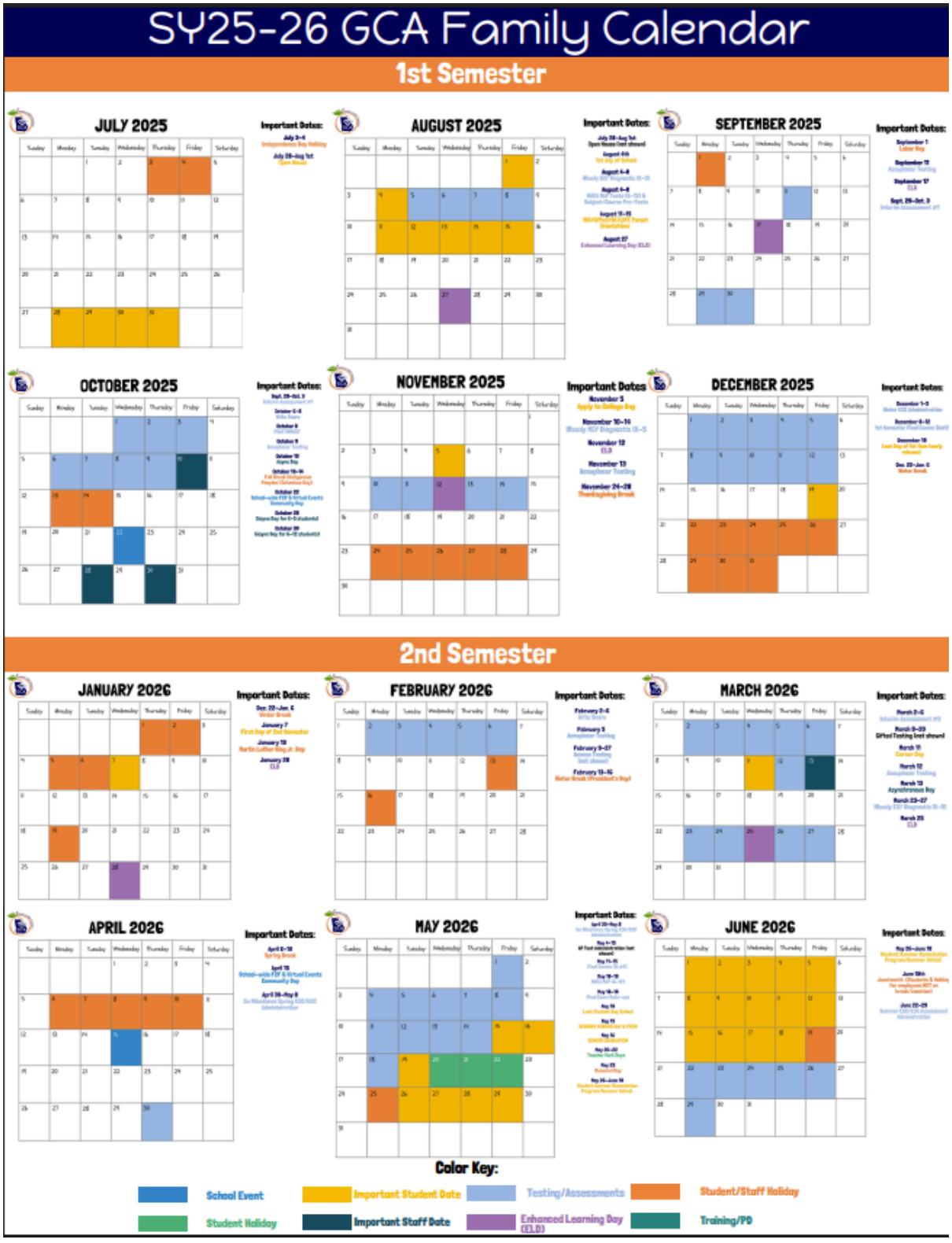
Please know that our staff is committed to helping your child reach his or her highest academic potential throughout their school career. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled and are providing quality instruction to your child.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teachers' qualifications, please contact Human Resources by email at gcahr@georgiacyber.org.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.

Sincerely, Michael Kooi
GCA Superintendent

2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR



https://www.georgiacyber.org/calendars

STUDENT ENROLLMENT NOTICE

Families who are new to GCA should understand the following as it relates to student enrollment:

1. All new families conditionally approved during the **open enrollment cycle** will have a **90-day grace period** from their student's start date to provide any required enrollment document that was not provided during enrollment.
    a. All new families conditionally approved for enrollment will have a **45-day grace period** from their student's start date if the family is enrolled for our **2nd Semester (Mid Year) enrollment cycle**.
2. Georgia Immunization Form 3231 must be provided and be up-to-date
    a. A 3231 Form is REQUIRED to be on file for all students.
    b. If the Georgia Immunization Form is not included in the enrollment application, this form must be provided by the deadline as outlined in the application approval letter.
        i. Georgia law allows for two types of immunization exemptions: medical and religious:
            1. A religious objection must be notarized and recorded on the Department of Public Health Form 2208.
            2. Medical objections are recorded on the Department of Public Health Form 3231 and are submitted annually.
                a. Medical exemptions are used only when a child has a medical condition that keeps them from being able to receive a specific vaccine(s), not all vaccines.
        ii. The Department of Health Refusal to Vaccinate Form #25-IMM-012E does not override or satisfy the requirement of the Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form.
        iii. Immunizations are still required for the virtual educational environment because students may interact at state testing, meet and greets, in-person events, competitions, graduation, awards functions, specialized educational service sessions, conferences, and field trips.
        iv. Immunizations or a waiver are required by law and are designed to keep Georgia students free from many debilitating and life-threatening diseases.
        v. Immunization Forms are obtained through your child's pediatrician, doctor, or medical provider at minimal to no cost. A copy can also be requested from the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services at 1-888-523-8076; FAX your request to 404-657-7496; or send an email to dph-gaimmreg@dph.ga.gov.
        vi. It is easier to get these forms at a routine doctor visit and just keep them in a file to upload each year. It is best practice to ask at the start of the appointment and obtain them before leaving the appointment.
        vii. Lead time is usually 10 days to 2 weeks if a copy of the form is not obtained at an annual well-child appointment and/or each time a child obtains a flu shot or new immunization.
        viii. Kindergarten and newly enrolling students are REQUIRED to submit a CURRENT Immunization Form to document that all required vaccines have been received.
            1. 'Current' means within 12 months of the start of school.
            2. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunization Form.

ix. 7th grade students are REQUIRED to submit a CURRENT Immunization Form to document that all required vaccines have been received.
    1. 'Current' means within 12 months of the start of school.
    2. Immunization Boosters are required for 7th grade enrollment.
    3. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunization Form.
x. Children 16 + years of age are required to have an updated Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 recorded with the school. GCA will extend a 90-day conditional enrollment to newly enrolled students.
    1. 'Updated' means within 12 months of the start of school.
    2. An updated Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 is required for children 16 + years of age.
    3. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunization Form.

3. Health Screening Georgia 3300 Form – Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental, and Nutrition Screening must be provided with all screenings stamped and signed by a physician.
    a. A 3300 Form is REQUIRED to be on file for all students.
    b. These documents are very important as a student's hearing, vision, nutritional requirements, and dental status may change from year to year which can drastically impact a student's ability to learn.
    c. **3300 Forms are obtained from a child's pediatrician, doctor, or medical provider at minimal to no cost.** (They will denote information from prior tests completed at a medical visit and/or screening. The screenings and/or tests may not be free depending on where they were obtained and/or your insurance plan.)
    d. It is easier to get these forms at a normal doctor visit and just keep them in a file to upload each year. It is best practice to ask at the start of the appointment and obtain them before leaving the appointment.
    e. Lead time is usually 10 days or 2 weeks if you do not obtain a copy at your annual well-child appointment and/or each time they get a flu shot or new immunization.
    f. More than one 3300 Form may be submitted if sections are filled out by multiple medical/healthcare/dental professionals. Most often parents/guardians submit two forms, one from their student's dentist and one from their student's doctor. However, you may submit up to four 3300 Forms to satisfy all sections of this item.
        i. A pediatrician, general doctor, or healthcare professional may fill out the vision, hearing, dental, and nutrition sections.
        ii. An optometrist or ophthalmologist may fill out just the vision section on a separate form.
        iii. An ENT (ear, nose, and throat doctor) or audiologist may fill out just the hearing section on a separate form.
        iv. A nutritionist may fill out just the nutrition section on a separate form.
        v. A dentist may fill out the dental section on a separate form.
    g. A child may be exempt from the Eye, Ear, Dental & Nutrition Screening 3300 Form due to religious practice. The parent/legal guardian must present a notarized statement stating that the required screening(s) conflict with the religious beliefs of the parent/legal guardian.

h. The 3300 Form is only required to be submitted annually for students who receive special program services. This form may be submitted at the point of entry into public school.

4. Scoliosis Screening Form 4400 must be provided with either physician screening results or parents decision to opt out.
    a. A 4400 Form is REQUIRED to be on file for all 6th and 8th grade students.
    b. Parent/guardian may furnish a properly executed Department of Health Form 4400 as early as the first day of 5th and no later than 90-days after the student begins 6th grade.
    c. Parent/guardian may submit a properly executed Form 4400 as early as the first day of 7th grade and no later than 90-days after the student begins the 8th grade.
        i. Parents/Guardians can choose not to have their student screened for scoliosis by selecting the opt-out option on Form 4400.
        ii. If a student is under the care of a physician, the parent/guardian should select the opt-out option within Form 4400
    d. A screening may be completed by a physician with an active Georgia license or a person working under the supervision of a physician with an active Georgia license, the local health department, and a licensed school nurse.
    e. All students who are enrolled at GCA in the 6th and 8th grade levels, a scoliosis screening form 4400 must be on file for each of the aforementioned grade levels.
5. Enrollment Compliance
    a. In order for a family to be in full compliance with the Enrollment and Records Department, they must:
        i. Provide all outstanding enrollment documents for the school year by the deadline date outlined in the conditional approval letter.
        ii. Provide all outstanding health documents, required by the Georgia Department of Health, that may expire within the school year. As a courtesy, the Enrollment and Records Department will send email reminders to all families with students whose documents remain outstanding.
            1. Families with medical exemption to immunization must provide GA 3231 Form each year to GCA to prevent non compliant status
        iii. Must reside in the state of Georgia, occupying a Georgia residence, for the full academic year. In case of emergencies that will require a family to be temporarily relocated to another state, families must communicate with the District Registrar prior to their departure and must return to Georgia within a reasonable amount of time.
            1. Georgia Cyber Academy serves students within the state of Georgia. Georgia Cyber Academy does not serve families outside the Georgia state lines.
            2. If a family moves out of state, they must communicate that to the District Registrar immediately to begin the withdrawal process.
            3. If a family has communicated with Georgia Cyber Academy staff that they are currently out of state, without prior notification or permission, Georgia Cyber Academy has the right to administratively withdraw their student.
        iv. If a family does not have the required enrollment documents on file for the school year, the entire family will be ineligible for re-registration until the required enrollment documents are received by Georgia Cyber Academy.
        v. If a family moves to another residence within the Georgia state lines, the family must

immediately provide the new address along with an updated and acceptable Proof of Residence to officially change their address in our system. Visit georgiacyber.org/parents/contact-information-changes for instructions.

vi. Students who are withdrawn for truancy within the school year are eligible to re-enroll if the withdrawal is within a current, active enrollment cycle. Re-enrollment steps include:
    1. Submitting a new enrollment application
    2. Submitting all required enrollment documents, including health forms that are required for the student.
    3. Completion of a Truancy Orientation Session
    4. Completion of a Truancy Orientation Quiz
    5. Signature of the Re-enrollment Contract

vii. Once all requirements are met, then previously truancy withdrawn students will be placed on district probation

viii. Enrolled McKenny Vento Families
    1. Verified McKenny Vento families are able enroll without required enrollment documents as stated in the McKenny Vento Act; however, legal guardians assume responsibility for providing the required enrollment documents for the school year by the deadline date outlined in the conditional approval letter. There may be documents (such as guardianship or signed residency affidavit) that will be asked after enrollment to help with our GCA Equipment process and to help staff outline clear understanding of legal guardian communication.
    2. McKenny Vento families must provide a proof of residence during GCA Annual Re-registration. (Transitional Liaisons are helpful during this time to share what GCA can accept as a proof of residence).
    3. For McKenny Vento families that do not have the required enrollment documentation on file for the school year, all students in the family will be ineligible for re-registration until those enrollment documents are received by Georgia Cyber Academy.
    4. McKenny Vento families must communicate with their transitional liaison at GCA when the McKenny Vento provision is no longer needed.

ANNUAL RE-REGISTRATION

To remain enrolled, re-registration is required.

During semester two, parents/guardians will be notified about the re-registration process. Parents/Guardians may indicate plans for their student(s) to either:

- re-register for the upcoming school year
- notify GCA of plans for their student to transfer to another education environment
- verify graduation status (for 12th grade seniors)

A legal guardian must respond and comply with all required documentation within the stipulated time frame to receive priority re-registration.

Failure to execute all requirements in a timely manner will result in the loss of your student's enrollment at GCA. After the re-registration window closes, students who are not re-registered and wish to return for the next school year will be directed to re-enter the New Student Enrollment process, beginning with entering student(s) into the GCA enrollment lottery. This can result in the student being waitlisted and potentially being unable to secure a seat for the next school year.

If re-registering for the next school year, then:

1. A Legal Guardian or currently enrolled Unaccompanied Youth **MUST** confirm their intent to remain enrolled with Georgia Cyber Academy by completing the required re-registration process for the next school year.
    a. GCA will only recognize a Legal Guardian or currently enrolled Unaccompanied Youth identified within the current student data record. Any change to guardianship status requires verification.
2. A Legal Guardian or currently enrolled Unaccompanied Youth must successfully complete the re-registration process by the given deadline.
3. Submit Annual Proof of Residency – REQUIRED. Proof of Residency (POR) must include acceptable documents listed on our Required Enrollment Documents page: https://www.georgiacyber.org/enrollment/required-enrollment-documents PLEASE NOTE: Proof of residency documentation requirements are subject to change.
    a. As a Georgia Public Charter School, and in accordance with the GCA Enrollment Policy, students enrolled at Georgia Cyber Academy must reside in the state of Georgia, physically occupying a residence. Any stays outside of the state of Georgia for events, i.e. vacation or a pre-approved study immersion experience, may result in an administrative student withdrawal; closing the student's enrollment with Georgia Cyber Academy. GCA reserves the right to require a current submitted POR record any time within the school-year.
    b. A notarized Affidavit of Residence Form accompanied by supporting documentation may be submitted when the legal guardian resides in the residence, but is not named in acceptable POR documentation. The POR must be in the name of the homeowner/renter or landlord recorded in the Affidavit of Residence Form.
    c. ***IMPORTANT: Computers, equipment, and materials WILL NOT be shipped out of state.***
4. A parent/guardian government issued photo identification is required of at least one listed parent/guardian. Acceptable parent/guardian photo identification include: state issued driver's license, state identification card, fishing/hunting license or passport.
5. Please submit the student's most recent Immunization Form (Form 3231)
    a. All re-registering students have 90-days from the first day of school to satisfy health records requirements: Please submit the student's most recent Immunization Form (Form 3231) if an update has occurred within the year or if the record remains outstanding.
    b. Georgia law allows for two types of immunization exemptions: medical and religious:
        i. A religious objection must be notarized and recorded within the DPH Form 2208.
        ii. Medical objections are recorded within the Department of Public Health Form 3231 and are submitted annually.
            1. Medical exemptions are used only when a child has a medical condition that keeps him from being able to receive a specific vaccine(s), not all vaccines.
    c. The Department of Health Refusal to Vaccinate Form #25-IMM-012E does not override or

satisfy the requirement of the Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form.

d. Immunizations are still required for the virtual educational environment because students may interact at state testing, meet and greets, in-person events, competitions, graduation, awards functions, specialized educational service sessions, conferences, and on field trips.
e. Immunizations or a waiver are required by law and are designed to keep Georgia students free from many debilitating and life-threatening diseases.
f. Immunization Forms are obtained through your child's pediatrician, doctor, or medical provider at minimal to no cost. You may also request a copy from the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services at 1-888-523-8076; FAX your request to 404-657-7496; or send an email to dph-gaimmreg@dph.ga.gov.
g. It is easier to get these forms at your normal doctor visit and just keep them in a file to upload each year. Ask at the start of your appointment and don't forget them before you leave.
h. Lead time is usually 10 days to 2 weeks if you do not get a copy of the form at your child's annual well-child appointment and/or each time they get a flu shot or new immunization.
i. Kindergarten and newly enrolling students are REQUIRED to submit a CURRENT Immunization Form to document that all required vaccines have been received.
    i. 'Current' means within 12 months of the start of school.
    ii. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunization Form.
j. 7th grade students are REQUIRED to submit a CURRENT Immunization Form to document that all required vaccines have been received.
    i. 'Current' means within 12 months of the start of school.
    ii. Immunization Boosters are required for 7th grade enrollment.
    iii. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunizations Form'
k. Children 16 + years of age are required to have an updated Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 recorded with the school. GCA will extend a 90-day conditional enrollment to newly enrolled students.
    i. 'Updated' means within 12 months of the start of school.
    ii. An updated Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 is required for children 16 + years of age
    iii. A Medical or Religious Exemption Immunization Waiver Form may replace a current Immunization Form.

6. Required for students re-registering for grades 06 or 08, please submit the Scoliosis Screening Form 4400
    a. Parent/guardian may furnish a properly executed Department of Health Form 4400 as early as the first day of 5th and no later than 90-days after the student begins 6th grade.
    b. Parent/guardian may submit a properly executed Form 4400 as early as the first day of 7th grade and no later than 90-days after the student begins the 8th grade.
        i. Parents/Guardians can choose not to have their student screened for scoliosis by selecting the opt-out option on Form 4400.
        ii. If a student is under the care of a physician, the parent/guardian should select the opt-out option within Form 4400
    c. A screening may be completed by a physician with an active Georgia license or a person

working under the supervision of a physician with an active Georgia license, the local health department, or a licensed school nurse.

If NOT re-registering your student for the next school year, the legal guardian should complete the following by the given deadline:

1. Contact your Family Engagement Liaison and inform them of your plan to withdraw at the end of the school year.
2. Complete the Re-registration application via your Infinite Campus Parent Portal account to indicate that your student is not returning. (gacyber.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/gacyber.jsp)
3. At the end of the school year:
    a. Follow the instructions on our Withdrawals web page (https://www.georgiacyber.org/enrollment/withdrawals)
    b. Fill out the Withdrawal DocuSign documenting the last date of enrollment as last date of school year to properly withdraw your student at the end of the year
    c. For official school records - Fill out a Records Request via ScribOrder (https://georgiacyberga.scriborder.com/) indicating where your student's records should be sent OR submit a Declaration of Intent to Homeschool form if you will homeschool for the next academic year
4. Return student computer(s), printer, materials, and any other equipment supplied by GCA. Return labels will be emailed to the email address on file, as well as mailed to the current address on file. If you need additional or replacement labels, contact your Family Engagement Liaison.

If the student is on track to graduate, and will graduate at the end of the academic school year, then the legal guardian should complete the following by the indicated deadline:

1. Complete the re-registration application, indicating not registering due to graduation.
2. At the end of the school year, request transcripts by either:
    a. Following the instructions located on our Transcripts web page: (georgiacyber.org/students/transcript-requests)
    b. Request your transcript by completing a Records Request via ScribOrder (https://georgiacyberga.scriborder.com/) to be sent to colleges, universities, technical schools, certification programs, the military, and/or employers.

If the student is a *SENIOR* AND *WILL BE LESS THAN 21 years of age BEFORE THE START OF THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR* and *IS NOT* on track to graduate OR is in danger of *NOT* successfully completing enough credits to graduate, then the legal guardian should complete the following steps by the indicated deadline:

1. Complete the re-registration application via your Infinite Campus Parent Portal account.
2. Don't get discouraged! Your student may just require a little more time to complete the required number of credits to successfully graduate.
3. ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO KEEP WORKING! Credits are being verified up to the date of graduation. Many students are able to successfully complete all credit requirements if they just put forth that last bit of effort right before the graduation verification deadline.
4. Talk to your student's counselor about a plan for graduation.
5. If you re-enroll and your student does successfully graduate, please inform GCA's Enrollment and Records Department for removal from next year's roster and then follow the directions for the '**On Track to Graduate**' process stated above.

If the student is a *SENIOR* AND *WILL BE 22 years of age PRIOR TO THE START OF THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR* and *IS NOT* on track to graduate OR is in danger of *NOT* successfully completing enough credits to graduate, then the legal guardian should complete the following steps by the indicated deadline:

1. Complete the re-registration application indicating your student will not be enrolling.
2. Don't get discouraged! Your student may just require a little more time to gain the required academic foundational skills. Not everyone was meant to follow the same path.
3. CONTACT YOUR STUDENT'S COUNSELOR! There are options and your counselor can help your student find a successful path forward.
4. At the end of the school year, request official records by either:
5. 1. Following the instructions located on our Transcripts web page: https://www.georgiacyber.org/students/transcript-requests
6. 2. Request your transcript by completing a Records Request via ScribOrder (https://georgiacyberga.scriborder.com/)
7. Return student computer(s), printer, materials, and any other equipment supplied by GCA. Return labels will be emailed to the email address on file, as well as mailed to the current address on file. If you need additional or replacement labels, contact your Family Engagement Liaison.

More information may be found at georgiacyber.org/enrollment/re-registration or by contacting an Enrollment & Records Specialist at enrollment@georgiacyber.org or 470-400-7887.

GETTING STARTED

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) is designed to meet the needs of a diverse range of students who seek a rigorous academic program through an online school experience, with access to school services such as clubs, activities, counseling services, and college advising. This technology enables teachers and students to engage in live virtual discussion similar to the physical classroom experience. Students at GCA attend school online using our robust learning management system (Canvas LMS), which hosts online courses and course management tools for students, teachers, and parents. The Canvas LMS offers a single place where students can access any information related to their academic life at GCA. Students use the Canvas LMS to:

- Access their courses
- Access live class sessions
- Access supplemental tools and resources
- Take assessments
- Review grades for courses within Canvas*
- Manage their course schedule
- Interact with faculty, staff, and peers in an online community

*Note: Infinite Campus is the student's Official Grade Book and will be updated weekly with grades as well as house report cards and/or transcripts at the end of each semester. For real-time grade progress, please refer to the student's Canvas account.

HOW CLASS SESSIONS WORK

All GCA classes are conducted using a combination of asynchronous and synchronous ("real-time") components. The combination of asynchronous and synchronous assignments may vary based on the course.

Courses contain asynchronous reading assignments, activities, assessments, and videos, as well as synchronous (live) class sessions conducted by the teacher at predefined times. All live core content class sessions are recorded, so students may access sessions for review, as needed. Both *required* and *encouraged* live class sessions are utilized, depending on a student's academic proficiency level. Small group and one-on-one (1:1) class sessions are not recorded since they are individualized to a particular student's academic needs.

Central to these synchronous (live) sessions is the online classroom technology our teachers use, which provides a whiteboard for live online instruction, the ability to conduct multi-student discussions and collaborative activities, space for instructional slides, and video sharing. This technology enables teachers and students to engage in live virtual discussion as if they were in a physical classroom. Attendance requirements for 'live' class sessions is based on the student's academic proficiency level, evidence of completing assignments/assessments in a timely manner, and/or their adherence to school procedures and policies. In cases where a scheduling conflict prevents a student from attending a ***required*** live class session, students must notify their Attendance Specialist in advance, provide an acceptable excuse if applicable, and they must watch the recording. Students are highly encouraged to attend live class sessions or watch the recordings of the live class sessions regardless of whether they have earned full flexibility or not. Students who are ***required*** to attend live class sessions will be counted absent if not in attendance for the entire class period. ***Note: Watching recordings does not remove the missed session(s) (i.e. absences) that students may accrue during the school year if the absences are not excused.***

Our faculty members also use live class session tools for small group remediation sessions, 1:1 tutoring sessions, and parent-teacher meetings. These particular live class sessions may or may not be recorded at the discretion of the host.

STUDENT ONBOARDING PROGRAM

To facilitate a successful virtual education experience for your student, Georgia Cyber Academy has implemented a student onboarding program (Strong Start) to ease new students and learning coaches into the online learning environment and to prepare them for the start of school. This program will only commence ***AFTER*** the student has completed the enrollment process and has been admitted. Typically, the program begins mid-July and must be completed before your student can attend classes; however, onboarding may differ, depending on the student's grade level and when they start school. Please expect a welcome email and phone call from your Family Engagement Liaison (FEL) before the first day of school. Students with a start date after the first day of school can expect a welcome email and phone call prior to their start date.

Re-registering students also participate in Strong Start and complete on-boarding components specific to existing students. This program will introduce existing students to new curriculums (if any), platform changes (if any), procedural/policy amendments (if any), and inform them of the school's expectations for the upcoming school year as well as be a resource for the entire year. This will better prepare them for the start of school and allow many of the typical start of school tasks to be completed prior to the first day of school. Your FEL will contact you before the start of school with instructions of how to access the Strong Start course.

During the first month of school, students and parents should plan to attend a *Learning Coach Live Help and Technology Training* virtual session, as well as their teachers' scheduled course orientations. A recording and/or documents of the *Learning Coach Live Help and Technology Training* virtual session will be posted on the Calendars section of the Georgia Cyber Academy website.

ROLE OF PARENT/LEARNING COACH

Georgia Cyber Academy students access their learning resources online. While school faculty and staff support student learning, there is still a need for support and guidance from an adult who is physically present with the student who will supervise and monitor progress throughout the school day and year. Georgia Cyber Academy refers to this "at home" role as the Learning Coach. Most frequently the Learning Coach is a parent, but it can also be a tutor or other designated adult responsible for the student's day-to-day learning supervision. Parents are asked to identify the designated Learning Coach, who faculty and staff will communicate with throughout the school year.

The primary duties of the learning coach are to review their student's attendance daily into the Nucleus attendance app, read their GCA emails at least once daily, answer all communications within 24 hours, complete all paperwork requests, complete all surveys, keep the student's information up to date, monitor their student's assignment completion and grades daily, ensure that their student attends all ***required*** live classes, monitor their student when the student is taking assessments and tests to ensure that no 'additional help' is provided that might mask whether a student truly understands the concepts or not, and communicate with their student's teacher(s), counselor, and FEL whenever they feel that a student is struggling or needs additional support. Students who are ***required*** to attend live class sessions will be counted absent if not in

attendance for the entirety of the session, regardless of parent entered attendance.

LIVE INTERACTION

Live interaction, which can include, but is not limited to **student to teacher/administration & parent/guardian/LC to teacher/administration,** and conversation through chat, video, microphone, or phone is required for all students. Depending on the proficiency level of the student that can be more or less live interaction. Students who login to class and are consistently not responsive to teachers may be referred to the counseling department, a behavior interventionist, and/or their principal to determine what barriers might exist to preclude participation and how any issues may be addressed. Learning coaches (parent/legal guardian or designated adult) are required to converse with staff regarding their student on a regular basis.

Our faculty teach online live classes just like in a traditional school model. Students that attend live classes interact with the teacher and other students. Classes are recorded, so students can refer to them if needed. Additionally, there are online live small group sessions, instructional support classes, and open offices. There is a combination of online and off-line work and projects to complete and turn in with due dates.

Students that are struggling to master standards/skills or have demonstrated proficiency below their assigned grade level are required to attend live classes on a set schedule. These students will be required to submit excuses for their absences just like in a traditional brick-and-mortar school.

Students that are doing well and have demonstrated a proficiency level which is consistent with or above their assigned grade level, are following school policies, and are completing all assignments/tests on time are afforded more flexibility and may view recorded classes when they miss live classes instead of being required to attend all live sessions on a set schedule. Determinations will take effect at the start of each semester.

Field trips, face to face social events, online clubs, and district-wide in-person events/outings are optional, but highly encouraged.

A student who is having difficulty demonstrating mastery of content or being compliant with school policies will require additional interaction. Parents/legal guardians/learning coaches should be prepared to attend all conferences and meetings regarding discussions/concerns/issues/academic decisions about their student as may be required. These conferences and/or meetings may be held in person, by telephone, and/or by video conference.

Georgia Milestones Assessments are mandatory and require face-to-face/in-person participation. Opt-outs are not permitted.

Other exams may be mandatory and may require face-to-face/in-person participation or be monitored virtually on camera and mic. For other mandatory exams, opt-outs are not permitted. These exams include but are not limited to Interim Assessments, GAA, ACCESS, WIDA, NWEA MAP Assessments, i-Ready Diagnostics, WriteScore exams, Final Exams, CogAT, etc.

GCA requires all students to be on camera, with their microphone on, and their device monitored for the

entirety of most assessments/tests/exams, regardless of proficiency level. The student's face must be unobstructed and visible on camera during the entirety of the testing/assessment/exam period. If the student is not monitored on camera, then face-to-face/in-person participation will be required for these tests/assessments/exams as well. Assessments/tests/exams may be invalidated by the teacher or administration if the student is not on camera and microphone the entire time the student is taking the assessments/tests/exams. In most cases the student may be allowed to take a make-up assessment/test/exam when this occurs. If a valid monitored assessment/test/exam is not submitted within the prescribed time period, then the student will receive a zero for the assessment/test/exam.

Engagement Policy

Student engagement is calculated using information that pertains to student use of camera/mic & student participation in the classroom. Examples of engagement expectations include but are not limited to the student being consistently visible on camera to their teacher, the student actively participating in the chat, etc.

SCHOOL PROPERTY AND SUPPLIES

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) provides academic support tools, equipment, and assistive technology when warranted and at its sole discretion. At present, all the programs/curriculums that GCA currently utilizes are online without a need for physical books and/or equipment. Georgia Cyber Academy provides loaner computers and printers to families upon request (see the Computer Policy section). Daily access to high speed, reliable and consistent internet is a requirement to attend GCA. Students will not be able to attend live Class sessions to receive instruction or complete online assignments in any school platforms without internet connection. School loaner Hotspots for internet service may be provided to families in financial need if their student is compliant to all GCA requirements, rules, procedures, and policies [see Hotspots and Internet Service Provider (ISP) Supplement Program section]. **These materials are school property and must be kept in good condition.** Damage incurred to school property beyond normal wear and tear is subject to disciplinary action and/or replacement of equipment at the family's expense.

All school property must be returned when a student fails to show up upon enrollment and/or is withdrawn from the school. It must be returned clean and in good condition. Failure to return school property upon request will be considered theft by conversion under Georgia law and the school reserves the right to pursue criminal and civil charges against anyone who violates this provision in order to reclaim school property or collect restitution for such property after attempts to collect the equipment have been exhausted. **PLEASE KEEP THE BOXES AND PACKING MATERIALS THAT SCHOOL PROPERTY WAS SHIPPED IN FOR FUTURE RETURNS.**

Facilities that are used for Georgia Cyber Academy outings are considered school property, and the same materials and equipment expectations apply to the facilities where Georgia Cyber Academy outings occur.

Parents are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement of all lost, stolen, or damaged school property. A list of property to return will be provided to parents upon withdrawal or graduation. A list will be provided for a computer, printer, and/or hotspot as those must be returned upon withdrawal or graduation for all students. All property and equipment must be returned in good, working condition upon withdrawal from the program. Please contact 404-334-4790 Ext.8 or support.georgiacyber.org and request a shipping label to return equipment.

Any printed materials that may be provided are copyrighted, and unauthorized copying of those materials is a copyright infringement.

Materials/equipment provided by GCA cannot be sold or transferred and are to be used solely by the student in his or her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents are to comply with this rule and all the terms and conditions of the School Property section of this handbook.

Basic school supplies such as paper, pencils, pens, erasers, highlighters, notebooks, binders, folders, markers, crayons, colored pencils, glue/glue sticks, scissors, rulers, protractors, compass, calculators, etc. are not supplied by Georgia Cyber Academy and are the responsibility of our families. A suggested school supply list will be provided for each grade level at the beginning of the school year. Please email your FEL or homeroom

teacher if one was not received.

LOANER COMPUTER AND PRINTER

Georgia Cyber Academy requires all families to have a minimum of one dedicated computer per student which meets the minimum specifications necessary to access GCA Online School platforms. Georgia Cyber Academy provides loaner computers and printers to families upon request. Families must also have internet access to participate in school. A reliable high-speed Internet connection is necessary. If a RELIABLE high-speed internet service connection is not available where you reside, then there is no way to participate in our virtual education program as GCA has no control on a given location's infrastructure. Dial-up internet access will not provide adequate access. Internet access is verified during the enrollment process and throughout the school year. Hotspots or reimbursement for internet service may be provided to students that have a financial need (see Hotspots and Internet Service Provider (ISP) Supplement Program section). However, GCA provided hotspots should not be viewed as the primary source of internet. It is at Georgia Cyber Academy's discretion whether to provide a Hotspot or ISP Reimbursement to assist families that have a financial need with securing internet service.

IMPORTANT NOTE: At the sole discretion of Georgia Cyber Academy, hotspots, computers, or printers may be turned off, locked, or request may be issued that these devices be returned during the summer months. Georgia Cyber Academy does not necessarily provide computers, printers, or internet assistance during the summer months unless a student is actively enrolled and fully participating in GCA's summer remediation program, Credit Recovery Courses, Summer School, Dual Enrollment Courses, and/or its Special Education Extended School Year Program.

Minimum technical specifications are as follows:

- Chrome, Windows-based, or Apple computer
- Reliable High-Speed Internet Connection with a recommended minimum 10 Megabits per second for both upload and download speed
- Internal or external microphone
- Internal or external speakers
- Internal or external web camera
- Google Chrome Browser
- Adobe Acrobat Reader

Georgia Cyber Academy will provide a computer to any enrolling student upon request. Please contact your Family Engagement Liaison if you need a computer or printer.

Computer kits include a computer, mouse, power cord, and headphones with a microphone. All references to computers include the peripheral equipment/items aforementioned. **PLEASE KEEP THE BOX AND PACKING MATERIALS FOR FUTURE RETURNS.**

Printers include a power cord, paper tray, and one set of ink. All references to printers include the peripheral equipment/items aforementioned. **PLEASE KEEP THE BOX AND PACKING MATERIALS FOR FUTURE**

RETURNS.

Computers and Printers are school property and must be kept in good condition. Damage incurred to computers and printers beyond normal wear and tear is subject to disciplinary action and/or replacement of the computer at the family's expense. Families will be invoiced for equipment that is damaged beyond normal wear and tear and given the opportunity to pay for its replacement prior to a collection agency being involved.

Computers and printers must be returned when a student fails to show up after enrollment, graduates, transfers, and/or is withdrawn from the school. A return label and box, if needed, will be provided, so that no additional expense is incurred by our families. Please contact 404-334-4790 Ext.8 and request a shipping label to return equipment. All school property must be returned clean and in good condition. Failure to return school property upon request will be considered theft by conversion under Georgia law and the school reserves the right to pursue criminal and civil charges against anyone who violates this provision in order to reclaim school property or collect restitution for such property after attempts to collect the equipment have been exhausted. Families that fail to return equipment will be invoiced for the equipment and given the opportunity to pay for its replacement prior to a collection agency being involved or police report being filed.

PRINTER INK AND PAPER

Georgia Cyber Academy does not provide printer paper or replacement printer ink.

LOANER HOTSPOTS AND INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER (ISP) SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

Families who meet the requirements listed below are eligible to receive either a hotspot or ISP supplement checks to help off-set the cost of internet service for their student(s). It is at the sole discretion of the school which type of internet assistance is provided to families with a financial need.

The requirements for receiving a hotspot or an ISP supplement are:

1. Family participates in the GCA Online School per requirements.
2. Family has a Georgia Cyber Academy loaner computer.
3. Family has completed a family income form after July 1st of the current school year and qualifies for financial assistance.
4. Family is compliant in academics, attendance, records and all other GCA requirements.
5. Family must have a *current* student address on file. Failure to provide an updated student address with required proof of residence will result in the forfeiture of the hotspot or in the ISP check being voided and the check will not be re-issued.
6. ISP Checks are only provided if a family does not have a GCA issued Hotspot.
7. Only one hotspot or ISP supplement will be provided per household.

If issued a loaner hotspot, it must be returned when a student fails to show up after enrollment, graduates, transfers, and/or is withdrawn from the school. A return label will be provided so that no additional expense is incurred by the family. Please contact 404-334-4790 Ext.8 and request a shipping label to return equipment. All

school property must be returned clean and in good condition. **Failure to return school property upon request will be considered theft by conversion under Georgia law and the school reserves the right to pursue criminal and civil charges against anyone who violates this provision in order to reclaim school property or collect restitution for such property after attempts to collect the equipment have been exhausted. Families that fail to return equipment will be invoiced for the equipment and given the opportunity to pay for its replacement prior to a collection agency being involved or police report being filed.**

ISP checks are only issued if the hotspot provider does not provide internet coverage in the area where the student resides (the student address of record).

If an ISP check is warranted, then it will be mailed twice per school year at the rate of $12.99 per month (per household) for the school year ISP supplement payments are made at the end of January and at the end of June or July and it is the responsibility of the legal guardian to ensure that all information listed in their student's Infinite Campus account is accurate for mailing purposes. ISP checks are issued to the legal guardian on record.

Eligibility for the ISP supplement begins the first full month ***after*** the family receives the loaner computer package. To receive the supplement when issued in January or June/July, the student must be enrolled in the school at the time of supplement processing to be eligible to receive it. Please be aware that if an ISP check is lost, Georgia Cyber Academy does not automatically reissue a check to the family. If a check is not received or is lost in the mail, parents need to notify the Georgia Cyber Academy office within thirty (30) days of checks being mailed to open an inquiry. At the discretion of Georgia Cyber Academy, non-compliant students may have ISP supplements denied. Checks not cashed within ninety (90) days will not be reissued.

IMPORTANT NOTE: At the sole discretion of Georgia Cyber Academy, Hotspots may be turned off during the summer months. Georgia Cyber Academy does not necessarily provide internet assistance during the summer months unless a student is actively enrolled and fully participating in GCA's summer remediation program, Credit Recovery Courses, Summer School, Dual Enrollment Courses, and/or its Special Education Extended School Year Program.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The purpose of Georgia Cyber Academy's acceptable use policy is to provide the procedures, rules, guidelines, and the code of conduct for use of technology and the information network at Georgia Cyber Academy.

Definition

The definition of "information network" is any configuration of hardware and software that connects users. The network includes all the computer hardware, operating system software, application software and stored files. This includes but is not limited to electronic mail, local databases, externally accessed databases, recorded magnetic or optical media, clip art, digital images, digitized information, communications technologies, portable/hand-held devices, and new technologies as they become available. Standalone workstations are also governed by this acceptable use policy.

Introduction

Georgia Cyber Academy provides resources for teaching and learning, collaboration, communication services and business data services by maintaining access to local, regional, national, and international sources of information.

Georgia Cyber Academy information resources will be used by staff and students in accordance with the policies and regulations established by Georgia Cyber Academy. These procedures do not attempt to articulate all required or prescribed behavior by its users.

Successful operation of the network requires the following:

1. All students conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical, and polite manner while using the network.
2. The student is ultimately responsible for his/her actions in accessing network services inside and outside of Georgia Cyber Academy network while using Georgia Cyber Academy loaner equipment.
3. The student is solely responsible for all resources issued or assigned to him/her. This includes equipment as well as login/specialized access information. In addition, any personal equipment used to access the Internet or other Georgia Cyber Academy resources is subject to the same rules and regulations outlined in this policy.
4. Georgia Cyber Academy monitors all Internet and local network activity.
5. Disciplinary action will be taken for any individual abusing or misusing technology resources.

Disclaimer

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of materials that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. On a global network,

it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. Georgia Cyber Academy maintains and monitors the use of filters for Internet content. Georgia Cyber Academy firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may obtain materials that are not consistent with the educational goals of Georgia Cyber Academy.
Guidelines

1. Access to the networks and to the information technology environment within Georgia Cyber Academy is a privilege and must be treated as such by all users of the network and its associated systems.
2. Georgia Cyber Academy systems will be used for the purposes of research, education, and school-related business and operations.
3. Any system which requires password access, or for which Georgia Cyber Academy requires an account, may only be used by the authorized user. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account.
4. All communications and information accessible via Georgia Cyber Academy systems should be treated

as property of Georgia Cyber Academy.
5. Georgia Cyber Academy monitors all Internet and local network activity, to include individual actions and activity.

Unacceptable Uses

Georgia Cyber Academy has the right to take disciplinary action, remove computer and networking privileges and/or take legal action for any activity characterized as unethical and unacceptable. Unacceptable use activities constitute, but are not limited to, any activity through which any user does the following:

1. Violates such matters as institutional or third-party copyright, license agreements or other contracts. The unauthorized use of and/or copying of software is illegal.
2. Copies or reproduces any licensed software on Georgia Cyber Academy computing equipment, except as expressly permitted by the specific software license. Unauthorized use of software is regarded as a serious matter and any such use is without the consent of Georgia Cyber Academy.
3. Installs unauthorized software or applications for use on Georgia Cyber Academy computers.
4. Interferes with or disrupts other network users, services, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, the following:
    a. distribution of unsolicited advertising.
    b. propagation of computer worms or viruses.
    c. distribution of quantities of information that overwhelm the system (for example, "chain letters," "network games" or "broadcasting" messages).
    d. utilization of the network to make unauthorized entry into any resources accessible via the network.
5. Seeks to gain or gains unauthorized access to information resources, obtains copies of, or modifies files or other data, or gains and communicates passwords belonging to other users.
6. Uses or knowingly allows another to use any computer, computer network, computer system, program, or software to devise or execute a scheme to defraud or to obtain money, property, services, or other things of value by false pretenses, promises or representations.
7. Destroys, alters, dismantles, disfigures, prevents rightful access to or otherwise interferes with the integrity of computer-based information, its operation, and/or information resources whether on stand-alone or networked computers.
8. Invades the privacy of individuals or entities.
9. Uses the network for commercial or political activity.
10. Uses the network to store, distribute or access materials inappropriate to the Georgia Cyber Academy setting.
11. Uses Georgia Cyber Academy systems to compromise its integrity ("hacking" software).
12. Submits, publishes, or displays any defamatory inaccurate, racially offensive, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, or threatening materials or messages either public or private.
13. Uses Georgia Cyber Academy systems for illegal, harassing, vandalizing, inappropriate or obscene purposes, or in support of such activities. Illegal activities will be defined as a violation of local, state and/or federal laws. Harassment is defined as slurs, comments, jokes, innuendoes, unwelcome compliments, cartoons, pranks and/or other verbal conduct relating to an individual that has the following purposes or effects.

a. creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.
b. unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance.
c. interfering with school operations.

14. Vandalism is defined as any attempt to temporarily or permanently harm or destroy an operating system, application software or data, or hardware.
15. Using generative AI to produce work that is then presented as the student's own without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism and will be treated as a violation of academic integrity policies.

Georgia Cyber Academy Rights

Georgia Cyber Academy reserves the right to do the following:

1. Monitor all activities on Georgia Cyber Academy equipment and networks by any user
2. Make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with this acceptable use policy.
3. Log network use and monitor storage disk space utilization by users
4. Deem what is appropriate use based on the requirements of law, this policy, and Georgia Cyber Academy's legitimate pedagogical concerns.
5. Remove a user's access to the network at any time it is determined that the user is engaged in unauthorized activity or violating this acceptable use policy and suspend any accounts during an investigation of possible violations of this policy.
6. Cooperate fully with any investigation concerning or relating to Georgia Cyber Academy.

Georgia Cyber Academy Responsibilities

Georgia Cyber Academy will do the following:

1. Respect and enforce copyright laws and regulations.
2. Take prudent steps to develop, implement and maintain security procedures to ensure the integrity of individual and Georgia Cyber Academy files. However, information on any computer system cannot be guaranteed to be inaccessible by other users.
3. Attempt to provide error-free and dependable access to technology resources associated with Georgia Cyber Academy. However, Georgia Cyber Academy cannot be held liable for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties.
4. Thoroughly investigate alleged misuse of the Internet and/or Georgia Cyber Academy prior to permanent denial of access to Georgia Cyber Academy resources.
5. Conduct assessments of inappropriate sites.
6. Monitor student Internet activities to ensure students and employees are not accessing inappropriate sites. The school Georgia Cyber Academy will use technology protection measures to protect students and employees from inappropriate access.
7. Expects that all students using Georgia Cyber Academy resources will be monitored by an adult(s).
8. Report child pornography to law enforcement. Georgia Cyber Academy and school technical support staff who are working with any computer or portable device and come across sexually explicit images of children must report this to local law enforcement. The report must include the name and address of

the owner or person in possession of the computer.

Disciplinary Action

This acceptable use policy is applicable to any member of the Georgia Cyber Academy community and refers to all information resources whether individually controlled, shared, stand alone, or networked. Disciplinary action, if any, for students, staff and other users will be consistent with Georgia Cyber Academy's standard policies and practices.

Where use of external networks is involved, policies governing such use also are applicable and must be adhered to. Violations can constitute cause of revocation of access privileges, suspension, or permanent removal of access to Georgia Cyber Academy resources, other school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action. Exact disciplinary measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Any user who violates the terms of this policy or otherwise misuses the Internet and/or technology to access or send inappropriate material will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including for students: removal of access, suspension, or withdrawal.

Violations of the laws of the United States or the state of Georgia also may subject the user to criminal prosecution.

Code of Conduct

Proper behavior, as it relates to the use of technology, is no different than proper behavior in all other aspects of Georgia Cyber Academy activities. All users are expected to use Georgia Cyber Academy technology resources in a legal, responsible, ethical, and polite manner. A student who knowingly violates any portion of the Code of Conduct Expectations will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the Georgia Cyber Academy's system and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Georgia Cyber Academy District Student and Parent Handbook.

1. Students will practice responsible use of digital information regarding intellectual property including complying with software licenses, copyright laws, and all other state and federal laws governing intellectual property. Students will practice safe and appropriate online behavior including using professional etiquette while communicating online. Improper use of Georgia Cyber Academy technology resources is prohibited including but not limited to:
    a. Using racist, profane, pornographic, sexually oriented, or obscene language or materials.
    b. Attempting to send or sending anonymous messages of any kind.
    c. Using the network to access inappropriate and / or harmful materials.
    d. Bypassing Georgia Cyber Academy's security measures to access sites that are filtered on Georgia Cyber Academy network.
    e. Encrypting communications to avoid security review or monitoring by the system administrator.
    f. Using the network to provide addresses or other personal information that others may use. inappropriately.
    g. Purposely engaging in activity that may: harass, threaten, defame, slander, libel, malign, or abuse

another (i.e., individual or group).

h. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages is prohibited. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
i. Using the network for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activity prohibited by Georgia Cyber Academy policy or guidelines.
j. Communicating with other students outside of class uses platforms such as, but not limited to, Google Docs.

2. Students will use the technology resources in a positive and responsible manner that promotes creativity & innovation, collaboration, communication, critical thinking & problem solving. Improper use of Georgia Cyber Academy's technology resources is prohibited including but not limited to:
    a. Using the network for political activity, financial gain, or commercial activity.
    b. Attempting to harm or harming equipment, materials, or data.
    c. Changing any computer configurations and/or settings.
    d. Installing software, including freeware and file sharing services.
    e. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as a violation of Georgia Cyber Academy guidelines and possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses, malware, or spyware.
    f. Streaming media, such as radio, games, video, etc., for non-educational purposes
    g. Proxy sites - Attempting to bypass or bypassing, the filtering device by using sites such as but not limited to proxy sites on Georgia Cyber Academy's electronic communications system.
    h. Running security programs or utilities that reveal or exploit weaknesses in the security of a system such as password cracking programs, packet sniffers, or port scanners or any other non-approved programs on Georgia Cyber Academy technology resources.
3. Students will understand the negative impact of inappropriate technology use including online bullying and harassment, hacking, intentional virus setting, invasion of privacy, and piracy of software, music, video, and other media.
4. Students will log in to Georgia Cyber Academy network using their own login credentials. Account information and passwords, or similar information used for identification and authorization purposes, must be kept private. Passwords should not be written down and left in a location where others may find it. The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be always responsible for its proper use.
5. In order to help preserve both privacy and security, neither still photography nor video capturing is allowed in person nor virtual school environments unless directed by a member of a faculty member to meet an educational goal or approved by an authorized member of the administration, faculty, or staff. Both behavioral and legal action may be taken against individuals not respecting the privacy and security rights.
6. Students will use technology resources cautiously to maintain security and prevent damage.
7. Students are asked to conserve Georgia Cyber Academy technology resources (such as network bandwidth and storage) by limiting usage to educational purposes. System users must not: degrade the performance of Georgia Cyber Academy technology resources (i.e., streaming video, streaming audio, and Internet radio); deprive an authorized Georgia Cyber Academy user access to a Georgia Cyber Academy resource, obtain extra resources beyond those allocated; circumvent Georgia Cyber Academy

computer security measures.

8. Creative Credit and Copyright. Students have the right to protect their own creative works. Additionally, students must exercise academic integrity in a fair and legal manner when using other people's creative works. Failure to appropriately cite ideas or work other than your own will result in adverse academic and behavioral action. Academic integrity protects against the following:
    a. ***Cheating*** is fabricating written assignments; giving or receiving aid to another student without the consent of the instructor on tests, quizzes, assignments, exams; unauthorized access of teacher's editions or answer keys. Cheating also includes the use of technology such as computers, phones, cameras, or any other device that provides access to unauthorized information related to graded course material, tests, quizzes, assignments, or examinations.
    b. ***Double Assignments*** are also a form of cheating. This is defined as an assignment that is used to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without prior approval from all involved instructors.
    c. ***Colluding*** is allowing one's work to be copied or submitted by another student. This applies to individual as well as group work where the students are given individual grades. It also applies to work that is transferred electronically and then submitted by another student. Joint student projects where information is combined for a final product submission are acceptable.
    d. ***Plagiarizing*** is the act of presenting the ideas or works of another person as one's own. This includes presenting information, ideas, phrasing, words, artwork, music, figures, diagrams, graphs, song lyrics, films, maps, illustrations, data, computer programs, emails, CDs, and electronic files from the Internet. All of these must be acknowledged with the proper documentation. Consult your instructor or the school links for proper citation practices. All assignments submitted to instructors should contain the proper citation. Plagiarism occurs when a student does one of the following: 1) fails to cite borrowed, quoted, or paraphrased material, even by accident 2) deliberately intends to deceive through lack of citation 3) Uses strings of words from a cited source without indicating these words are not his own (attempted paraphrase without quotations, even if there is a correct citation)
    e. ***Carelessly*** or inaccurately citing quoted or paraphrased material is not plagiarism. This type of error is attributed to style or formatting. For example, if you submit an ALA works cited instead of an APA, then this is an inaccurate citation. You may lose style or formatting points; however, it is not plagiarism.

Digital Rights

Georgia Cyber Academy works hard to ensure the following digital rights for all students.

1. Each student shall have access to current, updated, and fully functioning technologies to be used in the learning process.
2. Each student shall be given access to his or her Georgia Cyber Academy username and password.
3. Each student shall be taught how to access resources such as Gmail and Google Drive, and learning management system (LMS) accounts connected to his or her Georgia Cyber Academy account.
4. Each student shall be provided the opportunity to attend classes led by teachers who continuously blend technology into learning and assessment activities.
5. Each student shall be offered ongoing workshops and educational opportunities to learn how to better blend technology into the learning process.

6. Each student shall have the opportunity to use online collaborative tools in the learning process.
7. Each student shall enjoy an educational experience that is free from any form of cyberbullying, harassment, or threats.

CHROMEBOOK PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Students:

1. Are required to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy.
2. Will receive a Chromebook as an educational tool and it should only be used in that capacity. Are responsible for the care of the Chromebook issued to them whether in or out of school.
3. Are responsible for ensuring the Chromebook is charged and ready for use every day.
4. Are given a power cord and Chromebook bag and must carry the Chromebook in the school-issued bag. If the power cord or bag is lost, damaged, or stolen, the student will pay for a new one.
5. Will lose Chromebook privileges if the student is responsible for any vandalism, hacking, network disruption, or any actions that disable, damage, or negatively affect the Chromebook or any GCA systems in any way.
6. Will only use software that is permitted and installed by the school Georgia Cyber Academy.
7. Acknowledge there is no expectation of privacy with files stored on the computers or with websites visited with the Chromebook. The school Georgia Cyber Academy has the right to monitor Chromebooks and/or block access to applications and websites.
8. Will NOT loan/borrow Chromebook, power cord, or bag to/from other students and will NOT share usernames and passwords.
9. Will NOT deface Chromebook by marking on or placing stickers on all surfaces.
10. Will report damages IMMEDIATELY to Southeastern Computer Associates Support.
11. Will return the Chromebook, printer, bag, and power cord if a student fails to show up after enrollment, graduates, transfers, and/or is withdrawn from the school. A return label and box, if needed, will be provided, so that no additional expense is incurred by our families. All school equipment must be returned in good condition within two weeks of graduation or withdrawal.
12. Failure to return school property upon request will result in families being invoiced. Unpaid invoices will result in GCA contacted collections agencies and/or filing police reports.

CHROMEBOOK PROGRAM WARRANTY AND DAMAGE PROTECTION INFORMATION

Warranty Information

All Chromebooks are covered by the manufacturer's warranty for malfunction due to manufacturing or non- performance issues. The warranty does not cover damage that is determined to be accidental and/or the result of negligent use or treatment. It also does not cover outright loss or damage of the Chromebook, power cord, or batteries through inattention or negligence

Negligence

Warranty coverage and damage insurance do not cover damages that are determined to be caused by

negligent use/treatment, nor do they cover the power cord, battery, or laptop bag. When the administration determines that damage was caused by negligent actions, the student or parent/guardian will be responsible for all costs. Negligence is defined as the lack of care for the device that results in damage. For example, dropping the device would be considered an accident whereas leaving the device in your car is negligence. A temporary computer will be provided when a deposit, not to exceed the cost of the device, is received from the Legal Guardian or Parent.

Reporting Procedure

Damage must be reported immediately to Southeastern Computer Associates Support within 24 business hours. If the damage is determined to be accidental, a damage claim will be processed, and a replacement Chromebook will be provided. If the damage is determined to be non-accidental, an invoice will be sent to the parents. A police report must be filed to process a theft claim.

ACADEMIC FOCUS: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) is committed to providing rigorous curriculum and a solid system of support for all students. GCA students are provided with coursework in:

- Mathematics
- English Language Arts
- Science
- Social Studies
- Electives:
    - PE/Health (K-8th)
    - Art (K-5th)
    - Computer Science (6th-8th)
    - *Optional* Spanish (K -8th)
    - *Optional* Computer Science (K-5th)
    - *Optional* Art (6th-8th)
    - *Optional* Career Discovery (6th-8th).
    - Two electives per semester are provided for grades 9-12 and vary by academic course path and individualized goals.

GCA also provides supplemental tools and resources for standards-based review/practice to include, but are not limited to: iXL, Edmentum, BrainPOP, i-Ready, and Progress Learning. The provided supplemental tools and resources offered vary by a student's grade level, individual learning plan, and required interventions.

All students take two electives as indicated in the preceding paragraph. Electives, whether optional or required, include graded assignments. 100% of elective courses must be completed and will be shown with a grade on the student report card.

All students taking additional optional courses/subjects must maintain an 80 or above in all academic contents, turn assignments in on time, be compliant to attendance & engagement policies, and follow all school policies. Students will be removed from additional optional courses/subjects for failure to attend all required classes and/or to maintain adequate progress in any subject. Additional options include:

- Kindergarten through 8th grade students – Spanish, Computer Science
- 6th - 8th grade students – Art, Spanish, and Career Discovery
- 8th grade Advanced & Gifted students – High School Spanish (for HS credit)
- Advanced & Gifted Students may have additional options based on their individual Gifted Educational Plans

Georgia Cyber Academy encourages students to complete assigned lessons within each content area course, since courses in the subsequent grade levels assume completion of lessons in the prior grade. A lesson is completed when the student has mastered the objectives, as measured by the lesson assessment. Learning Coaches and students should work very closely with their teachers to decipher the best course of action when determining the time management of lesson and assessment completion.

The GCA Online School is designed to collect and record data that substantiates the academic progress of

each student. Therefore, it is mandatory that the Online School is used to collect assignment/assessment data that reflects the standing of the student. Any academic activities the student engages in each school day should be recorded by the Learning Coach as attendance and must be entered into Nucleus (our attendance module) by the Learning Coach each school day. This data serves as one of the primary tools for determining advancement into subsequent course levels in conjunction with the minutes automatically captured from student attendance in required online class sessions; together they count as attendance.

It is essential that parents of GCA students understand that, by enrolling in GCA, they agree to ensure that their students participate in the academic programs as designed, including completing all coursework, recording attendance, participating in required interactions with assigned teachers/staff, checking their email daily, and participating in school and state-mandated assessments.

GCA requires that parents/students submit work assignments to assist teachers with the decision to advance a student to the next course/grade level. GCA requires student work to be original, with appropriate citations for references to published works. Parents/students are provided work assignment guidelines from their assigned teacher(s). Work assignments are submitted electronically. GCA understands that our school is academically rigorous. Meeting the challenge of completing one year of course work in this model can be demanding. Our certified, highly qualified teachers and support staff are here to assist parents/ learning coaches to meet the associated challenges.

A student identified as “academically at-risk” would hold a differentiated priority of contact, as determined by the teacher and the parent, and increased interventions may be warranted. It is vital to note that academically at- risk students require a greater commitment to remediation and support. Students who are identified as academically at-risk may receive additional Response to Intervention (RtI/MTSS) support. Students and Learning Coaches are required to comply with all recommendations to address the current academic needs of the student.

OBJECTIONABLE CONTENT

There may be times when a parent finds certain lessons, books, or materials objectionable for various reasons. If a parent finds objectionable material, he or she should contact his or her content teacher via email. Teachers will work with the parents to find alternative lessons to meet the lesson objectives. An assessment for the alternate lesson must be completed to ensure that the concepts/skills of the lesson have been mastered.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

The student may have live class requirements, conferences, assignments, and/or assessments between 8am and 4pm, Monday through Friday excluding school holidays. A student’s grade level, courses, specific programs, provided services, and their proficiency level determine the amount of online time that may be required and the structure of that time.

Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, Georgia Cyber Academy students must participate in school learning activities for a minimum of 180 days per school year.

Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, the **minimum** number of hours required per school day are as follows:

- Kindergarten: 4.5 hours per day
- 1st through 3rd grade: 4.5 hours per day
- 4th through 5th grade: 5.0 hours per day
- 6th through 12th grade: 5.5 hours per day

For Kindergarten through 12th grade, time includes Math, Social Studies/History, Social Sciences, English/ Language Arts, Science, Foreign Language, Art, PE/ Health, Computer Science, and other elective courses, as well as, support activities such as tutoring, state testing, and Academic Support Services (per IEP). Time may also include Educational Field Trips, Testing, Counseling, Health Screenings, and extended learning time activities; however, additional attendance guidelines for these activities may be outlined in the GCA District Handbook.School sponsored non-instructional activities may also count toward attendance hours.

NOTE: Attendance hours must be logged in the Nucleus attendance program by the Learning Coach daily in accordance with GCA procedures and guidelines. Failure to follow attendance logging procedures may result in withdrawal from GCA. Students who are required to attend 'live' class sessions will be counted absent if not in attendance, regardless of parent entered attendance.

LIVE INTERACTIVE CLASS SESSIONS

Live Interactive Class Sessions (Synchronous)

We believe synchronous learning is important because it provides students the full benefits of instruction delivered by our highly qualified teachers. Synchronous interaction provides immediate instructor and student feedback, reduces the feeling of isolation, fosters a sense of community with the learners, and offers a forum for student collaboration. By incorporating live and interactive learning opportunities in the online environment, teachers leverage synchronous learning to enhance student learning and promote engagement.

Our synchronous sessions are personalized for the individual learner's needs. We feel it is important to allow the teacher flexibility to determine what should be covered, what students should be targeted for extra support, and when the sessions should be held to reach these students.

Camera Expectations

Live class participation and engagement supports student achievement and is essential to learning. GCA requires all students to attend daily classes with their camera on and their face visible to their teacher. Students may also participate via chat, microphone, and class tools. Students who do not follow the camera policy may be referred for progressive discipline.

Live Interactive Class Sessions Engagement Guidelines

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) provides students with a balance of flexibility and appropriate levels of academic support. GCA students will be held accountable for attending live class sessions based on their

individualized proficiency level (see “Instructional Levels” chart below). Students identified as *Beginning* or *Developing* are required to attend live class sessions to receive intensive teacher support. The Learning Coach is required to log all daily time per state requirements for students with flexibility status.

Recordings are provided to all students for review; however, live class attendance may be ‘*REQUIRED*’. Full flexibility students (Proficient) are encouraged to attend live class sessions but may watch recordings if that better fits their schedule. Flexibility is earned at the proficient and distinguished levels as determined by the GCA staff pursuant to assessments taken by students prior to, at the start of, and throughout the student’s time at GCA, including, but not limited to the Georgia Milestones (or Milestones replacement exam if Milestones is suspended) and NWEA assessments. Students who miss required class sessions may be referred for progressive discipline, including a referral to the Student Attendance Committee and up to withdrawal from GCA. Students who are ***required*** to attend live class sessions will be counted absent if not in attendance.

If a student has an emergency that conflicts with a required class session, it is imperative that the legal guardian or learning coach upload documentation of the absence in Nucleus within three (3) school days of the student returning.

Instructional Levels				
Instructional Level	**EOG Cut Score* *grades 4-8 only**	**Interim Assessment Score**	**iReady/NWEA Growth Assessments**	**Course Average**
Advanced	**Distinguished Learner**	**>92%**	**Above grade level**	**>90%**
Proficient	**Proficient Learner**	**80-92%**	**On grade level**	**80-89%**
Developing	**Developing Learner**	**68-79%**	**1 year below grade level**	**75-79%**
Beginning	**Beginning Learner**	**<68%**	**>1 year below grade level**	**<74%**

Notes on Full Flexibility: If a student is granted flexibility from attending live class sessions, then it is possible to do most assigned schoolwork from recorded class sessions; however, even full flexibility students must occasionally interact with their teachers, school personnel, and other students on team projects between the hours of 8am and 4pm. Mandatory tests are also administered in live class sessions between the hours of 8am and 4pm and the student must attend during the assigned time(s) to complete these tests. School conferences, as well as, FEL calls/meetings, IEP, and MDR meetings are typically scheduled during the 8am to 4pm school day, too.

Once a student is granted flexibility, they must demonstrate the ability to manage that privilege without it negatively impacting their academic performance. They must maintain grade level proficiency as demonstrated through varying data points, turn all assignments in on time, and take all required assessments or flexibility may be revoked. Prior to being granted flexibility from live classes, students must demonstrate proficiency in all core subjects per the state Milestone's assessments; therefore, it is possible for students to earn a great deal of flexibility in how they structure their school day, but there will be times that they are required to be present during the hours of 8am and 4pm.

New students will be granted flexibility based on their ability to show proficiency pursuant to a review by GCA staff of GMA assessments taken the prior school year if available as well as assessments given by GCA prior to and at the start of the student's enrollment at GCA. Such students may be required to attend classes long enough for GCA staff to make such a determination.

Regardless of whether a student is struggling or typically does well academically, there may be times that extra support is required to master a skill or concept. When students are invited to a small group reinforcement session or tutoring, they are required to attend the live session even if they have full flexibility.

To avoid absences, families are asked to schedule appointments around required class sessions. Please communicate any special circumstances to your Attendance Specialist *AND* your teacher.

Learning coaches/parents/legal guardians may submit excuses for absences following the GCA Board Attendance Policy located in the Appendix of this document to their Attendance Specialist.

Students will additionally be held accountable to the attendance and truancy process regarding work completed, student logins, and attendance logged by Learning Coaches. Students failing to attend ***required*** live classes will be counted as absent regardless of the attendance logged by the parent or learning coach. GCA staff will also encourage students to remain compliant and engaged.

IMPORTANT: By enrolling your student at Georgia Cyber Academy, you are agreeing to ensure your student is actively engaged in class and that they are completing/submitting their own work on time and in compliance with the assignment's guidelines. Students are expected to respond to all questions and/or prompts from the teacher during the session to the best of their ability. Students are expected to complete any work assigned during the session or by the assigned deadline. If a student is unable to attend a 'required' session live, they will watch the recording even though watching the recording will not excuse the absence.

Important Notes: Students attending extracurricular or other outside programs (including religious based) will still be held accountable for attending ***'required'*** live class sessions. Students traveling, regardless of the time zone they are in, are still held accountable for attending ***'required'*** live class sessions, turning assignments in on time, and taking assessments at the assigned time (all stated times are based on Eastern Standard Time Zone). Trips/vacations will not be accepted as excuses for missing '***required'*** live classes or completing assignments late. Excused Absences are an exception to these provisions although arrangements must be made to make up missed classes and assignments during the timeframe from which the student was absent.

Live Interactive Class Sessions Conduct for Parents and Students

When in a teacher's online conference platform or online classroom, parents and students are required to sign in using their first name and last initial. In certain cases, other naming conventions may be required, and those directions should be strictly followed.

Guidelines for Parents and Students:

- Arrive promptly at the scheduled time for your live interactive class sessions.
- Whiteboard and microphone privileges are assigned at the discretion of the teacher.
- Direct messaging conversations should be limited to the content of the lesson.
- Respectful and courteous behavior toward others is always expected.
- If there are multiple students in your home, each student needs to log into a session individually.
- Students and parents are expected to follow the etiquette previously described.
- Students are not allowed to type their full name, address, email address, or phone numbers in the chat box or share that information during live class sessions.
- Students will not be allowed to cause learning disruptions during live class sessions including use of inappropriate language (typed or oral), posting pictures or images to the whiteboard (unless specifically requested), posting web links (URLs) in the chat box or on the white board, disrespect of teachers or other students. If a student is causing a disruption that negatively impacts the learning environment or engages in behavior that is prohibited, they will be removed from the live class session and their parents will be contacted.

Please keep in mind that individual teachers may have additional guidelines/expectations that are specific to their classrooms.

Asynchronous Engagement Expectations

All students will be held accountable to the truancy process regarding work completed, student logins, and attendance logged by Learning Coaches. In addition, students must maintain a high level of academic performance to receive flexibility from attending live class sessions and asynchronous participation.
To remain in good standing, all students must meet or exceed expectations in the following four areas:

1. Logging into Canvas.
2. Remaining on pace with coursework.
3. Taking all assessments/tests/exams within the stipulated time period.
4. Maintaining high performance as evidenced by overall average per course.

SECONDARY GRADES (HIGH SCHOOL) COURSE SELECTION

Mid-Year Enrollment

GCA operates on a block calendar where students take four classes in a semester and earn one credit for each course. Students enrolling during the Spring semester who are transferring from a semester schedule (where students take part A of a course during the 1st semester and part B during 2nd semester) will be scheduled for courses comparable to their first semester core classes so they can earn the credits required for graduation. While students are typically scheduled for 2 core classes and 2 electives, students transferring from a semester schedule will be scheduled as needed to remain on track for graduation.

Schedule Changes

Students are scheduled for the full academic school year prior to the start of school or upon enrollment. New students enrolling in the Fall have one week from the date they start classes to request schedule changes for first and second semester. Schedule changes requested after this deadline are permitted under extenuating circumstances, which may include:

- Course scheduled that the student previously passed
- Less than 4 courses scheduled
- More than one course scheduled during a period
- Changes needed to accommodate an IEP
- Changes needed to accommodate a 504 Plan

Course Prerequisites

Many of our higher-level courses require successful completion of lower-level courses. For students to enroll in a course with an established prerequisite, the student must provide documentation of successful completion/ earned credit for the prerequisite. Please see the Secondary Grades 9-12 Course Catalog for a listing of course prerequisites.

Middle Grades Students Taking Secondary Grades (High School) Courses

Middle grades students are permitted to take high school courses for high school credit provided they have met the Advanced & Gifted criteria for doing so. These courses may count for both middle grades full-time load requirements and for the high school diploma requirements. If counted for high school diploma credit, the grades will be visible on the student's permanent high school transcript. All requests for middle grades students to take high school coursework are subject to approval by the Advanced & Gifted Assistant Director.

Honors Courses

Honors courses feature their own specific requirements as follows:

- Teacher and Counselor recommendations are required for students to enroll in an Honors course.
- Students requesting Honors placement without recommendation and/or fulfillment of the following criteria are permitted upon receipt of a signed acknowledgement form:
    - Have earned a B+ (85% or above) grade in the prior course within that subject or course path.
    - Have earned a Level 3 or Level 4 (Proficient or Distinguished) on EOC or EOG in the corresponding subject or course path for at least 2 years prior.
    - If prior EOC or EOG data is not available, have earned at least a Level 3 or 4 on NWEA MAP Projected Proficiency for that content area. NWEA MAP assessment must be taken on camera to validate placement.
    - Have a history of completing work and assessments on time.
- Students and parents must sign Honors Memo of Understanding.

Advanced Placement Courses

Advanced Placement (AP) courses feature their own specific requirements that are as follows:

- Teacher and Counselor recommendations are required for students to enroll in an AP course.
- Students requesting AP placement without recommendation and/or fulfillment of the following criteria are permitted upon receipt of a signed acknowledgement form:
    - Have earned a B+ (85% or above) grade in the prior course within that subject or course path.
    - Have earned a Level 3 or Level 4 (Proficient or Distinguished) on EOC or EOG in the corresponding subject or course path for at least 2 years prior.
    - If prior EOC or EOG data is not available, have earned at least a Level 3 or 4 on NWEA MAP Projected Proficiency for that content area. NWEA MAP assessment must be taken on camera to validate placement.
    - Have a history of completing work and assessments on time.
- Student and parent must sign AP Memo of Understanding.
- It is the expectation that all GCA students enrolled in AP courses will be prepared for success and should plan to take the AP exam.

Dual Enrollment Courses

Georgia Cyber Academy students may participate in the Dual Enrollment (DE) Program beginning in 10th grade, meaning students are dual enrolled with GCA and at a college or university. Students should attend a Dual Enrollment Information Session for details on this program, criteria for placement, and assistance in course selection. Additional information regarding Dual Enrollment, including Dual Enrollment counselor contact information can be found on the website. Students who want to take DE courses must meet with a DE Counselor for advisement.

Students should be aware that Dual Enrollment courses may not transfer to their post secondary institution of choice. It is the responsibility of students to check the transfer credits policy of their intended college or university. Students may also use Georgia Transfer to explore Georgia credit transfer opportunities at participating colleges and universities within Georgia

Students who are interested in going straight into the workforce after high school, instead of attending a four-year college or university, have the opportunity to participate in the Accelerated Career Diploma (ACD) Program. Students in the ACD program complete complete an alternative path to graduation, which includes 9 high school courses and all college courses required to complete an Associates of Applied Science Degree, or Technical Diploma, or program certification leading to licensure, or two approved Technical Certificates of Credits (TCCs).

Dual enrollment students will have elevated permissions on their GCA provided devices to accommodate their various course requirements. If you have specific technology requests, please send an email to technology@georgiacyber.org and include a copy of your course syllabus.

For more information, visit the GCA website.

CTAE Elective Pathways

Career (CTAE Elective) Pathways refer to a prescribed order of courses that are intended to develop student's academic and occupational skills within a career category. Throughout the course of study, students will gain an understanding of the relationship between what they learn in school and what employers, colleges and universities expect of high school graduates wishing to enter a specific career field.

Students take courses in the prescribed order within the chosen pathway to allow for maximum success as the student progresses to the upper-level courses. Students are **expected to complete all prerequisites** prior to enrolling in upper-level courses. **Prerequisites** will be enforced in all **courses**. Courses with prerequisites should not be taken at the same time. Students who complete all courses in their pathway will be eligible to take the End of Pathway Assessment (EOPA), which is an industry recognized credential in the field of study. GCA may offer some End of Pathway Assessments for students, but this is not guaranteed. However, all students can work with their counselor to help them find assistance with registration and preparation for their End of Pathway Assessment as an individual, whether it is offered by GCA or another testing site. Students who complete and pass their respective End of Pathway Assessments are more prepared for work in their respective fields.

Students may take CTAE elective courses as early as 9th grade depending on their individualized high school graduation plan. It is possible for students to complete more than one pathway, especially if the two pathways

are related in their field of study and share some of the same courses. Students should consult with their counselors beginning in 8th grade to discuss different pathways and their outcomes regarding student college and career readiness. Students may complete pathways offered by GCA or through approved Dual Enrollment courses. Students who wish to complete a pathway through the Dual Enrollment program must meet the admissions requirements for Dual Enrollment and other GCA Dual Enrollment guidelines.

Course materials for specific CTAE courses may include a secondary GCA device, a Windows computer. To receive the device, you must read, sign, and submit a DocuSign that you will receive from your teacher, indicating your understanding of, and adherence to, the return policy on the device.

The Acceptable Use Policy governing the procedures, rules, guidelines and the code of conduct for use of technology and the information network still apply to the secondary device.

For more information, visit the GCA website.

Work Based Learning

The Work-Based Learning Program is a structured experience for juniors and seniors that connects the student's career goal and classroom learning with a productive work environment. Work-Based Learning provides students with opportunities for instruction not only in academics but also in occupational skills, career exploration, and guidance in identifying employment and educational goals. Students have the opportunity to connect what they learn in school with work-site application, enabling a smooth transition into the workforce and/or postsecondary education. Students must be 16 years of age, have a 2.2 GPA, as well as a chosen CTAE Pathway.

The Work Based Learning Program at GCA has team members called "Work Based Learning Site Specialists" who visit and evaluate the job sites of Work Based Learning students regularly throughout the semester. Site Specialists help ensure safety, compliance and that the learning experience is beneficial for the students. The Work Based Learning team at GCA will evaluate new job sites and have the ability to end a placement or partnership at any time if it is determined that the environment is not safe, is not conducive to the learning goals of work-based learning or that the site violates any Work Based Learning agreements or standards.

For more information on this program, please visit the GCA website.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Requirements

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) is an **NCAA-eligible school** (School Code: **110144**). All GCA high school courses are approved by the NCAA Eligibility Center and coursework completed **School Year 2021 and beyond** may be used to meet NCAA academic requirements.

Students who plan to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II level should **register with the NCAA Eligibility Center** at eligibilitycenter.org. GCA will submit official transcripts directly to the NCAA for students

through our secure portal.

All students are assigned a school counselor who can assist with academic planning and NCAA eligibility questions. Please see the Counseling section for the district counseling department directory and additional information.

Visit our website to learn more about NCAA eligibility

GCA Approved Programs for Additional Academic Credit (Optional)*

Students are permitted to take courses through outside programs to earn academic credit. The course must be approved by the student's high school counselor prior to registration in order to count for transfer credit. *Tuition/Course Fees for optional additional courses are not covered by GCA.*

Approved Programs

- **Georgia Virtual School (GVS)** - Georgia Virtual School is a program of the Georgia Department of Education's Office of Technology Services. The program is SACS CASI accredited and operates in partnership with schools and parents to offer middle school and high school level courses across the state.
- **The Keystone School** - The Keystone School is an online high school that serves a wide range of students who need flexibility. Call 1-800-255-4937 to speak with a Student Services Representative from 8AM – 8PM Monday-Friday. You will be guided through course selection and payment options.
- **BYU Independent Study** - BYU Independent Study is an online education program that offers high school courses. Students are able to enroll at any time. BYU Independent Study provides 3 different types of courses. The 3 types are Paper/Online, Online, and Instructor-Guided Online Courses. Online courses are taught by certified instructors. Registration: By phone 1-800-914- 8931 or online.
- **National High School** - National High School is a 100% online school that provides courses for credit recovery/credit transfer and NCAA classes. There are certified teachers provided for each online class. There will be 24/7 access to the online classroom and live online lectures weekly. It generally takes 8 weeks to complete a course for 1 credit or 4 weeks to complete a 1/2 credit course.

**Please note, any courses taken through another school other than GVS would be in addition to the student's four (4) regularly scheduled required GCA courses. As these courses would be additional, optional classes, tuition/course fees are not covered by Georgia Cyber Academy.*

In specialized cases where GCA does not offer the course that a student needs to complete a particular academic course path, GCA at its sole discretion may allow students to take one or more of their four (4) required courses through Georgia Virtual School at no additional cost to the student. Typically, this is utilized for some AP and CTAE courses.

Course Audits

Auditing a course allows a student to take a course without the benefit of a grade or credit for the course. Generally, a student who audits a course does so for the purposes of self-enrichment and academic

exploration. Currently, Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) does not allow students the option of taking coursework for audit. All courses taken at GCA and courses approved from another institution will appear on the official transcript, with a numerical grade. The only exception to this will be for late enrollees, as determined by administration.

SECONDARY GRADES (HIGH SCHOOL) TRANSFER CREDIT

Transfer Credits for Courses Taken Prior to Enrollment

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) allows the transfer of high school course credits for full-time students, provided an official transcript is submitted from the accredited school where the credit was earned. GCA will determine which credits are recognized and in which subject credit is awarded. Students transferring to GCA from other schools are subject to the diploma requirements found in this handbook.

Official transcripts are analyzed by GCA School Counselors and GCA Registrar. Students will receive notification of transfer credit decisions and posting of credits when the analysis is completed. Official transcripts from other institutions that have been presented for admission or evaluation become part of the student's academic file and are not returned or copied for distribution.

GCA Procedures for Awarding Homeschool and Non-Accredited School Course Credit

Georgia Cyber Academy does not automatically accept course credits earned in homeschool or through a non-accredited school. GCA has three categories of courses from non-accredited sources to determine credit:

1. course with a corresponding EOC
2. course that satisfies an elective credit for graduation
3. and a course that satisfies an academic course requirement for graduation.

The GCA Homeschool Transcript Form must be submitted as an application for credit and should explain in detail what the course curriculum covered. The High School Placement Counselor will evaluate the GCA HomeSchool Transcript Form to compare the course description provided on the form to the Georgia course description and determine if 1) the course lines up with state standards and if course credit can be awarded, 2) further assessment is needed, or 3) whether the student needs to take the EOC or not for course credit. GCA at its sole discretion may require an exam be taken to assess the validity of a student's mastery of the standards for a given homeschool or non-accredited school course prior to awarding transcript academic course credit.

Students transferring from a homeschool or non-accredited school are placed on a probationary period of one semester in the grade that coincides with the number of credits submitted on the GCA Homeschool Transcript (with a maximum of seven per year) or Non-accredited School transcript. If the student has not taken OR passed the appropriate corresponding assessments at the end of one semester, the student's credit standing will be re-evaluated and they may be required to complete additional diagnostic tests to determine their exact level of proficiency and mastery of standards in any given subject and may not be awarded the respective transferring graduation credits, depending on the results of the diagnostics taken. After the student's first semester at GCA they will either continue in the grade that they were originally placed in based on transferring

transcripts or they will be moved into the grade level based on the final number of credits awarded and the results of the diagnostic assessments taken.

All homeschool and non-accredited school courses accepted for credit will be excluded from GPA calculations. The accepted homeschool and non-accredited school credits will be reflected on the transcript. For courses that do not require an End of Course (EOC) exam, the homeschool and non-accredited school grades will be reflected on the transcript. For EOC courses, the homeschool and non-accredited school grades will be reflected on the transcript ONLY if the student scores a 70 or above on the EOC. If the student scores below a 70 on the EOC, an NG (no grade) will be reflected on the transcript and the student will have to retake the course. The Home School Transcript Form and/or Non-accredited School Transcript information will be an extension of the GCA transcript for informational purposes.

Awarding Credit for Courses with a Corresponding EOC

Credit will be awarded for homeschool and non-accredited school courses with the receipt of a passing EOC score of 70 or greater. The grade provided on the homeschool or non-accredited school transcript will be reflected on the GCA transcript.

If a student takes the EOC and does not score a 70 or better, “NG” for No Grade will be reflected as the grade on the GCA transcript. The NG does not affect credit total or the student’s GPA in any way. The student will be required to take the EOC course again through GCA to satisfy their graduation requirements.

Awarding Credit for Courses Satisfying an Elective Credit for Graduation

If a thorough course description is submitted on the GCA Homeschool Transcript Form or Non-accredited School Transcript, elective credit will be awarded. The Homeschool or Non-accredited school grade will be excluded from GPA calculations.

Awarding Credit for Courses Satisfying an Academic Course for Graduation

Counselors will use their expertise along with the assistance of content area experts to determine if the student has mastered the curriculum. After comparing the submitted course description to the Georgia course description, the counselor may request further assessment from the respective subject area Lead Teacher to ensure content was covered and mastered. A formal assessment may be required to receive academic course transcript credit.

If the counselor and/or grade band Assistant Principal determine Georgia standards HAVE been met and mastered, academic course credit will be awarded. However, the Homeschool or Non- accredited School grade will be excluded from the GPA calculations.

If the counselor and/or grade band Assistant Principal determine that Georgia standards HAVE NOT been met and mastered, elective credit will be awarded for the Homeschool or Non- accredited School course. However, the Homeschool or Non-accredited School grade will be excluded from the GPA calculations. The student will

be required to take the academic course again through GCA for academic course credit to satisfy their graduation requirements.

Transfer Credits for Outside Courses Taken While Enrolled

Any credits taken outside of GCA must be pre-approved by administration and/or school counselors to be considered as potential transfer credit and must be taken through an accredited institution.

Transferring GCA Credits to Another School

Course credits earned at Georgia Cyber Academy are transferable at the discretion of the receiving school, which has the right to award or deny credit transfers based on their policies.

COURSEWORK

Accessing Your Assignments

Lessons are structured using modules that guide students to complete content in order. When courses allow students to work ahead, conditional release settings may be used to ensure proper order of completion.

Submitting Your Assignments

All assignments should be saved within the student's Google Drive. If there are ever technical issues, you have the assignments ready to submit again if needed. If a problem arises during submission, email your teacher the assignment with a screenshot of what occurred. Otherwise, all assignments should be submitted within the course. All assignment due dates are set and communicated using Eastern Standard Time (EST). Any assignment received after the due date and time according to Eastern Standard Time will be considered late.

Grade Response Time

Please allow a turn-around time of 3-5 school days after submitting an assignment during the Fall and Spring semesters and one school day during the summer semester, although you will often receive your grade sooner. For major projects, teachers may indicate a longer turn-around time for grading. Teachers will notify students when additional time is required to assess assignments such as projects. Keep the turn-around time in mind when planning your schedule so you can turn in assignments and still allow time for feedback.

GRADING

Our mission is to provide students with a flexible, high-quality, and interactive virtual learning environment. Student success will be measured by valid and reliable assessment data and continued institutional growth within the academic community. In the spirit of the student success measurement component, the following

guidelines outline our mastery-based grading principles and expectations.

Grading Scales

Kindergarten through 2nd grade

All academic subjects in Kindergarten-2nd grades are assessed based on student progress and mastery of the standards. Students receive a grade for engagement in each course, completion of required assessments, and mastery of each standard.

The following grading scale applies and reflects student mastery of each standard:

- 4 - Distinguished (only applicable to specific standards)
- 3 - Proficient (expected level of mastery)
- 2 - Developing
- 1 - Beginning

3rd through 12th grade

Final Grades are reported numerically based on the following scale:

- A = 90-100+
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- F = 0-69

Grades at or above seventy percent (70%) are considered passing. Students taking high school courses will earn 1 credit for each block course grade at or above seventy percent (70%).

Gradebook Composition

There must be at a minimum five (5) grades per semester in all sections of the grade book, except for the Final Exam section, which will have one (1) grade per semester. A project/ paper may be broken into up to five (5) sections for the extended coursework section.

- Mandatory Benchmark, Growth, and Summative Assessment Participation grades shall be either 0% or 100%, based on whether the exam was taken or not AND within the time period allowed.
- Students may earn over 100% on any assignment, test or benchmark with extra credit.
- A student's overall cumulative average grade may be over 100% in a grade level's subject area.
- A student's overall cumulative grade earned in any subject/ course will be reflected on their report card and transcript and accurately reported in Infinite Campus to the second decimal place.

Grades are calculated as outlined below:

Gradebook Category	Description	PGB (K-2)	EGB (3-5)	MGB (6-8)	SGB (9-12)	AIM Classes (K-8)	AIM Intervention (Study Skills	ESOL Classes	LIFE Classes	Elective Classes

							Elective) (9-12)	(1-8)	(K-12)	(1-8)
Coursework	Discussions, curriculum lessons, quizzes, etc.	Standards Based Grading: 1 - Beginning Learner 2 - Developing Learner 3 - Proficient Learner 4 - Distinguished Learner N/A - Not Yet Assessed Standards Grades will be entered throughout the year as standards are assessed in each course. At the end of the year, the overall final grade will be converted to a final grade of P (Pass) or F (Fail).	50%	50%	50%	80%	50%	100%	100%	50%
Assessments	Unit Tests, Teacher Created Assessments, NWEA MAP, IAs, Beacon, NWEA Reading Fluency, Exams, Write Score, Midterm Exams, etc.		50%	50%	40%					50%
Class Engagement	Student is adhering to their class engagement requirements/rubric						50%			
Assessment Participation	Pre-Test, NWEA MAP, Interim Assessments, Milestones, iReady Diagnostics, NWEA Reading Fluency, WriteScore, Beacon, WIDA Screener, GAA, ELLs 2.0, etc. These assessments and any others assigned by a teacher are mandatory. This section gives credit for participation.					10%				
EOG/EOC/Final Exam	EGB & MGB EOG SGB EOC/Final Exam		5%* (Q4)	5%* (Q4)	10%* (Q4)	10%				
TOTAL		**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**		**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
***EOG and EOC percentages count in the content course for which they correlate.**										

Late Work

At Georgia Cyber Academy students are responsible for accessing and completing daily assignments, as outlined in each course calendar. Due dates for assignments are posted in each course calendar to ensure that students are informed of appropriate pacing.

All coursework/assignments must be completed and submitted no later than the assigned time OR by 11:59 pm EST on the posted due date if no specific time is denoted by the teacher.

- Temporary zeroes are entered as grades for each assignment not submitted by the due date. The temporary zeroes will be calculated into the overall course scores for assignments that remain unsubmitted during the allotted late work policy window.
- All students are permitted to complete all coursework (excluding assessments) up to seven (7) days

after the due date (including weekends) for partial credit. Assignments received after the actual due date WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION, but within the granted grace period, will be graded and then receive an additional 5% deduction taken for each day past the original assignment due date with a minimum grade of 50%. The new grade will replace the zero in the grade book.

- Coursework received more than seven (7) days after the due date will not be accepted for grades, unless prior arrangements have been requested. Permanent zeroes will be entered as grades for these assignments and for assignments not received by the permanent zero deadline.
- IMPORTANT NOTE regarding assessments – NWEA MAP, Interim Assessments, Unit Tests, WriteScore, final exams, and other assessments as determined by the school must be completed within the class period(s) scheduled. Extended time will be followed. In some cases, it may be appropriate for assessments to be given early if a student completes work at a faster pace than their assigned class.

Due date extensions on assignments may be permitted under some extenuating circumstances with advance approval from school administration. Extenuating circumstances may include, but are not limited to, conflicting student work schedules (Counseling ***AND*** Principal approval required), hospitalizations, debilitating illness, conflicting medical treatments, new parenting responsibilities (Counseling AND Principal approval required), APPROVED travel (Superintendent approval required), conflicting academic competitions.

For students with Individualized Education (IEP) or 504 Plans, the plan accommodations and requirements regarding extended time will be followed.

Late Policy

All students are permitted to complete all coursework (excluding assessments) up to seven (7) days after the due date (including weekends) for partial credit. Assignments received after the actual due date WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION, but within the granted grace period, will be graded and then receive an additional 5% deduction taken for each day past the original assignment due date with a minimum grade of 50%. The new grade will replace the zero in the grade book.

Extra Credit

Extra credit may be offered at the discretion of the teacher. Any extra credit opportunities will be offered to the entire class, not to individual students. Examples of extra credit opportunities include:

- Study Guides
- Enrichment Projects

Secondary Grades (High School) Course Failure and Repeat Credit

Failed courses will be recorded as an 'F' and/or with the failing numerical grade on the student's transcript and a zero-quality point will be computed for the course in determining the GPA. Students are permitted to retake failed courses. Courses required for graduation must be re-taken and passed. If a student re-takes a course, the initial failing grade and the subsequent repeated grade will appear on a student's transcript and both

grades will be factored into the student's overall GPA.

Grade Appeals

Course Grade appeals must be submitted in writing to the school principal within thirty (30) days of the term end date. Upon receipt of the appeal, the school principal will lead a review internally among faculty, staff and administration.

A grade appeal may only be disputed for the following reasons:

- The grade was issued in error. This includes situations where there was a miscalculation of grade points that resulted in a lower grade for the appeal. The student must clearly demonstrate the miscalculation. It also includes situations such as missing records, mistaken grade entries, etc.
- The student's documentation that he or she previously received a higher grade on a similar assignment at the same level of competency.
- At least ten (10) business days are required for the principal and his/ her team to review a grade appeal request and issue an official decision. Appeal requests are permitted once per student, per term and all decisions are considered final.

Secondary Grades (High School) Grade Point Averages (GPA)

For secondary grades students, GPAs are determined by multiplying the GPA Weight by the GPA Value for each course, adding those numbers together and then dividing by the total number of credits attempted. The transcript reflects semester averages as well as the student's cumulative GPA. Earned grades greater than 100% will be depicted on the high school transcript as what the student earned. Courses taken outside of Georgia Cyber Academy are not included in the GPA if not taken at an accredited school. High school courses taken while in middle school are included in the GPA and are shown on the transcript unless the Learning Coach has opted out of this option.

Report Cards and Progress

One of the many features available to students and parents/ learning coaches is a current report of academic progress, grades, and attendance information. A parent/ learning coach or student may monitor student current progress grades within each course gradebook, unless otherwise directed. A report card will be issued at the end of each semester and will be available in Infinite Campus. Report cards should be retrieved through Infinite Campus and will not be mailed to the student's home. If you need assistance with your Infinite Campus account, please contact your Family Engagement Liaison.

PROMOTION, RETENTION, and GRADUATION

K-8 Promotion and Retention

K-8 promotion and retention is determined by multiple data points including but not limited to: content grades,

NWEA MAP assessments, Interim Assessments, Reading Assessment, Write Score Assessments, i-Ready tests, Final Exams, and Milestones scores or a replacement for Milestones should the state test be suspended or waived. A historical perspective is also considered. Note: The Milestones results are more heavily weighted as this is our only teacher proctored assessment. Parents are provided an opportunity to appeal all retention decisions. See the GCA Promotion and Retention Policy in the Appendix or on our website.

High School Grade Level Assignment/Placement

Grade level placement is based on the total number of credits the student has earned. Students must earn the number of required credits prior to the start of the school year. Mid-year grade level changes are not permitted.

Promotion Requirements	
Grade Level	Credits Needed for Placement
10	6 – 11.5
11	12 – 17.5
12	18 or more

Georgia Cyber Academy Graduation Requirements

Students are required to complete 23 Total Credit Hours:

- **4 units of English/Language Arts** (a full unit of Literature & Composition I and Literature & Composition II are required)
- **4 units of Math** (Algebra: Concepts and Connections, Geometry: Concepts and Connections, and Advanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections shall be required, the fourth unit of math must be chosen from the approved list of GaDOE math courses)
- **4 units of Science** (a full unit of Biology; one of Physical Science or Physics; one unit of either Chemistry, Earth Systems or Environmental Science and one additional science unit are required)
- **3 units of Social Studies** (a full unit of United States History; one unit of World History; ½ unit of American Government/Civics and ½ unit of Economics are required)
- **3 units of CTAE/World Language/Fine Arts**: A total of 3 units shall be required. If a student plans to attend a 4 year college/university the student should take 2 consecutive years of the same World Language
- **4 units of elective** credits
    - **½ unit of Personal Fitness**
    - **½ unit of Health**

Honors Graduate Requirements

- **Summa Cum Laude:** Graduates who have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 or better and have at least two units of Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment credits.

- **Magna Cum Laude:** Graduates who have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 - 3.99 and have at least two units of Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment credits.
- **Cum Laude:** Graduates who have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or better and do not meet the qualifications for Summa Cum Laude or Magna Cum Laude
- **Valedictorian** is the Summa Cum Laude graduate who has the highest GPA.
- **Salutatorian** is the Summa Cum Laude who has the second highest GPA.

*2nd semester senior grades excluded from calculations.

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments are a necessary tool by which we can identify students' strengths and weaknesses in order to better individualize their educational plan and supports and they are used to inform classroom instruction. These tools also assist us in determining a student's level of academic mastery and may play a significant role in grade level placement decisions.

Students are required to take many assessments/tests/diagnostics/exams on camera & microphone. Teachers shall also use our management platform to monitor students through the student's school account within Google Chrome during the assessment window. It is at the sole discretion of the teacher and/or school administration whether a student is required to take assessments/tests/diagnostics/exams on camera regardless of their proficiency level. If a student is required to take an assessment/test/diagnostic/exam on camera and fails to do so, then they will earn a zero (0) for that assessment/test/diagnostic/exam. Note: All students are required to take all assessments/tests/diagnostics/exams on camera and/or microphone as may be applicable.

All students are required to attend tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams when they are assigned, or they will receive a zero (0). Students with excused absences will be given a make-up exam. Students may receive both a performance mastery grade as well as a participation grade for all tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams.

Students may be required to retake a test/assessment/diagnostic/exam if there is concern and/or indicators that the student did not take adequate time to perform the assigned task, did not take the test on camera, may have been assisted in performing the assessment in a manner that was not specifically permitted, and/or that the results may not have been the student's own work. The determination of whether a student needs to retake a test/assessment/diagnostic/exam is at the sole discretion of the teacher and/or school administration. If a student is required to retake a test/assessment/diagnostic/exam, then a zero (0) will remain as the student's grade until the test is retaken. If a student is found to have cheated on an exam, then the student may receive a zero (0) for the test/assessment/exam or may be given the opportunity to retake the test/assessment/exam for a score not to exceed 70% at the sole discretion of the teacher and/or school administration.

If the validity of an assessment/test/diagnostic/exam result is in question the student may be required to retake the exam in-person at the sole discretion of the school's administration.

Testing for the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (End-of-Grade and End-of-Course exams), Georgia

Alternate Assessment (GAA), and ACCESS for ELLs are mandatory for applicable students. They must be taken in person at the assigned location and time and on the assigned date.

Gifted Testing is by invitation only and may be given in person and/or online proctored by camera and microphone at the sole discretion of the school administration and/or according to specific testing requirements. The testing is optional, but a 'Gifted' designation may be required to participate in specific programs and/or activities and cannot be acquired without participation in Gifted Testing.

There may be additional required tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams depending on the grade level, course, and/or a student's special circumstances that are monitored on camera and/or are taken in person. A student's special circumstances may include but is not limited to those that may be required for RtI/MTSS monitoring, to participate in the Advanced & Gifted Program, to be considered for AP/Dual Enrollment classes, and/or as may be required per a student's IEP.

All students have a set amount of time to complete tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams unless extended time is allowed per a student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Students who receive accommodations for extended time are typically expected to submit their tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams on the same due date as other students as extended time usually refers to the number of minutes allowed to complete an assessment; however, students are provided all necessary provisions as noted in their IEP and/or 504 Plan even if extended time, in rare instances, refers to an amended due date.

Diagnostics

All students take diagnostic assessments to help teachers plan lessons and group students based on their needs.

- Grades K-5: Students take the i-Ready Diagnostic.
- Grades 6-12: Students take the NWEA MAP tests.

Both diagnostics are mandatory. Scores are not used for report card grades but are entered into the gradebook as participation grades. Students who complete the test will receive a 100%. Students who do not complete the test within two weeks of enrollment will receive a 0% until the assessment is finished.

Quizzes

Quizzes may be administered throughout the course to assist teachers in assessing student mastery as well as to guide instruction.

Interim Assessments

Interim Assessments are administered during the last week of each Instructional Cycle, typically during live class sessions. All students must take these tests while on camera, no matter their current skill level. Most IAs are taken in Illuminate. For subjects tested on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (see the GMAS section below), students will take IAs on the state's DRC Beacon platform. These tests help predict how students are likely to perform on the End-of-Grade (EOG) or End-of-Course (EOC) state exams.

Interim Assessments will be recorded in the gradebook as both an assessment and a participation grade. They will be graded for accuracy and the student's actual score will be entered in the Assessment category of the gradebook. Students will not be allowed to retake an Interim Assessment.

All students have a set amount of time to complete tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams unless extended time is allowed per a student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Students who receive accommodations for extended time are typically expected to submit their tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams on the same due date as other students as extended time usually refers to the number of minutes allowed to complete an assessment; however, students are provided all necessary provisions as noted in their IEP and/or 504 Plan even if extended time in rare instances necessitates an amended due date.

Final Exams

Final Exams are the summative assessment for each semester. Sometimes Final Exams are referred to as Interim Assessments (IAs), especially during the first semester of a year-long course/subject. If a Final Exam is referred to as an Interim Assessment, then it will be the *LAST* Interim Assessment administered in the semester. All students are required to take their Final Exams monitored on camera regardless of their proficiency level.

Final Exams will be recorded in the gradebook as both an assessment and a participation grade. Final exams will count toward the student's final course average. They will be graded for accuracy and the student's actual score will be entered in the Final Exam category of the gradebook. Students will not be allowed to retake a Final Exam.

All students have a set amount of time to complete tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams unless extended time is allowed per a student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Students who receive accommodations for extended time are typically expected to submit their tests/assessments/diagnostics/exams on the same due date as other students as extended time usually refers to the number of minutes allowed to complete an assessment. However, students are provided all necessary provisions as noted in their IEP and/or 504 Plan even if extended time in rare instances refers to an amended due date.

Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS)

All Georgia Cyber Academy 3rd grade through secondary grade (high school) level students are required to attend various state- mandated summative assessments each year. **Opt-outs are not permitted**. Students who have an approved, excused absence will be required to make-up missed tests on an alternate day during the approved testing window or re-test during the summer if that is an option. Students may be withdrawn for truancy for not attending state mandated tests. Students may be retained for failing to take state mandated tests. Students may fail to be awarded credit for a high school course for failing to take state mandated tests.

NOTE: If a family has students in multiple grade bands, then it is possible that the family may have students

assigned to BOTH the morning and the afternoon testing windows during the Milestones Assessment period, thus occupying most of that family's day. If a family has students in both 3-8 grades and in high school, then the Spring and/or Summer Milestones Assessment window may require participation over the course of two weeks depending on the high school EOC tests required.

Students in Grades 3-8 take an End-Of-Grade (EOG) Assessment in English/ Language Arts and Mathematics, while students in Grade 5 are also assessed in Science and students in Grade 8 are additionally assessed in Science and Social Studies.

Students in grades 3 through 8 are required to receive a reading determination of Grade Level or Above on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in reading and to attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics and ELA sections of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment to be promoted to the next grade level.

All K-8 students that failed math or reading/ELA are offered summer remediation to assist in closing academic gaps in knowledge/skills. 3rd, 5th, and 8th Grade students who score an achievement level of "Beginning Learner" are offered summer remediation to assist in closing academic gaps prior to retaking the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment.

For grades 3, 5, and 8, if a student takes the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and does not score proficient or distinguished in reading, mathematics, and/or ELA, we offer help for the student to reinforce academic skills needing additional attention and an opportunity to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment again. A student who does not score at grade level on this second administration of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment or who does not take the second administration of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment may be retained.

Note: The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) does not offer Science or Social Studies EOG summer retest opportunities. The GaDOE does not offer 4th, 6th, or 7th grades the opportunity to retake EOGs during the summer. The GaDOE does not offer 3rd graders the opportunity to retake the math EOG during the summer. *GaDOE makes the decision which retests are offered. Georgia Cyber Academy has no say in the matter.*

Secondary Grades and Middle Grades students enrolled in a Georgia Milestones End-Of-Course (EOC) Course take an EOC Assessment for each of the high school courses listed in the EOC course table below at the completion of that subject*, unless a dual enrollment college final or AP exam exemption is allowed per GaDOE guidelines.*

- All students enrolled in Algebra: Concepts and Connections, Literature & Composition II and Composition, or Biology MUST take the associated EOC exam regardless of the course level (i.e. AP/IB) or the course grade awarded by a postsecondary institution (i.e. Dual Enrollment).
- A student shall be exempt from taking the US History EOC assessment if they pass an AP/IB/Dual Enrollment US History course for core credit.

Typically, the EOC tests are administered at the completion of the course, regardless of the grade level. These assessments serve as the final exam for the course and count as ten percent (10%) of the student's final course grade.

IF state EOC tests are suspended or waived for any reason, then a replacement final exam will be given in their

place and the final exam will count 10% of the EOC course grade in place of the state EOC test grade.

EOC courses:

English/ Language Arts	Literature & Composition II and Composition
Mathematics	Algebra: Concepts and Connections
Science	Biology
Social Studies	United States History

IMPORTANT NOTES: Students who are testing to validate credits from a home school or unaccredited private school only have one opportunity to test before an NG is awarded for the course, at which point the student will have to retake the course.

Students testing for course completion have two opportunities to test before a zero is factored into their grade for their EOC score.

Advanced Placement (AP) Course Exams

AP Exams are offered for all AP courses.

For the possibility of earning college credit for an AP course, a student must take the AP exam for that course and pass at the level required by their receiving college, university, and/or technical school.

AP students, also, take an AP Final Exam. AP students can take the Georgia Milestones EOC Assessment in lieu of the AP final exam for the following courses unless the EOC has already been taken for a lower-level high school course:

- AP Microeconomics
- AP Macroeconomics
- AP United States History
- AP American Literature and Composition

If a student chooses not to take the AP Exam, then they will not receive college credit for the course. Typically, colleges and universities require a score of 3 or higher on the corresponding AP exam to receive college credit for the course; although, some require a 4 or 5 to receive college credit. Please check with your intended college or university to determine their credit rules regarding AP courses.

It is assumed that students in AP courses are not taking the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment in the exempted courses allowed by the state and are taking the AP exam for that course unless they notify a GCA teacher, counselor, or administrator otherwise.

A Georgia Milestone EOC assessment grade may only count in one course. For example, a student who takes the US History Georgia Milestone EOC assessment may not count that Georgia Milestone EOC assessment grade in both a US History course and an AP US History course. Also, if a student is taking the course a second

time, the first Georgia Milestone EOC assessment score cannot be counted as the Georgia Milestone EOC assessment grade.

Testing Site Assignments

Georgia Milestones End-Of-Grade (EOG) and End-Of-Course (EOC) testing will be conducted in-person at multiple testing sites throughout the state. The tests will be proctored by Georgia Cyber Academy faculty and staff over a one to five-day period, depending on the test and the student's grade level.

Students will be notified in advance of their testing site assignments and testing dates and times. Students are assigned a test site based on proximity to their primary address on file. Every effort is made to secure a test site within forty-five (45) miles of a student's home, but it is not always possible due to the availability of feasible sites and/or the number of students within a given area.

Important Notes: There are fewer testing sites for December EOC administrations and summer Milestones Re-Tests than there are for the spring administrations. Therefore, please be aware that for December EOC administrations and summer Milestones Re-Tests students may be required to attend at a different location than they did during the Spring Milestones administrations. Also, site locations and their availability change from year to year, so students may or may not have the opportunity to test at the same site from previous years or testing administrations.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES ARE NOT CONSIDERED A VALID EXCUSE TO MISS MILESTONES TESTING. If a student encounters transportation issues on any given day of Milestones EOC/EOG testing, then make-ups will be arranged provided that the state testing window has not closed, or the student can be moved to an alternate testing site that is located on a public transportation line.

Other In-Person Assessments

In addition to the Georgia Milestones EOG and EOC tests, the following assessments may also be administered in- person at the sole discretion of school administration and/or may be mandatory depending on program/service/assessment requirements:

- Georgia Alternative Assessment
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0
- WIDA Screener
- Gifted Testing
- Special Education evaluations
- PSAT
- SAT
- ACT
- Advanced Placement (AP) Exams
- Accuplacer
- ASVAB
- DIBELS (Grades K-5) – rarely applicable
- NWEA Reading Fluency – rarely applicable

- I-Ready Diagnostic – rarely applicable
- NWEA Growth Assessments - rarely applicable
- Interim Assessments – rarely applicable
- Final Exams - rarely applicable
- End of Pathway Assessments

Specific testing dates and locations will be published no later than two weeks prior to the testing window. All guidance for students who are taking End of Pathway assessments can be found on the GADOE website, but specific arrangements for any GCA students who are taking an End of Pathway assessment will be provided to that student no less than two weeks before the assessment, if GCA is administering the test. If the student is taking an EOPA that is not offered by GCA, their counselor can assist them in registering and preparing for the assessment, as well as showing them the testing arrangements upon registration for the test. Any student who registers for an End of Pathway Assessment on their own, should notify their counselor that they are registered for the test and any outcomes of the test. This data is used for GA DOE CTAE reports, CCRPI scores, and possibly for student award ceremonies, such as Honor's Day. Attendance at testing is mandatory. Students may face academic and disciplinary consequences for non-participation in testing, including withdrawal from Georgia Cyber Academy.

In-Person Testing Attendance

There is no legal “opt-out” of mandated testing, including Georgia Milestones Assessments. The State of Georgia’s legislation does not permit opt-outs from state mandated assessments (Georgia Law O.C.G.A. §20-2-281). GCA students who do not attend testing will be counted as absent. The refusal to participate will impact overall school achievement and CCRPI scores (State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11). More importantly, the absence of state mandated testing would result in data that does not reflect the true achievement of the student and would not show a complete and accurate picture of the academic performance and quality of instructional programs.

Both state and federal laws currently require the annual assessment of all students enrolled in public schools in identified grades and courses and neither law nor policy currently allow for a parent to opt a student out of this requirement for any reason. Parents who wish to advocate for a change in testing requirements are encouraged to contact their federal legislators and to work within the legislative process.

Students are required to attend all scheduled in-person testing sessions. To be excused, valid documentation must be provided — this includes a medical note from a healthcare provider or official evidence of a family emergency.

Please note that personal notes from parents stating a student is "not feeling well" or verbal explanations such as car trouble will **not** be accepted. If appropriate documentation is not submitted, the absence will be marked as an **unexcused (UA)**.

Only documented situations that prevent a student from being at the test site will qualify for an excused absence.

Special Education Services

The 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the more recent 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) have mandated that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children with disabilities, from birth through age 21, who live within the district.

Georgia Cyber Academy will make a concerted effort to identify, locate, and evaluate children who have a suspected or confirmed disability, in accordance with all federal regulations and state standards as required by Child Find. In addition, it shall be the policy of Georgia Cyber Academy that the child with a disability and his or her parents/ guardians shall be provided with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in conjunction with procedural safeguards, as required by law, throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process.

Students with disabilities can be found eligible for Special Education based on the following eligibility categories:

- Autism
- Deafblind
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Emotional & Behavioral Disorder
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Significant Developmental Delay
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech-Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment & Blindness

Students with disabilities who qualify for Special Education Services can receive a free appropriate education (FAPE) based on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Georgia Cyber Academy delivers special education programming and related services in the least restrictive environment, as determined by the student's IEP team. Related Services, such as Speech, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy, etc. are determined through review of various data sources to include evaluations and progress monitoring data. Instruction and services delivered in a virtual and/or face to face environment are provided at no cost to the parent, guardian or student. Through the virtual learning environment, students can be served using regular education, additional supportive services, consultative, co-teaching, collaborative, and/or small group settings.

Progress monitoring of IEP goals is accomplished through a variety of data collection methods using a variety of instructional programs, as well as individualized assessments designed by special education and general education teachers. IEP mandated, specialized instructional services are provided via online learning platform, and progress data is collected during live class sessions. These sessions are designed to aid in the continuous progression and mastery of students' IEP goals and objectives. These sessions, led by certified special education teachers, are intended to support the student's academic, behavioral, and post-secondary needs.

All members of the Georgia Cyber Academy school community believe that varied instructional practices and learning environments benefit all children. In sum, Georgia Cyber Academy is committed to the full implementation of IDEA. When students served through the Department of Special Education are provided with

the appropriate supports, as outlined in their IEP and through the collaborative efforts of parents, students, teachers, therapists, and other faculty/ staff (as appropriate), we believe they will achieve.

Any additional information regarding Parent Rights, Special Education Records, and services offered should be directed to J. Brock Tarno jtarno@georgiacyber.org.

Students receiving special education services may have additional face-to-face, on camera, and attendance requirements per their IEP. The learning coach or designated adult will have additional meetings with staff as is required.

Please visit the Special Education section on our website for more information.

Advanced and Gifted Program

The Advanced and Gifted Program (A&G) is a supplemental program designed to meet the needs of our advanced learners in a variety of ways including enriched sessions, curriculum compacting, topic enrichment and extension, honors, advanced, and/or accelerated course planning and placement; along with other activities which incorporate academics, multiple intelligences, and social interaction.

General Advanced & Gifted program qualifications are set forth by Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) guidelines and implemented in accordance with specific Georgia Cyber Academy program criteria. These requirements are subject to change year to year; therefore, students may need to re-qualify annually to remain in the A&G program.

Participants in the Advanced & Gifted program are expected to maintain exemplary progress and achievement. If you feel your student qualifies for the program, please contact the Assistant Director of Advanced & Gifted Programs, Marchele Nelson, at mnelson@georgiacyber.org for additional information. Please note that students must qualify each year to participate in the Advanced & Gifted Program.

Advanced & Gifted learning options also include Advanced Placement (AP), Acceleration, and Honors courses. Georgia Cyber Academy plans to offer the following AP and Honors courses for the 2025-2026 school year:

- Honors 9th Grade Literature and Composition
- Honors World Literature
- Honors American Literature
- Honors Biology
- Honors Chemistry
- Honors Physics
- Honors Algebra
- Honors Geometry
- Honors World History
- AP Psychology
- AP US History
- AP World History
- AP US Government and Politics
- AP Calculus AB

- AP Calculus BC
- AP Pre-Calculus
- AP Statistics
- AP English Literature and Composition
- AP English Language and Composition
- AP Biology
- AP Environmental Science

In addition, Georgia Cyber Academy will allow qualifying students to take the following AP classes through Georgia Virtual School for the 2024-2025 school year:

- AP Research
- AP Seminar
- AP Art History
- AP Music Theory
- AP Chemistry
- AP Physics 1: Algebra Based
- AP Physics 2: Algebra Based
- AP Physics C: Mechanics
- AP Human Geography
- AP Comparative Government and Politics
- AP European History
- AP Microeconomics
- AP Macroeconomics
- AP Computer Sciences A
- AP Computer Science Principles
- AP Spanish Language and Culture
- AP French Language and Culture

Please visit the Advanced & Gifted section on our website for more information: georgiacyber.org/students/advanced-gifted

Instructional Support Services

Instructional Support Services (ISS) includes programs like 504 plans for students with medical needs, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for targeted academic and behavioral interventions, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services for our multilingual learners. We offer specialized Hospital Homebound services and conduct ongoing Child Find activities to identify students who may need additional support

Section 504 Plans

Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria for Special Education services may be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations when they have a documented disability that: (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. The determination of whether a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (and therefore has a disability) must be made on a case-by-case basis and is subject to review by the school 504 team. After all documentation of the disability and its academic impact for the student is collected, an eligibility meeting will be held with the teacher(s), parent/legal guardian, 504 coordinator, and administrator

to determine plan eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Please review the 504 page located on our website for complete information on 504 Plans and their requirements.

Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)

Georgia Cyber Academy supports the academic achievement of all students, particularly those most at-risk. The Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) team composed of parents, teachers, administrators, trained professionals, and the student (as appropriate), uses a tiered model incorporating problem-solving methods and research based interventions to identify and serve students having academic, behavioral or emotional difficulties. The goal of the MTSS process is for the teacher, learning coach, and/or parent to work together so the student may achieve a satisfactory rate of progress in the regular educational setting, preventing the need for more intensive services at a later period. In accordance with the Georgia Department of Education, all students at Georgia Cyber Academy participate in the MTSS process, which is embedded in the school's instructional model. This model includes standards-based curriculum, direct instruction from certified teachers via live sessions, other supplemental programs, as well as all state mandated assessments. As a student identified as needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports, they would receive supplemental help from their teacher, such as small group or individual Live Class sessions and/or other research-based interventions and may move up the tiered process for additional support. The teacher, intervention specialist, and the learning coach/parent form a partnership to determine which additional interventions are required to further support the student's learning needs.

The teacher and learning coach/parent carefully follow and document the student's response to those interventions over a course of six weeks. During this period, data is collected and reviewed to determine whether the recommended interventions are effective. Once the data has been collected and reviewed, the Student Support Team (SST), made up of the classroom teacher, learning coach/ parent, and other intervention specialists, reviews the student's progress, assignments, assessment scores, educational and family learning history, medical history and the results of the interventional strategies previously attempted with the student. If the interventions have shown little to no effect on student progress, the SST may recommend a referral for further academic or behavioral screenings, a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation and/or a referral to participate in other supplemental programs designed for more intensive student support. Since MTSS is a process, not a program, students may move up and down through the tiers throughout their academic career. The goal of MTSS is a proactive one, to provide students with the tools necessary to achieve academic success.

Note: Regardless of whether a student is struggling or typically does well academically, there may be times that extra support is required to master a skill or concept. When students are invited to a small group reinforcement session or tutoring, they are required to attend the live session even if they have full flexibility.

Please visit the Instructional Support Services section on our website for more information.

STUDENT LIFE: RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The Family Engagement Team was established in 2010 to provide meaningful support to GCA students and their learning coaches. Since its inception, the team has grown significantly—from five original members to a team of almost one hundred dedicated professionals. Every GCA family is assigned a Family Engagement Liaison (FEL) who supports them throughout their academic journey at our school.

The Family Engagement Team is committed to helping students and learning coaches successfully navigate the virtual learning environment. We work to support students in overcoming academic as well as other challenges that may arise. By collaborating with all GCA departments, the team ensures families receive the individualized support they need to thrive.

Our holistic approach includes early intervention, tailored support services, and connections to both school and community-based resources. Team members—including Family Engagement Liaisons and Family School Partnership Coordinators partner closely with families to promote strong communication, student motivation, and consistent engagement. Together, we strive to create a supportive educational environment where all students can succeed.

More information about the Georgia Cyber Academy Family Engagement program can be found on the GCA website.

Family Engagement Liaison Responsibilities:

- Facilitates a close working relationship between families and other school staff by being a main point of contact.
- Guides new families through the Strong Start Process (onboarding) to ensure understanding and navigation of the main online school platforms. Provides troubleshooting and basic platform support throughout the school year. (Canvas, Clever, Google Workspace, Class, Infinite Campus, Nucleus (Attendance Program), etc.)
- Initiates regular and frequent contact with families to encourage attendance and compliance with school requirements and initiatives
- FELs and content teachers work together with families to provide the extra help needed to enable students to stay motivated and on track.
- Guides and directs the student through using the Online School Platform.
- Informs students and families of school updates/ information.
- Provides support in all areas of successful student learning and achievement.

Family Engagement Liaisons are available Monday-Friday from 8 am until 4 pm. When you reach out to your FEL, you should expect to receive a response within twenty-four hours (on school days).

COUNSELING AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Through a holistic approach, the Georgia Cyber Academy Counseling Department will empower all students to reach their full potential by using a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes academic, career, and personal and social development. Our program will foster the growth of each student as a civic-minded contributor to their local communities and beyond. Upon graduation, students will be college- and/or career-ready and will possess the competencies necessary to make self-directed, realistic, and responsible decisions, becoming successful contributors to society.

Counseling & Student Support Services Mission

The mission of the Georgia Cyber Academy's (GCA) Counseling & Student Support Services Department is to provide a data informed comprehensive program that is accessible to all students and supports students with acquiring the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to graduate as college and career ready contributors to society.

Counseling & Student Support Services Vision

Through a holistic approach, the Georgia Cyber Academy Counseling Department will empower all students to reach their highest potential by using a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes academic, career and personal/social development so students will be college and/or career ready leaders in society.

All stakeholders within Georgia Cyber Academy share in the benefits of its comprehensive school counseling program.

Student Benefits

- Access for all students to the comprehensive school counseling program.
- Monitors and interprets data to facilitate student improvement and school success.
- Provides strategies for closing the achievement gap.
- Creates a culture of college and career readiness for all students.
- Advocates for students and promotes equitable access to educational opportunities.
- Offers career and social/ emotional development.

Parent/ Guardian Benefits

- Supports active partnerships for student learning and career planning.
- Invites and coordinates access to school and community resources.
- Advocates for student academic, career, and personal development.
- Provides training and informational workshops.

The Counseling department at Georgia Cyber Academy is made up of Assistant Directors, School Counselors, Social Workers, Transitional Student Liaisons, Graduation Coaches, Placement Counselors, Work-Based Learning Professionals, Event Coordinators, and professional personnel with a wealth of experience and knowledge. Many have worked for years in brick-and-mortar schools with all grade bands, including college level students.

Our department strives to continue the development and implementation of the comprehensive counseling and social work programs based upon the identified needs of Georgia Cyber Academy students in grades K-12. We also aim to integrate school counseling and social work programs within the total educational curriculum and programming of the school.

Programs offered by the Counseling Department include:

- K-5 Counseling
- Middle Grades Counseling
- 9th Grade Counseling
- Secondary Grades 10-12 Counseling
- Dual Enrollment Counseling
- Graduation Coaching
- Accelerated Career Diploma Program
- Work-Based Learning
- Academic Placement and Compliance
- Advocacy
- Community Engagement/Outreach
- Personal/Crisis Counseling
- Academic Counseling
- Post-Secondary Counseling
- K-5 Social Work
- MS Social Work
- HS Social Work
- MKV (Homeless) Social Work
- Mental Health Support
- Community Resource Coordination
- Parent and Family Guidance/Support

Suicide Awareness and Mental Health Support (All Grade Levels)

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. Information will be provided to students about suicide prevention and positive attitudes about mental health. This will increase students' ability to recognize the warning signs of suicide and how to seek help for the individual.

Many of the indicators of abuse are common to multiple categories of abuse. Indicators like running away, school problems, aggression, depression, anxiety, withdrawal, excessive worries, substance abuse, self- injury, and suicidal thoughts or actions could be a response to any type of abuse.

Deciding why a child needs help is less important than acting on your concern that a child is in harm's way. If the child you are concerned about has attempted suicide in the past or your concern is about the danger that the child represents to him or herself, you may want to contact the Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800- 273-TALK (8255) to learn more.

Some of the warning signs that someone is at high risk include:

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having a reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself

If you are concerned about your child or you are having thoughts of suicide, please access or contact the

school counselor or social worker for more information related to suicide prevention services available in your area. For access to services and immediate crisis help, call the Georgia Crisis & Access Line (GCAL) at 1-800-715-4225, available 24/7. You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Georgia Cyber Academy's security platform, Securly, monitors student search history to protect our students. If a severe self-harm alert occurs during weekends or holidays, Securly will send a law enforcement officer to conduct a well-check.

Prevent Child Abuse

It takes parents, caregivers, and supportive resources to help children thrive. Parents and children are often in complex situations and need professional and community support. Prevent Child Abuse Georgia provides the 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline, whose bilingual staff are trained to listen to parents and help connect them with programs and services in their neighborhood.

Here's how you can help:

1. Call the **1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)** Helpline to talk to trained professionals to connect them with supportive programs in their area.
2. Go online to use the 1-800-CHILDREN Resource Map, which contains over 3,000 local and statewide programs designed to assist and support families. See what services are available in your area.
3. Use the **FREE helpline 1-855-GA-CHILD (1-855-422-4453)**.
4. Additional information about 1-800-CHILDREN is located at PCAGeorgiaHelpline.org.

The 1-800-CHILDREN Helpline can connect caregivers with:

- Parenting support
- After school and other child programs
- Counseling and support groups
- Referrals for legal needs
- Grandparent raising grandchildren
- Concerns about well-being of a child or family member
- Family violence concerns
- Community resources for emergency assistance

The Helpline is toll free, bilingual, available Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 6 pm, and a good place to discuss options.

How to Report Child Abuse

Reports are taken 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-855-GACHILD / 1-855-422-4453







Monique Burr Child Safety Matters Program

In accordance with Senate Bill 401, which requires all public schools to implement age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education for students in grades K-9, Georgia Cyber Academy uses the Monique Burr Child Safety Matters program from the Monique Burr Foundation for Children. The goal of the Program is to help keep our students safe. The Program empowers children to spot and respond to bullying, cyberbullying, child abuse, and digital dangers. Most importantly, it teaches that adults are responsible for children's safety. The Program is based on the latest research. It has been reviewed and endorsed by national experts.

Why does your child need a safety program?

- 10% of children are abused before their 18th birthday
- 14% of children have been solicited online
- 28% of students have been bullied
- 90% of children between 8 and 16 years have viewed explicit material online

School Counselors and Social Workers facilitate the lessons with students during the Spring semester. Families are provided information before the program starts and parents have an opportunity to opt their students out of the program. You can learn more about the curriculum on their website. You can also download the "Child Safety Matters" app at no cost from the App Store or Google Play.

Bridge Bill: College and Career Advisement

The BRIDGE (Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy) Act, House Bill 400, was signed into law in May 2010 to create an atmosphere motivating middle- and high-school students to learn because they see the relevance of education to their dreams and future plans. The implementation of the BRIDGE Act provides middle- and high-school students with career counseling and regularly scheduled advisement to choose a focused plan of study.

The following BRIDGE Law advisement tasks are required to be completed at each grade level:

6th Grade:

- Complete Career Cluster Inventory

7th Grade:

- Complete one career interest and one career aptitude inventory or
- Explore 3 Career Clusters

8th Grade:

- Complete Individual Graduation Plan
- Receive advisement on Dual Enrollment

9th Grade:

- Complete one career interest and one career aptitude inventory
- Explore at least three (3) Careers / Occupations
- Review and revise Individual Graduation Plan

- Receive advisement on Dual Enrollment

10th Grade:

- Review and revise Individual Graduation Plan
- Receive advisement on Dual Enrollment

11th Grade:

- Save three possible choices of postsecondary options
- Research at least one additional state or local workforce development initiative, such as “High Demand Careers Initiative,” “HOPE Career Grant,” “Specialized Training Centers” or any other Georgia workforce and education initiative.
- Review and revise Individual Graduation Plan
- Receive advisement on Dual Enrollment

12th Grade:

- Complete the graduation survey

STUDENT CLUBS AND COMPETITIONS

Georgia Cyber Academy encourages contribution to student life through school clubs, which represent the wide range of our students’ interests and talents. Students gather in a secure and inviting online environment where they can explore topics that interest them, under the guidance of a GCA faculty/ staff member. Such interactions create a strong community among our diverse student body and can result in the development of lifelong friendships. These clubs meet at pre- determined days/ times. If a group of students has a common interest, which is not represented in our current club offerings, they may submit a proposal to the Head of School to form a new club.

STUDENT FIELD TRIPS / ANNUAL SCHOOL-WIDE EVENTS

Georgia Cyber Academy recognizes the importance of face-to-face interaction and strives to provide numerous opportunities for students to connect with each other throughout the school year.

Students that are performing below grade level are limited to 2 (two) field trip excused absences per semester. All assignments are still required to be completed. Also, class recordings MUST be reviewed for all required classes.

Students are not permitted to participate in field trips that fall on Pre-Test, NWEA MAP, IA, Final Exams, Access, or Milestones EOG/EOC assessment days unless those exams have been previously completed.

In addition to our regular field trip offerings, which can be found on the calendar posted on our website, GCA students may participate in the following school-wide events:

- Annual Welcome Back Event (Fall Community Day) at various sites around the state.
- Annual End of Year Event (Summer Community Day) at various sites around the state

Students are marked as excused from Live Class Sessions for both the GCA school-wide annual events.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Georgia Cyber Academy has a robust school culture and an active community of students, families, and staff. Throughout the year, students will have the opportunity to participate in various school culture initiatives which are designed to enhance student learning and keep our school community connected and engaged.

***School Nickname*:** Champions
***School Mascot*:** Champ the Owl
***Colors*:** Navy and Orange
School Motto: Rise Up, Aim High, and Soar

SCHOOL MASCOT

Champ the Owl



SCHOOL LOGO



SCHOOL CREST



School Culture & Events Calendar:

Please refer to the Community Events Calendar on our website for upcoming virtual and face-to-face activities and events.

School Podcast: GCA Hootworthy

Our Podcast/Blog/Vlog where we share hootworthy stories of our Champions rising up, aiming high, and soaring. georgiacyber.org/hootworthy

School Social Media

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/GCAchampions
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/GCAchampions
Twitter (X): http://www.twitter.com/GCAchampions
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@GCAchampions
Linkedin: http://linkedin.com/school/35488768
Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/GCAchampions/

If you have questions about school culture initiatives or are interested in becoming more involved in our school community please email: champ@georgiacyber.org

DIABETES MEDICAL MANAGEMENT

GCA ensures that at minimum two staff members are trained in diabetes management. These employees are not required to be health care professionals but have participated in required Diabetes Management training.

Parents/Guardians of students with Diabetes must submit a Diabetes Management Plan completed by the student's physician or healthcare provider in the event any type of diabetes management will be needed at in-person or events, assessments, or school functions. The district will additionally provide information to all staff in the recognition of diabetes-related emergencies.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Georgia Cyber Academy students have a right to:

- Function and work in a positive learning environment, free from disturbances created by self or others
- Participate in safe school outings
- Have individual beliefs, ideas, cultures, religious practices and to have these differences respected
- Be treated with courtesy, fairness, and respect
- Have personal or school property respected
- Participate fully in school life, when all the established requirements have been fulfilled
- A clear understanding of what is expected of them
  A fair hearing in cases involving the application of academic or disciplinary regulations

Georgia Cyber Academy students have the responsibility to:

- Abide by all laws
- Abide by all rules, policies, and procedures of Georgia Cyber Academy
- Understand and accept that student learning is the primary purpose of our school and during instructional time, to behave in a manner that promotes opportunities for optimal teaching and learning
- Respect the right of others to have a safe school environment in the presence of other students or people
- Accept the uniqueness of others
- Treat others with courtesy, fairness and respect
- Respect and secure private, school, and public property
- Assure that participation in all aspects of school life is open to everyone
- Know their role in the school community and to help others to understand their role
- Understand and utilize the school's procedures for resolving concerns, conflicts, and disagreements
- Be courteous and respectful in all communications
- Attend classes as required
- Complete and turn in assignments on time
- Participate in all assessments including state mandated tests within the stipulated period
- Ask if they are struggling and need assistance

Civility Policy

In an effort to foster a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all stakeholders, our district is implementing a civility policy. The goal of this policy is to encourage positive communication that contributes to student success, while discouraging disruptive, volatile, hostile, or aggressive communication or actions. Parents, students, and visitors will treat teachers, administrators, and other district employees with courtesy and respect face-to-face and in the virtual environment. GCA staff will not continue communication with any parent or stakeholder who does not follow the civility policy. Communication shall return once civility is restored. Repeated or on-going disruptions will be reported to the superintendent and/or designee.

Student Behavior Guidelines

Georgia Cyber Academy expects all students to behave in a manner that is respectful of others and towards school property. All violations of the Code of Conduct will be part of a student's disciplinary record and may be used in a student disciplinary hearing pursuant to Georgia Cyber Academy's progressive discipline process. Suspension of a student from school for not more than ten (10) consecutive days is considered a short-term suspension, not subject to formal rights of hearing or appeal. Although there are no such rights guaranteed by law, parents/ guardians may contact the Office of the Head of School to discuss their disciplinary incidents and actions involving their children.

The following are some examples of misbehavior that will result in discipline:

- Violations against property including but not limited to damage to or destruction of school property or the property of others, failure to compensate for damage or the destruction of such property, arson, breaking and entering, theft, robbery, possession of stolen property, extortion, trespassing, unauthorized usage, or vandalism (including outing locations and test sites).
- The use of profanity or obscene language or the possession of obscene materials.
- The dissemination of profane, obscene, lewd, or pornographic images, url links, or websites.
- Gambling
- Hazing
- Defiance toward faculty/ staff members
- Using, possessing or distributing tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia
- Using, possessing or distributing vaping paraphernalia on school property or at school outings/events
- Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
- Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of narcotics, drugs or other controlled substances (except as prescribed by a physician).
- Using, possessing or distributing items or articles that are illegal or harmful to persons or property including, but not limited to, drug paraphernalia.
- Using, possessing or distributing weapons or other dangerous objects.
- Possession of ammunition including, but not limited to, bullets or other projectiles designed to be used as a weapon.
- Possession, use, or distribution of explosives or any compound mixture, the primary or common purpose or intended use of which is to function by explosion.
- Possession, use, or distribution of fireworks or any substance or combination of substances or articles prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation.
- Acts disruptive of the educational process, including but not limited to, disobedience, disruptive or disrespectful behavior, defiance of authority, insubordination, failure to identify oneself, improper activation of fire alarms or bomb threats.
- Possession of nuisance devices or objects which cause distractions including, but not limited to, pages, radios, and phones during learning experiences or school events.
- Possession or distribution of slanderous, libelous, or pornographic materials.
- Student attire or personal grooming which creates a danger to health or safety or creates a disruption

to the educational process, including clothing which bears a message which is lewd, vulgar or obscene, apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors, or clothing containing objectionable emblems, signs, words, objects or pictures communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group or which connotes gang membership. Violation of any local, state or federal laws (as appropriate).

- Falsification of any records, documents, notes or signatures.
- Tampering with, changing or altering records or documents of the school district by any method including, but not limited to, computer access or other electronic means.
- Impertinent or disrespectful language toward teachers or other school district personnel; sexual abuse or harassment.
- Actions including fighting or other assaultive behavior, which causes or could cause injury to students or other persons or which otherwise endangers the health, safety or welfare of teachers, students, other school personnel or other persons.
- Committing an act that inflicts great bodily harm upon another person, even though accidental or a result of poor judgment.
- Violations against persons including, but not limited to, assault or threatened assault, fighting, harassment, interference or obstruction, attack with a weapon, sexual assault, illegal or inappropriate sexual conduct, or indecent exposure.
- Verbal assaults or verbally abusive behavior including, but not limited to, use of language that is discriminatory, abusive, obscene, threatening, intimidating or that degrades other people.
- Physical or verbal threats, including but not limited to, the staging or reporting of dangerous or hazardous situations that do not exist.
- Inappropriate, abusive, threatening, or demeaning actions based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.
- Disobedience or insubordination to teachers or other school district personnel.
- Violation of school rules, regulations, policies or procedures.
- Attempts to and/or successfully hack into the software, online programs, systems, and virtual platforms utilized by GCA.
- Impersonating a teacher in any manner and/or her classroom rights as the classroom moderator/host.
- Impersonating an administrator/staff member in any manner and/or her classroom rights as the classroom moderator/host.
- Other acts, as determined by the school district, which are disruptive of the educational process or dangerous or detrimental to the student or other students, school district personnel or surrounding persons or which violates the rights of others or which damages or endangers the property of the school, or which otherwise interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of students or employees.
- Retaliation

Students who fail to comply with these requirements are subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- A verbal warning
- An in-person, online, or telephone meeting with the student, parent, teacher, counselor and school administrator will be arranged to discuss the student's behavior.
- Suspension

- Expulsion

Pursuant to OCGA Section 20-2-735, discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline. The prior disciplinary history of the student during the current school year and other relevant factors will be taken into account and due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. However, it is important for all students and parents to note that the circumstances of particular violations may warrant more severe consequences even on the first violation. The School reserves the right, in school administration's sole and exclusive discretion, to take any and all actions necessary to protect its students, provide a safe and secure learning environment, and to ensure the orderly operation of the educational process including providing more severe consequences for certain violations.

Offenses that may result in expulsion include, but are not limited to the following:

- Violations against property including but not limited to damage to or destruction of school property or the property of others, failure to compensate for damage or the destruction of such property, arson, breaking and entering, theft, robbery, possession of stolen property, extortion, trespassing, unauthorized usage, or vandalism (including outing locations and test sites).
- The dissemination of profane, obscene, lewd, or pornographic images, url links, or websites.
- Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
- Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of narcotics, drugs or other controlled substances (except as prescribed by a physician).
- Using, possessing or distributing items or articles that are illegal or harmful to persons or property including, but not limited to, drug paraphernalia.
- Using, possessing or distributing weapons or other dangerous objects.
- Possession of ammunition including, but not limited to, bullets or other projectiles designed to be used as a weapon.
- Possession, use, or distribution of explosives or any compound mixture, the primary or common purpose or intended use of which is to function by explosion.
- Possession, use, or distribution of fireworks or any substance or combination of substances or articles prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or an audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation.
- Actions including fighting or other assaultive behavior, which causes or could cause injury to students or other persons or which otherwise endangers the health, safety or welfare of teachers, students, other school personnel or other persons.
- Committing an act which inflicts great bodily harm upon another person, even though accidental or a result of poor judgment.
- Violations against persons including, but not limited to, assault or threatened assault, fighting, harassment, interference or obstruction, attack with a weapon, sexual assault, illegal or inappropriate sexual conduct or indecent exposure.
- Verbal assaults or verbally abusive behavior including, but not limited to, use of language that is discriminatory, abusive, obscene, threatening, intimidating or that degrades other people.
- Physical or verbal threats, including but not limited to, the staging or reporting of dangerous or hazardous situations that do not exist.

Bullying

Bullying of any kind is not tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Depending on the nature, severity, and outcome of the incident the matter may result in referral of the incident to the appropriate authorities as well. A Georgia Cyber Academy administrator will notify the parent and/or guardian via email and/or phone call of any student found by administration to have committed or is a victim of bullying. All forms of bullying, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials that a student in grades 6 through 12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school, as required by OCGA 20-2-751.4.

Physical Bullying

We are fortunate that in a virtual educational environment with little in-person contact that physical bullying is almost non-existent. However, we do have field trips, school-wide events, and testing situations that are conducted in-person.

Physical bullying occurs when a minor is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or physically assaulted in-person by another minor using verbal communications, physical instruments, and/or physical actions. For this behavior to be considered physical bullying, the infraction needs to take place between two minors. Physical bullying is not tolerated in any form at Georgia Cyber Academy.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying occurs when a minor is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another minor using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. For this behavior to be considered cyberbullying, the infraction needs to take place between two minors. Cyberbullying is not tolerated in any form at Georgia Cyber Academy. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Assuming a false identity online to trick others.
- Tricking people into revealing personal information.
- Spreading false information about a victim.
- Sending or forwarding mean text messages.
- Posting pictures of victims without their consent.

Effects of Cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

Below are some preventative measures that student can take to minimize their risk of being cyberbullied, as well as help stop the cyberbullying cycle:

- Never share personal information with anyone, even your best friend. Remember anything posted online may potentially be viewed by millions of people.
- Be careful with whom you interact online. Block messages or requests from people that you do not know.
- Do not pass along or forward cyberbullying messages.
- Discourage your friends from cyberbullying.

Anyone can be a victim of cyberbullying, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or financial status. The most important thing to do if you are being cyberbullied is to tell a trusted adult. An adult, whether it is a parent, teacher or school administrator, needs to get involved. Save and document all occurrences of cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is no longer an anonymous crime. Technology allows for easy tracking of the source. Cyberbullying is illegal, and violators can be prosecuted.

For learning coaches of bullied students: If your student comes to you and reports being bullied, please report it to your child's Family Engagement Liaison immediately.

If the accused is a student of the school, school administration will investigate the accusation. If the accusation is proven true, the school discipline policy will apply. If the accused is not a student of the school, the school administration will help the victim and his/ her family contact local authorities and/ or the local school district.

If a student is found guilty of cyberbullying, the following consequences will apply based on the severity of the infraction:

First Offense or Minor Infraction: The student will receive a verbal warning and meet with the school counselor to learn about cyberbullying.

Second Offense or More Severe Infraction: The student, parent/ guardian, counselor and administrator will hold a conference. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.

Third Offense or Severe Infraction: Repeated Infractions or Severe Infractions may result in the student being referred to an alternative education program or school.

Determination of the severity of an infraction is at the discretion of the GCA Administration. In cases of severe infractions, local, state, or federal legal authorities may be contacted.

To learn more about cyberbullying, visit the following websites:

StopBullying.gov
Kids Health
Teens Against Bullying

Student Dress Code

The administration, faculty and staff of Georgia Cyber Academy are committed to providing our students with a safe, respectful learning environment, free from distractions. This includes both our virtual learning environment and in-person, school-sponsored events.
When participating in live class sessions or attending in-person events, students are expected to dress in a manner that is supportive of learning and appropriate to the setting.

When on camera, the below rules apply to all parts of the student that may be visible to those receiving the image.

When at school-sponsored in-person events, field trips, meetings, conferences, testing, or receiving educational support services, the below student dress code rules apply in their entirety.

Clothing and accessories which interfere with, distract from, or further impede student learning are not allowed. Prohibited articles of clothing and accessories include but are not limited to the following:

- Any articles that may reasonably be considered a safety hazard or potential weapon.
- Garments that expose the midriff or cleavage, see-through or mesh clothing, halter or tank tops, pajamas, sleep or loungewear. More specifically, shirts, blouses and dresses must cover the abdomen, cleavage, back and shoulders. Shirts/ tops must also cover the waistband of pants, shorts or skirts, with no midriff or cleavage visible while standing or while bending over.
- If wearing bike shorts (or something similar), then the top worn must fall to mid- thigh.
- If wearing leggings, then the top worn must fall to mid-thigh.
- Hats, caps and other head apparel should not be worn except for religious or medical purposes.
- Clothing and accessories may not display any of the following:
    - Racial or Ethnic slurs
    - Hate Speech
    - Gang Affiliation
    - Vulgar, sexually explicit, or suggestive language/ images
    - Products such as alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- Shorts, skorts, skirts, and dresses must be at least at finger-tip length. These items must cover all undergarments and maintain modesty when a student is leaning over or sitting down. It is highly recommended that if skirts or dresses are shorter than 2 inches above the knee that shorts be worn underneath the garment.
- Obviously oversized or baggy items. Pants/shorts/skirts must be worn at the waist. Sagging pants/ shorts are not allowed.

Georgia Cyber Academy administration, faculty or staff members reserve the right to determine what constitutes appropriate or inappropriate dress for the school setting. In matters of opinion, the judgment of school administration shall prevail. All items of apparel worn for religious observance or medical purposes will be allowed in situations in which such accommodation is required by state or federal law.

Virtual Classroom Behavior

While our online learning environment affords students the opportunity to attend class anywhere, it is our expectation that all students conduct themselves in a respectful manner during live sessions, as you would in a face-to-face classroom.

The following guidelines outline our behavioral expectations in the virtual classroom environment:

- Make sure to present yourself in an appropriate manner on camera, in accordance with the GCA Student Dress Code.
- Make sure you are in a setting conducive to learning such a home office, kitchen table, or personal desk. For example: A student *should not* attend live sessions from their beds unless medical reasons or disabilities necessitate that they do so.
- Please be sure to eliminate outside distractions, such as televisions and radios.
- If you have a cellphone, make sure it is on silent during the class session.
- Refrain from using inappropriate/ offensive language in the chat, on the whiteboard, or on the microphone.
- Do not share personal information and/or contact information unless specifically granted permission to do so from your teacher and/or a school administrator (gaming identifiers, invitations to outside chatrooms, emails, phone numbers, addresses, last names, etc.).
- Do not attempt to hack and/or hack into the programs and platforms utilized by GCA.
- Do not impersonate a teacher and/or his/her classroom rights as the classroom moderator/host.
- Do not post pictures, images, websites, or links to inappropriate or illegal content in the chat box or on the virtual whiteboard. If an illegal posting is made or shared (forward/copy & paste/email), then the incident will be reported to the appropriate authorities up to and including the GBI (Georgia Bureau of Investigation).
- Do not share (forward/copy & paste/email) inappropriate or illegal content (pictures, images, websites, or links to inappropriate or illegal content) that may have been posted in the chat box, on the virtual whiteboard, or received via email, contact your teacher IMMEDIATELY letting her know what may have occurred. If illegal content is shared, then the incident will be reported to the appropriate authorities up to and including the GBI (Georgia Bureau of Investigation).

GCA faculty reserve the right to remove any student from live class sessions due to inappropriate or distracting behavior. Teachers are authorized to give verbal warnings, write reprimands, refer students to school administration, and employ any other discipline and behavior management techniques, except for suspension or expulsion of a student, discipline prohibited by law, or discipline permitted to be administered only by school administrators.

Treatment of School Property

Georgia Cyber Academy may provide materials, books, and other curricular supplies. Georgia Cyber Academy may also provide computers and printers to families. Hotspots are provided per financial need. The materials are school property and must be kept in good condition. Facilities that are used for Georgia Cyber Academy outings/ test sites locations are also considered school property. Parents are responsible for the repair or replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged school property. A list of property that must be returned is provided

to parents. All property and equipment must be returned in good working condition upon withdrawal from the program.

All printed materials are copyrighted, and unauthorized copying of those materials is copyright infringement. Materials cannot be sold or transferred and are to be used solely by the student in his or her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents are to comply with this rule and all the terms and conditions of the School Property section of this handbook.

Off-Campus Behavior

Students are expected to be responsible representatives of the school at all times, whether online at an in-person school event or "off campus," meaning outside of school activities. Adverse behavior that negatively affects the school's community or reputation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Georgia Cyber Academy Administration reserves the right to discipline students and their families whose off-campus interactions have negatively impacted the school community.

School-Sponsored Events Conduct

Georgia Cyber Academy expects its students to adhere to its behavior guidelines while at school events, on school trips, and during educational and co-curricular activities offered year-round. Safety, civility and respect for the worth of every member of our community remain the philosophical foundation of our school. Georgia Cyber Academy acknowledges that the family is responsible for a child's behavior after school hours and on weekends, and our usual policy is to respect a student and the family's privacy in that regard. However, behavior that significantly affects students when they are attending school sponsored events, that suggests a threat to the emotional or physical safety of our students may require action by the school.

Consequently, School Administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for misconduct that occurs at a school activity or event, on a school computer or platform, at a non-school activity, function or event where the misconduct leads to a potential danger or disruption of the school. The school has authority to take disciplinary action for such misconduct at any time of the year provided that such conduct has a direct, or immediate impact on school discipline, the educational operation or function of the school, or the welfare of students or staff of the school. Such misconduct could include, but is not limited to, a felony, a delinquent act which would be considered to be a felony if committed by an adult, an assault upon another student, a violation of the laws prohibiting controlled substances, or sexual misconduct and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process (OCGA 20-2-751.5).

DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

Disciplinary Hearing Officers are independent decision makers appointed by the Board of Education to hear disciplinary matters. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary here within, Disciplinary Hearing Officers have the authority to issue a short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion of any student found to have violated the Code of Conduct. If a hearing is called, the student will be suspended from school until the hearing can be held. The hearing will be held no later than ten (10) school days after the beginning of the

suspension unless the parent and school mutually agree to an extension or the conduct of the student or parent causes a delay beyond said ten (10)-day period. Prior to the hearing, students and parents will receive a notice to include the following:

1. The rules that the student has allegedly violated.
2. A description of the student's acts.
3. The names of the witnesses who may testify against the student (witnesses may be added prior to and during the hearing).
4. The maximum punishment that the student could receive
5. The time and place for the hearing
6. That the student is entitled to require witnesses to be present at the hearing and the student will have the right to present evidence, examine any and all witnesses presented and have an attorney at the student's expense, to represent the student. School administrators should be notified prior to the hearing if a subpoena is to be issued by the Superintendent.

Parents/guardians should contact the school if they would like the notice and other documents related to the hearing in a language other than English. Language interpreter services are also available, upon request, for a student disciplinary hearing.

At the hearing, students and parents will have the right to present witnesses and evidence, to examine. Any and all witnesses presented, and to have an attorney, at the parents' expense, to represent the student. Any teacher called as a witness shall be given notice no later than 3 days prior to the hearing.
O.C.G.A. § 20-2-754(b)(4). The decision of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer may be appealed by submitting a written notice of appeal to the Superintendent within twenty (20) calendar days from the date the decision is made.

A student disciplinary hearing is formal, although the strict rules of evidence as applied in a court do not apply in a disciplinary hearing, the school has the burden of proving that the student engaged in acts that violated the student code of conduct. The student will have the opportunity to present evidence and/or witnesses for the Disciplinary Hearing Officer's consideration but is not required to do so. The Disciplinary Hearing Officer will determine whether the student committed or did not violate the code of conduct as set forth by the school.

The Disciplinary Hearing Officer shall make a verbatim or written record of any information orally presented at the hearing. A transcript of the hearing will not be prepared unless there is an appeal to the Board of Education. The record and documentary evidence shall be kept on file by the Superintendent or designee for a period of twenty (20) days after the date of the decision of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer. If no appeal is filed within twenty (20) days of the date of the decision of the Disciplinary Hearing Officer, the record and documentary evidence may be destroyed. If an appeal is filed, the record and documentary evidence will be kept until thirty-one (31) days after the appeal(s) become final at which time the record and documentary evidence may be destroyed.

All parties shall be afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses about any matters logically relevant to the charge against the student. The Disciplinary Hearing Officer may limit unproductively long or irrelevant questioning.

The parents or legal guardian of the student may give testimony at the hearing and make a statement to the Disciplinary Hearing Officer concerning their feelings about the proper disposition of the case and to answer any questions. The student may be represented by counsel at the student's expense at the hearing. If parents intend to be represented by counsel at the disciplinary hearing, the parents must notify the school twenty-four (24) hours prior to the start of the hearing so that the school district may elect to retain legal counsel to represent its interests. Failure to notify the District of a student being represented by counsel may cause a delay or continuance of the hearing.

All parties shall be entitled to subpoena witnesses for the hearing. A student or parent/guardian shall submit all requests for subpoenas to the student's principal at least three (3) days prior to the time of the disciplinary hearing.

All student disciplinary proceedings and hearings conducted by either the Disciplinary Hearing Officer or the Board of Education are confidential and are not subject to the open meetings law. Only the following persons are permitted to attend a school disciplinary hearing conducted by a Disciplinary Hearing Officer: the accused student, parents or legal guardians of the accused student, legal counsel, a provider of interpretative services, school staff, and witnesses. Any written records, transcripts, exhibits or other documents assembled or used in any manner with regard to the conduct of any student disciplinary hearing are not public records and are not subject to public inspection.

Students who receive long-term suspension or expulsion may file an appeal to the Georgia Cyber Academy Board of Directors. The student's appeal must be in writing and delivered to the Superintendent.

When a hearing is appealed, the Board will review the transcript of the hearing, make a decision based solely on the record, and notify students and parents, in writing, of the Board's decision. At the hearing before the Board, students have the right to be represented at the students' and parents' expense, by an attorney. The attorney will not, however, be permitted an oral argument at the disciplinary hearing appeal. Students and parents may appeal the Board's decision to the State Board of Education by giving the Superintendent written notice within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Board.

Student Questioning by Officials

School Administrators: Principals and Assistant Principals have the responsibility and authority to question students for the purpose of maintaining a safe and orderly school environment. Though it is important to inform parents about issues of concern, parental consent is not required prior to the questioning of students.

Department of Family and Child Services (DFCS): DFCS officials investigating suspected child abuse are permitted to conduct reasonable interviews and inspections of children. Notice to parents is neither required nor desirable when the object of that investigation may be the parents. If the investigation involves suspected child abuse by individuals other than those residing in the child's household, parents will be informed that such interviews are being requested, if prior notification is possible.

Guardian Ad Litem: The Guardian Ad Litem is a trained professional appointed by the court to represent the

best interests of minor children in court cases. Any request to interview a student or to inspect the student's school record should be submitted, in writing, along with court documentation establishing the Guardian Ad Litem relationship with the child.

Academic Integrity

All submitted coursework is assumed to have been completed only by the individual student. Students are responsible to observe standards on plagiarism, cheating and properly crediting all sources used during the composition of work. Students who fail to abide by these standards will be reported to the administration, which may result in a conference with the Learning Coach, failure of the course assignment or exam, loss of credit for courses, revoked access to courses and suspension/ expulsion from the school.

Cheating

Cheating is the use of another person's work to gain an unfair advantage. Cheating occurs when a student knowingly submits the coursework or an assessment of another individual and claims it as their own original work. Examples of cheating include but are not limited to the following:

- Copying a classmate's work; this may be an answer to an essay question, any written assignment or exam.
- Copying from course feedback provided by another school, person, website, and/or platform.
- Copying answers to exams found in other sources, such as entering the question into a search engine and copying the response found online.
- Collaboration between two students, which results in submitting identical answers on such assignments.
- Using online translators for assignments in language courses.
- Additionally, students using books or other technological devices for assistance during tests and assessments is considered cheating unless explicitly allowed by the teacher. These actions also mask a student's need for additional help and academic interventions, which can ultimately lead to a significant academic deficit.
- Hints and assistance with answers from others while taking an assessment or test may be considered cheating. These actions also mask a student's need for additional help and academic interventions, which can ultimately lead to a significant academic deficit.
- Submitting work that is not one's own.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using an author's work, without acknowledging the source of the material. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following:

- Quoting work from an outside source, without proper citations and attribution.
- Improper paraphrasing of another person's work, maintaining the original text with little alteration or re-wording and/or not citing the source.
- Copying information from a book, play, speech, article, website or other written or spoken work without

proper citation.

Plagiarism may occur unknowingly. It is important to understand that simply acknowledging a source through quotation marks or comments is not the same as citing it.

Academic Integrity Violations

All students who violate principles of academic integrity will be reprimanded. Depending on the nature of the offense, a student's grade or ability to earn credit for a course may be affected at the discretion of the student's teacher and Georgia Cyber Academy administration. Violations of academic integrity will be reprimanded per the following guidelines:

- The first offense will be handled between the classroom teacher, administrator, student and parent/ learning coach. The teacher will provide additional instruction as to what constitutes plagiarism and/or cheating, and the student will receive a zero on the assignment. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the student may have an opportunity to make up the assignment at the discretion of the teacher. The student will be required to attend a meeting with Georgia Cyber Academy administration regarding the plagiarism. If more than one violation is discovered at the same time, it will be considered the student's second offense.
- A second offense will result in a meeting with the school administration, the student, the parent and the classroom teacher. Students will have no opportunity to make up questionable work and a grade of zero will remain. Further action may be taken, as needed, following the discipline policy.
- In the case of a third offense, a meeting will be held with the school director, a classroom teacher, the student and their parent/guardian. The meeting may result in one or all of the following: removal from the course with loss of credit, removal from Georgia Cyber Academy and/or denial of re-admission
- If academic integrity violations were found to have been perpetrated for a majority of a course/subject or during the course of a high stakes test, a meeting will be held with the school director, a classroom teacher, the student and their parent/guardian. The meeting may result in one or all of the following: removal from the course with loss of credit, removal from Georgia Cyber Academy and/or denial of re-admission.
- If parents or others are found to be completing graded work or significantly assisting in completing graded work on behalf of a student and submitting that work as the student's own efforts, a meeting will be held with the school director, a classroom teacher, the student and their parent/guardian. The meeting may result in one or all of the following: zeros for all graded work submitted, removal from the course with loss of credit, retention, summer school, removal from Georgia Cyber Academy and/or denial of re-admission.

Responsible Use of Technology

All students are expected to be responsible representatives of the school at all times, whether on or off campus and whether school is in or out of session. This expectation includes students' behavior in the electronic world. Parents/ Learning Coaches are responsible for supporting the school's standards when students use Internet resources. The Responsible Use of Technology Policies are in effect for as long as students have a valid network account and password, including during the summer months and/ or any time

students use the school's technology resources.

- Students are responsible and liable for maintaining the confidentiality of their assigned passwords and access codes. They agree not to disclose assigned passwords and access codes or allow other persons or students to use them or attempt to circumvent the school's security system.
- Students may not interfere with other users' ability to access GCA technology resources or disclose anyone's password or allow them to use another user's account(s).
- All students will receive an email account. Students will use their email account for all academic work and only for legitimate and responsible communication between students and faculty. Harassing, discriminatory, or otherwise objectionable remarks and any other antisocial activities are prohibited on all communications, including email.
- Students may only access information that belongs to them, or that they have been given permission to use by the owner.
- Malicious use of the network to download, store, or develop programs that embarrass, harass, or are otherwise objectionable to other users is prohibited. Activities to infiltrate or overburden a computer or computing system and/ or damage computer software or a computing system are prohibited.
- Using technology resources to access, purchase, or download products or services that could subject the school's technology to viruses, malicious code, back doors, or other malware designed to harm technology resources are prohibited.
- Encryption of files is prohibited.
- Posting images, video, or audio of any student, visitor, staff member, faculty member, or administrator on the Internet without receiving permission from the individual(s) is prohibited.
- Students must not publicly post their personal contact information (last name, address, phone number, gaming identification, social media identifications, etc.) or personal messages from websites or blogs intended for personal gain or profit, as well as audio files or compressed video, any non-instructional files, or any material not approved by GCA administration.
- Using any recording device, including, but not limited to video and digital cameras or camera phones to record videos or take pictures to slander, bully or denigrate any student, visitor, staff member, faculty member, and/or administrator on or off campus at any time is prohibited.
- Unauthorized access to the school's website, platforms, systems, software, is strictly prohibited.
- Impersonation of a teacher/administrator/staff member in any manner is strictly prohibited.
- Impersonation of a teacher/administrator/staff member's moderation/hosting rights is strictly prohibited.
- All virtual classroom behavioral conduct guidelines must be strictly followed.

Failure to adhere to the Responsible Use of Technology guidelines or other misuse of a computer or the network is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action. Information relating to illegal or inappropriate activities must be reported to a faculty member.

ATTENDANCE, TRUANCY, & STUDENT ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

Attendance

As a public charter school, Georgia Cyber Academy is required to monitor student attendance in accordance with all applicable statutes and State Board of Education rules. Georgia Cyber Academy's Student Attendance Committee monitors student attendance. All Georgia Cyber Academy students must be legal residents of the state of Georgia and provide proof of residence at the time of enrollment, re-enrollment, and at any time during the school year if a change in residence occurs. If you have any questions about your student's attendance, please contact your Attendance Specialist.

- Students are required to follow the school calendar, which includes one hundred eighty (180) school days.
- All students must log in to the GCA Online School (GOLS) via Canvas every day to include Canvas Login Days (asynchronous days), and log completely out of the system when schoolwork is completed for the day. You can think of logging into Canvas like stepping into the school building.
- All students must log into Google, Clever, and Canvas.
- Six (6) unexcused absences from required class sessions equals one (1) unexcused day of school.
- GCA uses a block schedule for certain grade bands, with each block divided into an A and B session. Students earn attendance credit for each session separately. For example, if a student attends only the A session of Block 1, they are marked present for that session only.
- Students are considered present for class if they attend for the entirety of the session, regardless of parent entered attendance.
- Students are required to click the 'Consent and Join' button at the beginning of each class session in order to be marked present.
- Time spent in class will automatically be logged in Nucleus.
- If a student's Nucleus attendance records are less than half of the required hours for their grade band, they will be counted absent for that day.
- Homeroom attendance is required daily for all students.
- Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, the minimum number of hours required per school day are as follows:
    - Kindergarten – 3rd Grade 4.5 hours per day
    - 4th – 5th Grade 5.0 hours per day
    - 6th – 12th Grade 5.5 hours per day
- Dual Enrollment and Work Based Learning students (full time and part time):
    - Are excluded from minimum instructional hours; however, they are not excluded from the minimum instructional days
    - Are required to attend homeroom live or watch the recording within two school days
    - Are required to log into Canvas and check their inbox on every GCA school calendar day to include asynchronous days, and log completely out of the system when schoolwork is completed for the day
    - Are required to check their student Gmail inbox on every GCA school calendar day to include asynchronous days
    - LG or LC are required to log attendance in Nucleus on every GCA school calendar day
    - Fifth year seniors are excluded from the minimum instructional hours listed above; however, they are not excluded from the minimum instructional days

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Excused Absences

To have an absence excused, a legal guardian (or learning coach, where applicable) must upload documentation to **Nucleus** within **three (3) school days** of the student's return.

Here is a guide to help you with Nucleus so you can review and upload any excuses: https://georgiacyber.instructuremedia.com/embed/5e24623a-00ab-4263-9269-d7c5ef69ba23.

Please note that students are excused from attending for the reasons below, but students are not excused from completing assignments and assessments. It is the students' and parents' responsibility, not the teachers', to arrange for make-up work. Students should ask their teacher for any missed assignments on the first day they return to school. The days allowed to make up work will not exceed the number of days absent. All excuse documentation must be uploaded in Nucleus by the last day of each semester, as attendance records will be finalized at that time. Valid reasons include:

- **Student illness or quarantine**
    - Doctor's note should be provided when possible as parent notes are limited.
- **Medical/Dental Appointments for the student**
    - Doctor's note should be provided when possible as parent notes are limited. Appointments for family members are not excused.
- **Counseling/Related Services**
    - Must be scheduled outside of core classes when possible. If it is not possible, please reach out to your Attendance Specialist for information on the required documentation to submit.
    -
- **Death in immediate family**
    - Up to 5 consecutive days for bereavement. Ongoing illness of a family member requires provider documentation that the student is unable to participate in school.
- **Court/Government Orders** involving the student.
- **Religious Holidays**
    - Religious holidays are not considered excused absences; however, students who observe a religious holiday may make up missed work under the following conditions: prior notice must be given to the school before the holiday, and students will have up to two school days to view class recordings and complete any missed assignments. Failure to view the recordings and complete the assignments within this timeframe will result in an unexcused absence.

- **Educational Travel**
    - Educational travel must be approved at least 5 days in advance by the School Accountability Director. Approval is not guaranteed and will be denied during testing windows. Non-school-related vacations or trips will not be excused. Legal guardians may submit a summary of the educational activities to the Attendance Specialist. If available, students may be approved to watch class recordings in place of being excused from class.

- **Military Leave (Parent/Guardian Deployment)**
    - Up to 5 excused days per year for visits before or during deployment with proper documentation.

- **Internet/Technology Issues**
    - If a student experiences technical difficulties with GCA systems, they are required to submit a ticket to the Help Desk and let their Attendance Specialist know by providing the ticket number in Nucleus: https://support.georgiacyber.org/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=18851293650327 in real time to troubleshoot the issue, or contact SCA at 404-334-4790 extension 8 for hardware-related problems.
    - All personal internet issues must be documented by the service provider, including ticket numbers or official outage confirmations, and must include identifying information. Information to include would be your name, address, and date of the outage.

Unexcused Absences

Absences that do not meet the criteria listed under *Excused Absences* are considered **unexcused**. If documentation is not uploaded to Nucleus within **three (3) school days** of the student's return—regardless of the reason—the absence remains unexcused.

Excuses for Required In-Person Testing (e.g., EOG, EOC, etc.):

There is no legal “opt-out” of mandated testing, including Georgia Milestones Assessments. The State of Georgia’s legislation does not permit opt-outs from state mandated assessments (Georgia Law O.C.G.A. §20-2-281). GCA students who do not attend testing will be counted as absent. The refusal to participate will impact overall school achievement and CCRPI scores (State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.11). More importantly, the absence of state mandated testing would result in data that does not reflect the true achievement of the student and would not show a complete and accurate picture of the academic performance and quality of instructional programs.

Both state and federal laws currently require the annual assessment of all students enrolled in public schools

in identified grades and courses and neither law nor policy currently allow for a parent to opt a student out of this requirement for any reason. Parents who wish to advocate for a change in testing requirements are encouraged to contact their federal legislators and to work within the legislative process.

Students are required to attend all scheduled in-person testing sessions. To be excused, valid documentation must be provided — this includes a medical note from a healthcare provider or official evidence of a family emergency.

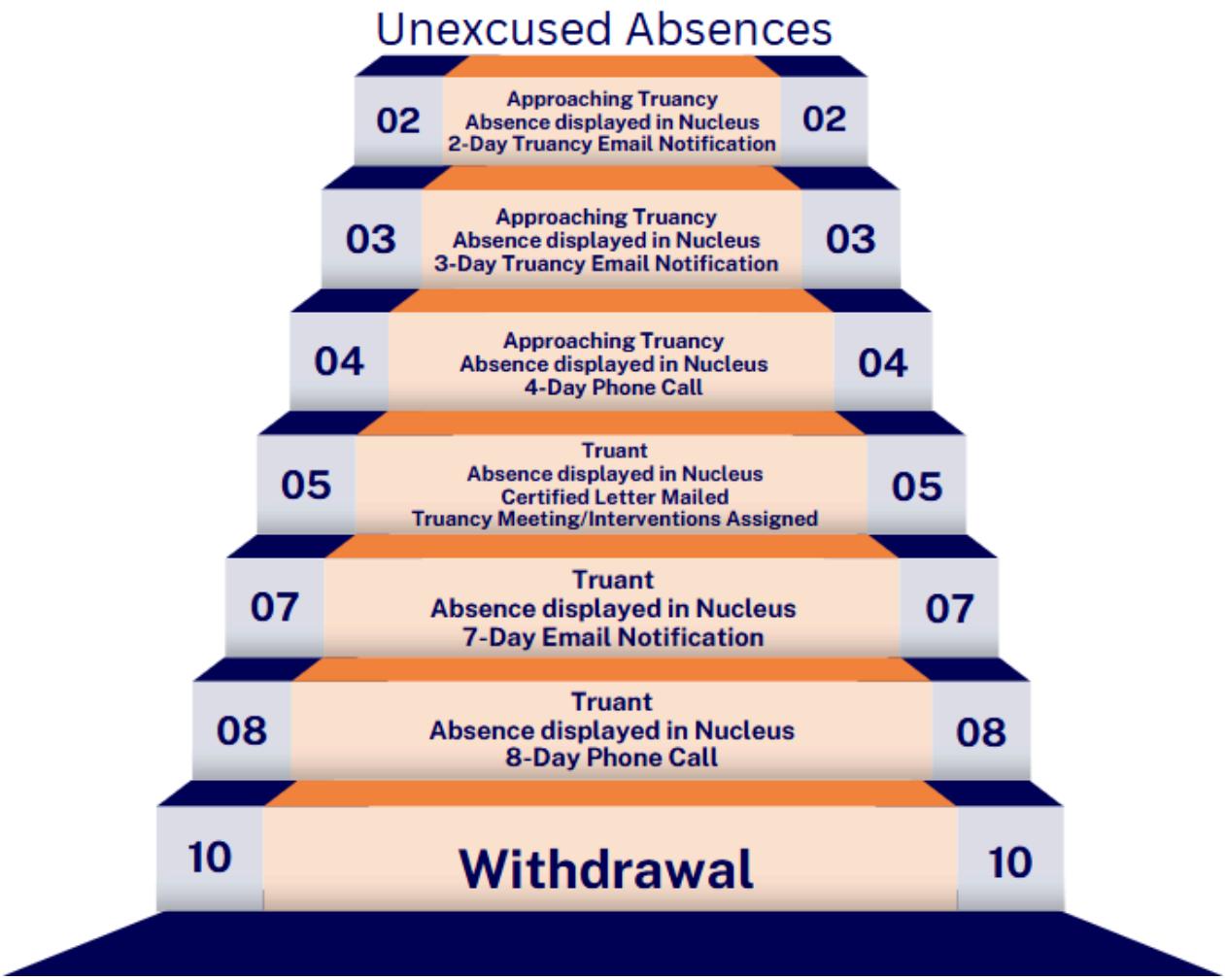
Please note that personal notes from parents stating a student is "not feeling well" or verbal explanations such as car trouble will **not** be accepted. If appropriate documentation is not submitted, the absence will be marked as an **unexcused (UA)**.

Only documented situations that prevent a student from being at the test site will qualify for an excused absence.

Student Attendance Committee Notifications

Our school is committed to supporting every student's success and doing all we can to prevent truancy-related withdrawals. We recognize that families may face challenges that impact attendance. Below is a graphic summarizing the steps the Accountability Department takes to ensure every effort is made to remove attendance barriers:

Number of Unexcused Absences	Notification	Displayed on Portal Dashboard	Truancy Status
1	-	Yes	Approaching Truancy
2	System Alert	Yes	Approaching Truancy
3	Email Notification	Yes	Approaching Truancy
4	Phone Call	Yes	Approaching Truancy
5	Certified Letter	Yes	**Truant**
5 or 6	Conference Notification	Yes	**Truant**
7	Email Notification	Yes	**Truant**
8 or 9	Phone Call	Yes	**Truant**
10	Withdrawal	Yes	**Truant**



Truancy

A student is considered **truant** after accumulating five (5) unexcused absences—consecutive or non-consecutive. Truancy includes failing to attend school, missing required classes, or not logging attendance in Nucleus. The truancy process continues throughout the school year.

Once a student is deemed truant, the **Student Attendance Committee (SAC) Coordinator** will notify the legal guardian of a required Truancy meeting with the Student Attendance Committee including an **Attendance Officer**.

If a student reaches ten (10) unexcused absences, they may be withdrawn from **Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA)** for non-attendance. Parents/guardians will be notified via email, and the local school district and juvenile court will also be informed to ensure the student is enrolled in another educational setting (public, private, charter, or homeschool).

Truancy is governed by **SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02**, which relates to student attendance during the school day and **State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10: Student Attendance,** which defines a truant student as one who has more than five unexcused absences during the school year.

IMPORTANT: By law, if a student is withdrawn and no proof of transfer or homeschool declaration is received within 45 days, the student will be referred to **DFCS (Department of Family and Children's Services)**.

Submit proof of registration or homeschool declaration to:

- K–8: csimmons@georgiacyber.org
- 9–12: cgermain@georgiacyber.org

Withdrawals

To withdraw, parents must contact their **Family Engagement Liaison** in writing via email and complete a DocuSign form. A copy will be sent to the provided email. Return of school-issued materials and equipment (computer, printer, hotspot) will be arranged by GCA. If you have questions about your student's attendance, please contact your Attendance Specialist. Appeals for Truancy Withdraw will not be accepted after the last day of school.

IMPORTANT: By law, if no transfer documentation is submitted within 45 days of withdrawal, the student will be reported to DFCS.

Probation

Students withdrawn from GCA due to truancy in the current or previous years will be placed on Attendance Probation for the entire school year. A Probation Attendance Specialist will be assigned to your student, and they will be reviewed for withdrawal if they reach three unexcused absences. Additional requirements must be met during enrollment.

Attendance FAQs

Q: When can I log attendance?
A: From the first to the last day of school.

Q: How often should I log attendance?
A: Attendance must be checked daily.

Q: Where is attendance logged?
A: In **Nucleus**.

Q: Why should I log attendance?
A: It's required by law and provides a record of your child's academic activity.

Q: How many hours a day should I log for attendance?
A: Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, the minimum number of hours required per school day are as follows:
Kindergarten - 3rd Grade 4.5 hours per day
4th - 5th Grade 5.0 hours per day
6th - 12th Grade 5.5 hours per day

Q: What counts as attendance?
A: All school-related academic activities—live classes, recordings, assignments, field trips, support services, assessments, etc. can be counted as attendance, however when required classes are scheduled, students must attend the required classes for attendance credit.

Q: What if my child is absent for all or part of the day?
A: Please upload an excuse into Nucleus for the missing class time and let your Attendance Specialist know if you have any issues.

Q: Should I log live class attendance?
A: No. Attendance for live classes is automatically populated in Nucleus.

STUDENT RECORDS

Georgia Cyber Academy maintains records concerning all students enrolled. Records containing personally identifiable information about or related to students including those with disabilities could include, but are not limited to:

- Cumulative Grade Reports
- Assessment Reports
- Discipline Records
- Enrollment and Attendance Records
- Health Records
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- Gifted Certifications
- 504 Plans
- Notices of Recommended Assignment
- Notices of Intent to Evaluate and/or Re-Evaluate
- Comprehensive Evaluation Reports
- Work Samples
- Test Data
- Instructional Support Services (ISS) Documents
- Referral Data
- Other Education Related Documents
- Correspondence between School and Home

Student Record Changes:

Student records are maintained in the Georgia Cyber Academy District Office. Parents are encouraged to keep a copy of any records submitted to Georgia Cyber Academy. If parents/ legal guardians change their address, telephone number or email they are responsible for notifying Georgia Cyber Academy by notifying their Family Engagement Liaison immediately. Parents/ legal guardians are responsible for keeping their contact information current within their Infinite Campus account.

Student Transfers and Records:

If a student transfers to another school from Georgia Cyber Academy, the new school should submit an official records request to Georgia Cyber Academy through our preferred secure electronic website https://georgiacyberga.scriborder.com/.

For Unofficial Transcript Requests, login to your Infinite Campus account, select “Documents”, select “Unofficial Transcript”.

Student Records Request:

For Official Transcript Requests for Grades 9-11, guardians (if student is less than 18 years old) or students (if 18 or older) in grades 9-11 visit our Transcript Request page. To follow up on transcript requests please email the student’s counselor.

For Official Transcript Requests for Seniors, guardians (if student is less than 18 years old) and seniors (if 18 or older) should request transcripts through their Xello Account.

Unofficial Transcript Requests for grades 9-12 can be accessed by logging into your Infinite Campus account, click “Documents” on the left panel, and then click “Unofficial Transcript”.

For student records requests, please visit our preferred secure electronic website https://georgiacyberga.scriborder.com/. To follow up on this request, please email records@georgiayber.org.

Official Incoming Student Records

The Enrollment & Records Department request official student records within 30 days of a students start date. Upon receiving official records, Georgia Cyber Academy has the right to review student records and determine the best academic plan for a student. Changes that can take place, but are not limited to:

1. Change in a students grade level if retention has been determined by the previous school district.

2. Change in a students schedule or services based on incoming IEP, 504, Gifted/Advanced, MTSS, RTI records from the previous school district.

3. Administrative withdrawal based on student discipline report and tribunal findings from the previous school district.

4. Administrative withdrawal based on any fabrication of unofficial academic records received in the enrollment application that is contradiction to the official records received.

Private School - Entering students from private school must settle previous private school tuition balances before an official record can be released to Georgia Cyber Academy. If there is a tuition balance, previous schools will not provide the transcript or academic record to Georgia Cyber Academy. This may impair a students schedule and accepted credits for a students official transcript. Georgia Cyber Academy is not responsible for official records not received due to the tuition balance owed from the previous school.

Newly Enrolled Homeschooled Students - Secondary Grades 9-12

Entering high school students must provide an accurate account of the credits earned on the official GCA Homeschool High School transcript. Homeschool students must also pass the corresponding EOC exam, when applicable, in order to receive credit as noted on the GCA Homeschool High School transcript. Enrolling parents will not hold Georgia Cyber Academy accountable for any errors that may develop from the academic information provided on this Home School Homeschool High School transcript.

FERPA NOTICE

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over eighteen years of age certain rights with respect to student educational records. Those rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within forty-five (45) days of the date Georgia Cyber Academy receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school administrator (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The administrator or designee will arrange a records inspection for the parent or eligible student.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students (age 18 or above) may ask Georgia Cyber Academy to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

Should Georgia Cyber Academy decide not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, we will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is available to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before Georgia Cyber Academy discloses personally identifiable information ("PII") contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official includes a person employed by Georgia Cyber Academy as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, collection agency, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. (34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1)).

Further, upon request, Georgia Cyber Academy discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the

disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. (34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(2)).

FERPA also permits disclosure of PII from students' education records without consent:

- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal-or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35).
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, the amount of the aid, the conditions of the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid (§ 99.31(a)(4)).
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38 (§ 99.31(a)(5)).
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction (§ 99.31(a)(6)).
- To accrediting organizations carrying out their accrediting functions (§ 99.31(a)(7)).
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes (§ 99.31(a)(8)).
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (§ 99.31(a)(9)).
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36 (§ 99.31(a)(10)).
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under § 99.37 (§ 99.31(a)(11)).

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Georgia Cyber Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-8520

Note: Georgia Cyber Academy does not disclose any identifiable student information other than first and last name for the senior class honors program, graduation program, and graduate honors recognitions in newspapers and other media publications unless specific approval is obtained from the student's parent or legal guardian. The student's parent or legal guardian has the opportunity to opt out of such graduation related inclusions. To opt out, a parent or eligible student must notify Georgia Cyber Academy in writing that he or she does not want this graduation related information released. Such written notice must be provided no less than two months prior to the student's graduation date at GCA.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Georgia Cyber Academy receives Federal Funding under various programs to support student education. For more information on GCA's Federal Programs, a Federal Programs Handbook is available on GCA's website.

Title I, Part A

The purpose of a Title I program is to help low income and low-achieving students meet the state's challenging academic content and performance standards. The Title I program offers a variety of services which may include additional teachers and support staff, extra time for instruction, a variety of teaching methods and materials, smaller classes, extensive use of technology by students, and additional training for staff.

Title I School Improvement 1003(a)

The purpose of the School Improvement 1003(a) grant is to provide financial resources to local educational agencies (LEAs) on behalf of Title I schools identified as Alert, Focus, or Priority.

Title I, Part C Migrant Education Program

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is designed to support comprehensive educational programs for migrant children to help reduce the educational disruption and other problems that result from repeated moves.

Title II, Part A Teacher Quality

The purpose of the Title II, Part A program is to increase academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality. This program is carried out by: increasing the number of teachers who meet applicable state professional standards in classrooms; increasing the number of leaders that meet applicable state professional standards; and increasing the effectiveness of teachers and principals by holding LEAs and schools accountable for improvements in student academic achievement.

Title III, Part A Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students

Title III, Part A provides eligible LEAs with funding to supplement ESOL services already in place. Both ESOL and Title III help ensure that English Learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English.

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ESOL is a state-funded instructional program for eligible English Learners (ELs) in grades K-12 (Georgia School Law Code 1981, § 20-2-156, enacted in 1985). The ESOL program is a standards- based curriculum

emphasizing academic and social language development. ESOL coursework is based upon the WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) standards. Students who are served in the ESOL program are required to complete an annual state assessment, which is called the ACCESS. Certain program exit criteria are in place and must be followed as part of the eligibility process.

Title IX, Part C McKinney-Vento for Homeless Children and Youth (Transitional Program)

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

APPENDICES

Pupil Privacy Rights Act

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.

Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) has developed and adopted 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. GCA will directly notify parents of these policies at least

annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. GCA 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 in the specific activity or survey. GCA 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

Equal Access

Equal Access to Public School Facilities- Boy Scout of America Equal Access Act: No public elementary school, public secondary school or local educational agency that has a designated open forum or a limited public forum and that receives funds made available from the US Department of Education shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet, or shall discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting with that designated open forum or limited public forum, including denying such access or opportunity or discriminating for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or of the youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society). For the purposes of this section, an elementary school or secondary school has a limited public forum whenever the school involved grants an offering to, or opportunity for, one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after the hours during which attendance at the school is compulsory. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any school, agency, or a school served by an agency to sponsor any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society). Compliance with this provision will be enforced through rules and orders issued by the Office for Civil Rights. If the public school or agency does not comply with the rules or orders, no funds made available through the Department of Education shall be provided by a school that fails to comply with such rules or orders or to any agency or school served by an agency that fails to comply with such rules or orders (P.L. 114-95, Section 8525).

GCA Governing Board Attendance Policy

The Board of GCA adopts the following policy, effective on the date of adoption by the Board.

Cumulative Number of Days and Hours Attendance Requirements

Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, Georgia Cyber Academy students must participate in school learning activities for a minimum of 180 days per school year.

Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, the minimum number of hours required per school day are as follow:

- Kindergarten 4.5 hours per day
- 1st through 3rd grade 4.5 hours per day
- 4th through 5th grade 5.0 hours per day
- 6th through 12th grade 5.5 hours per day

For Kindergarten through 12th grade, time does include Math, Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, Foreign Language, Art, PE, Music, Health, and other Elective courses, as well as, support activities such as tutoring, state testing, and Academic Support Services (per IEP). Time may also include Educational Field Trips, Testing, Counseling, Health Screenings, and extended learning time activities, however additional attendance guidelines for these activities may be outlined in the GCA District Handbook. Also, school sponsored non-instructional activities may count toward attendance hours. Additionally, 30 cumulative health hours and 60 cumulative PE hours are required per year.

For High School, time includes all courses on the approved course list as defined in State Board Rules 160-4-2-.03 and 160-4-2-.20 shall be counted as instructional time (Note: All GCA courses are on the approved course list). In addition, Educational Field Trips, Testing, Counseling, Health Screenings, Academic Support Services (per IEP), and extended learning time activities may be included, however additional attendance guidelines for these activities may be outlined in the GCA District Handbook. Also, school sponsored non-instructional activities may count toward attendance hours.

NOTE: Attendance hours must be logged in a timely manner in accordance with GCA procedure and guidelines. Failure to follow attendance logging procedures may result in withdrawal from GCA.

This policy may be amended at any time in order to align with federal and state laws, rules, regulations, and policies.

Resource Document Links:

Georgia Department of Education: Defining Instructional Time and School Day for Students

160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees

Attendance Protocol

Developed by Georgia Cyber Academy

I. Definitions for Attendance Protocol

A. **Truant**: Any child who is subject to the compulsory attendance law who has five or more days of unexcused absences during the calendar school year.

1) **Excused** absences include:

a. Personal illness of the student or when attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others. Upon the student's return to school, appropriate medical documentation is required within three days of the absence.

b. Serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating the absence. In the case of serious illness, the student is required to present medical documentation to validate the absence and as excused absence within three days of the student's return to school.

c. Court order by a governmental agency mandating the student's absence from school.

d. Special or recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student.

1. Religious holidays are not considered excused absences; however, students who observe a religious holiday may make up missed work under the following conditions: prior notice must be given to the school before the holiday, and students will have up to two school days to view class recordings and complete any missed assignments. Failure to view the recordings and complete the assignments within this timeframe will result in an unexcused absence.

e. Weather or environmental conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety.

f. An absence not to exceed one (1) day for registering to vote.

g. Other absences to be approved by, and at the discretion of, the Superintendent and/or the local school board.

h. Note that additional questions may be asked concerning the excuse that was provided by the LG for the purpose of clarification and updating attendance appropriately.

2) **Unexcused** absences include:

a. Failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined as excused absences.

3) Excuses uploaded to our attendance platform must match the name provided to the records department. Excuses in aliases will not be accepted. Any excuse submitted may be verified by the Attendance Specialist by calling the provider and confirming the student was seen at the medical facility.

4) Students who do not attend required in person testing will receive an unexcused absence for the day.

B. **Grades and Absences**: A student's final course grades shall not be penalized for excused absences if the following conditions are met:

1) Absences are justified and valid documentation is presented. Within three (3) days of the student's return to school, an email explaining the absence should be sent to the student's Attendance Specialist. The email must include the student's name, the date of the absence, the reason for the absence and the required documentation. If an excuse is not uploaded within three days of the absence, the absence will be unexcused and will remain unexcused.

2) Make-up work for excused absences is completed satisfactorily.

3) In the instances where the above conditions are not met, penalties and consequences will be imposed and upheld by the local school board.

II. Parental/Student Notification

A. Georgia Cyber Academy will provide each student and his/her parent, guardian or other person who has control or charge of the student, with the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law and a written summary of the possible consequences and penalties for non-compliance at the beginning of each school year.

B. By September 1st of each school year or within 30 days of a student's enrollment in a school system, the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of such student must sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties. Students who are ten years or older by September 1st shall sign a statement indicating receipt of such a written statement of possible consequences of non- compliance with the school system's policy.

C. When a student reaches five (5) or more unexcused absences, the Student Attendance Committee will schedule a Truancy Meeting with the legal guardian where possible consequences will be outlined. Legal guardians will receive a certified letter after five (5) unexcused absences have accumulated explaining the student is truant and possible consequences.

D. After two reasonable attempts (including but not limited to: phone calls to the parent or guardian, letters to the parent or guardian, through US mail to notify the parent, guardian or other person who has charge or control of the student), the Attendance Department will send written notice via **certified mail with the return receipt requested.**

III. Interventions and Consequences for Truancy

A. GCA has outlined the following interventions and consequences for truancy for primary, elementary, middle and secondary grade bands.

B. Prior to Court Involvement

1) Before any court referral is considered, the school Attendance Specialist must have detailed all efforts to intervene with students and their families, including a minimum of three (3) calls, letters and/or email to the parent/legal guardian.

2) Before juvenile court or other referral, the school system must have implemented the following progressive discipline process with parental involvement:

3) Procedures for **unexcused** absences

a. After five (5) unexcused absences:

1. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian or other person without response, the school shall send a notice to such parent, guardian or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested. The letter should include a copy of the compulsory attendance law.

i. GCA Attendance Specialists will work with the School Staff for the purpose of evaluating attendance and to provide intervention services.

b. After seven (7) unexcused absences: by a child 14 and older, the Attendance Specialist shall notify the student that only three unexcused absences remain prior to violating the attendance requirements specified in Georgia statute (O.C.G.A. 40-5-22).

After ten (10) unexcused absences: An email could be sent from an Attendance Officer to the parent or guardian informing them of withdrawal. At this point, all administrative actions have been taken to correct truancy and have proven ineffective. GCA could file proceedings in court and furnish evidence for the conviction of parents and /or child for non-compliance with compulsory attendance laws.

c. For a student aged 14-18 whose ten (10) unexcused absences are within one semester or two quarters, the letter shall state that the student's eligibility to obtain or retain a driver's permit or

license may be impacted.

C. Court Referral:

1) Juvenile Court Referral:

1. A school employee will file an unruly/truancy or educational neglect petition with the Local County Juvenile Court and if the case meets the necessary requirements, it will be assigned to a probation officer.

2. If found truant and adjudicated unruly/ungovernable, the child may be placed on supervision with the court and subject to dispositions for unruly children pursuant to O.C.G.A.15-11-67.

3. If deprivation is found based upon educational neglect, the juvenile court judge may issue a protective order against the parent/legal guardian or custodian pursuant to O.C.G.A. 15-11- 11 and 15-11-55.

4. In either case, if the child is placed on supervision or the court has issued a **protective order** against the parent/legal guardian or custodian, the child's attendance will be monitored by the probation officer.

5. If the child fails to comply with the court's order, a violation of supervision charge shall be filed by the juvenile court probation officer.

6. In the case of educational neglect, if the child is still chronically absent from school, and the parent/guardian has failed to comply with conditions of the protective order, a **rule** will be issued against the parent, legal guardian or custodian to show cause why he/she should not be found in contempt of court and punished by incarceration, fine, or a required community service program administered and monitored by the local board of education. The Juvenile Court, in its discretion, may order all the aforementioned punishments for contempt. The parents or guardian may be allowed to purge themselves of contempt by immediately complying with the protective order or ensuring that the child complies with the court ordered rules of supervision.

2) State Court Referral: If after the protective order and the finding of contempt, the child continues to be truant or non-compliance continues, the juvenile court may proceed as a court of inquiry to bind the parents or guardian over to the state court under the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law (O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-690.1).

a. If the parent/guardian or custodian fails to complete or declines to participate in pretrial intervention efforts, the Solicitor General may file formal charges against the defendant or take other appropriate action.

b. If the parent, legal guardian or custodian agrees to a plea bargain or is found guilty of violating O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1, he/she shall be guilty of a misdemeanor subject to a fine of not less than $25.00 and not greater than
$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed thirty (30) days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the State Court judge.

c. Each day's absence from school in violation of this section shall constitute a separate offense.

D. Student Withdrawals**:**

1) Georgia Cyber Academy is authorized to withdraw a student for any of the following reasons:

a. Has had 10 or more consecutive or non-consecutive days of unexcused absences;

b. Lack of engagement per Board policy;

c. Is not subject to compulsory school attendance; and

d. Is receiving instructional services from the local school system through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); or

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e. Is no longer a resident of Georgia.

2) Withdrawal Notification

a. Each superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall use his/her best efforts to notify the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance.

b. Georgia Cyber Academy is authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has determined the student is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

c. Georgia Cyber Academy shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

3) IMPORTANT: By law, if a student is withdrawn and all attempts to secure proof of transfer to another school or to receive a homeschool declaration fails within forty-five (45) days of the withdrawal, then the student will be referred to DFCS (Department of Family and Children's Services). Proof of registration at another school or a homeschool declaration must be documented in the student's file within forty-five (45) days to avoid referral to DFCS.

IV. Summary of Adopted Local School Board Policies and Regulations

A. **Definition of Truancy:** The Board of Education of Georgia Cyber Academy adopts, as a part of the student codes of conduct developed pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-735, the outlined definition of truancy that contains the minimum standards related to student attendance and a summary of possible consequences and penalties for truancy established in state board rule (160-5- 1-.10). The summary of possible consequences for students shall include possible dispositions for unruly children in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 15-11-67, including the possible denial or suspension of a driver's license for a child.

GCA Governing Board Promotion and Retention Policy

Adopted On: 4/18/2018 Last Reviewed On: 3/12/2019 Last Updated On: 4/24/2019

The Board of GCA adopts the following policy, effective on the date of adoption by the Board.

Georgia Cyber Academy ("GCA") is a charter school that is provided under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 a waiver of certain requirements of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia, including but not limited to the requirements of
O.C.G.A. Sections 20-2-282 through 285 regarding the retention and promotion of students. Consistent with the flexibility provided to GCA under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065, GCA desires to establish an appropriate policy regarding the procedures for promotion, placement and retention of its students.

The placement or promotion of a student at GCA into a grade, class, or program shall be based on an assessment of the academic achievement of the student and a determination of the education setting in which the student is most likely to receive the instruction and other services needed in order to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement, in a manner consistent with the policy set forth below.

I. DEFINITIONS

Accelerated Instruction – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to meet grade-level standards in a compacted period of time.

Additional Instruction – academic instruction, beyond regularly scheduled academic classes, that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before or after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer or other inter-session instruction.

Differentiated Instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

Grade Level Achievement – standard of performance, as defined by the Accountability Division of the Georgia Department of Education, on the state adopted assessment(s).

Placement – the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

Promotion – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established
criteria in the current grade.

Retention – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

State Adopted Assessment – an assessment in any subject required by the state of Georgia to be administered to students.

II. PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES KINDERGARTEN through GRADE 8

1. Students shall be tested in accordance with requirements specified in State Board Rule 160-3-1.07 Testing Programs – Student Assessment.

2. The school principal or designee shall annually notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that promotion, placement, or retention of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the student's performance on the state adopted assessments, the academic achievement of the student, and the GCA promotion, placement and retention criteria set forth in this policy.

3. Placement decisions will be made on an individual basis by the student's principal based upon the criteria set forth in this policy. If a student is retained, written documentation of evidence supporting the decision will be on file in the student's permanent record.

4. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the promotion, placement or retention decision within
10 days after the decision has been made.

5. Students who spend more than one year in any grade will be provided accelerated instruction, additional instruction, or differentiated instruction.

III. GCA PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION CRITERIA

Kindergarten:
1. Readiness level as established by the results of the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS).
2. Readiness level as established by the results of the approved district reading assessment(s) and approved district mathematics assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
3. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 1 - 2:
1. Readiness level as established by the results of the approved district reading assessment(s) and approved district mathematics assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
2. Readiness level as established on the student report card.
3. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 3 - 5:
1. Readiness level as established by the results of the appropriate state adopted assessment(s) in the areas of reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
2. Readiness level as indicated on the student report card.
3. Readiness level as established by the results of any approved district reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.

4. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

Grades 6 - 8:

1. Grade level achievement as established by the results of the appropriate state adopted assessment(s) in the areas of reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.

2. Passing 3 of 4 academic classes and 66% or more of all connection classes taken during the school year.
3. Readiness level as established by the results of any approved district reading, mathematics, science and/or social studies assessment(s) which are available at the time the retention, promotion or placement decision is being made.
4. Teacher recommendation for promotion, placement or retention.

IV. APPEALS OF PLACEMENT, PROMOTION AND RETENTION DECISIONS GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 8

In the event a parent of a student in Kindergarten through Grade 8 disagrees with a placement, promotion or retention decision by the student's principal (the "Placement Decision") and wishes to appeal such decision, the parent must notify the student's principal in writing of their appeal of the Placement Decision within 10 days of receiving written notice of the Placement Decision or all rights of appeal of the Placement Decision shall be waived and the Placement Decision shall be final.

In the event a timely appeal of a Placement Decision is made by a parent of a student, a Placement Review Team consisting of the parent(s) of the student, a counselor or the family support liaison for the student, and the school principal or designee shall be convened to reconsider the Placement Decision of the student. The Placement Review Team shall consider all the retention, placement and promotion criteria as set forth in this policy and such other relevant information as the parents and other members of the Placement Review Team wish to share with the Placement Review Team. The initial Placement Decision (regardless of whether the initial decision was a decision of placement, retention or promotion) shall not be changed by the Placement Review Team unless the Placement Review Team unanimously agrees to the change in placement, retention or promotion of the student. The decision of the Placement Review Team shall be given to the parents in writing within 10 days of the date of the decision of the Placement Review Team.

In the event any member of the Placement Review Team disagrees with the decision of the Placement Review Team and wishes to appeal such decision, the person desiring to appeal the decision of the Placement Review Team must notify the Head of School in writing of their appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team within 10 days of receiving written notice of the decision of the Placement Review Team or all rights of appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team shall be waived and the decision of the Placement Review Team shall be final. The person submitting the appeal must submit a statement of all reasons and supporting documentation as to why they disagree with the decision of the Placement Review Team at the time of submitting their appeal of the decision of the Placement Review Team. The Head of School (or designee appointed by the Head of School) shall review the written documentation that is timely submitted by the person making the appeal along with records of the District relating to the decision of placement, promotion or retention without the requirement of any additional hearing or meeting. The Head of School (or designee) shall issue a written decision either affirming or modifying the placement, promotion or retention based upon their review of the record. The decision of the Head of School (or designee) shall be final.

V. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 9 —12

Students in high school progress toward graduation on a course by course basis. Students shall take courses based upon academic performance, academic needs, graduation requirements and previous credits earned.

Students shall stay intact with their entering class for courses related to their freshman year. Assignments beyond the freshman year will be determined by the number of credits earned by the student. That is, a student will remain a freshman until such time that he/she earns 5 credits to be considered a Sophomore, 11 credits to be considered a Junior and 17 credits to be considered a Senior.

UNITS OF CREDIT

All state-supported high schools shall make available to all students the required areas of study. A course shall count only once for satisfying any unit of credit requirement for graduation. **A total of 23 units are required to meet graduation requirements.** See the following chart:

AREAS OF STUDY		Units Required
(I)	English/Language Arts	4
(II)	Mathematics	4
(III)	Science	4
(Note: The 4th science unit may be used to meet both the science and an elective requirement)		
(IV)	Social Studies/History/Humanities	3
(V)	Health	.5
(VI)	Personal Fitness	.5
(VII)	CTAE and/or World Language and/or Fine Arts	3
(VIII)	Electives	4
TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED (MINIMUM)		23

VI. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND OTHER APPLICABLE LAWS AND RULES

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in compliance with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), and its implementing rules and regulations, all decisions regarding the provision of a free, appropriate, public education to students served under IDEA, including but not limited to decisions regarding placement, promotion and retention shall be made by the child’s IEP team in accordance with the provisions of IDEA, and the decision of the IEP team shall be final. Also notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in policy, in the event a child is served under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and its implementing rules and regulations, if a parent disagrees with a promotion, placement or retention decision, the child’s Section 504 team shall convene to determine whether the District will be providing a free appropriate public education to the child as required by Section 504 if the promotion, placement or retention decision is implemented, and the Section 504 team may make such modifications to the promotion, placement or retention decision to the extent the Section 504 team determines that such changes to the promotion, placement or retention of the child are required in order to provide a free appropriate public education to the child pursuant to the requirements of Section 504. For purposes of this policy, the Section 504 team shall be the Placement Review Team for students served under Section 504, all decisions made by the Section 504 team shall be made in a manner consistent with Section 504, and the

decision of the Section 504 team shall be final.

GCA chooses to exercise the flexibility given to it under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 with respect to promotion, retention and placement of its students to the greatest extent permitted by law and in accordance with the terms of this policy; however, to the extent that any laws, rules or regulations cannot be waived or are otherwise required by law to apply to GCA notwithstanding the flexibility give under O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-2065 or are applicable under GCA's Charter, Bylaws or other governing documents (collectively "Non-Waivable Laws and Rules"), all such Non-Waivable Laws and Rules shall be fully complied with by GCA, notwithstanding any other terms of this policy to the contrary.

Legal citations:

O.C.G.A. 20-02-282 Academic Placement and Promotion Policy

O.C.G.A. 20-02-2065 Applicability of title, etc. to charter schools; waiver; requirements with respect to operation, control, and management

29 U.S.C. Section 794 Nondiscrimination under Federal grants and programs 34 C.F.R. 104.33 Free appropriate public education
20 U.S.C. Section 1412 State Eligibility

34 C.F.R. 300.101 Free appropriate public education (FAPE)

GCA Governing Board Student Discipline and Code of Conduct Policy

Adopted On: __April 24, 2019_ Last Reviewed On: __April 24, 2019____Last Updated On: _____

The Board of GCA adopts the following policy, effective on the date of adoption by the Board.

The Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) Governing Board adopts this Student Discipline and Code of Conduct Policy to establish and implement an age-appropriate student code of conduct designed to create and sustain a learning environment that facilitates all students' efforts to learn. Student Discipline also will be addressed, consistent with this policy, in a student code of conduct included in the District Handbook. This Policy, and the Student Code of Conduct, will comply with state law and State Board of Education Rules and will include the following:
Standards for student behavior designed to create the expectation that all students will behave t in such a manner as to facilitate a learning environment for all students. The standards will encourage students to respect each other, school faculty/ staff, and any persons attending school functions, and to motivate students to obey student behavior policies adopted by this Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school.

1. Student support processes designed to consider, as appropriate, considering the severity of the behavioral problem, support services available at each school, the district and other public entities or community organizations which may assist students to address behavioral problems.

2. Progressive discipline processes are designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline imposed will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior leading to the discipline and will consider the previous discipline history of the student and other relevant factors, while ensuring that each student receives the due process mandated by federal and state law.

3. Parental involvement processes designed to enable parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators to work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance. The process should enable parents, guardians and school employees to communicate freely their concerns about student behaviors which detract from the learning environment.

The code of conduct will require disciplinary action for infractions of the code and will include the disciplinary process required by Georgia statute and a hearing officer that meets the training requirements included in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-759 and State Board of Education (SBOE) rule 160-4-8-.15.

The student code of conduct will be distributed to each student at the beginning of the school year and upon enrollment of each new student. The parents/guardians will be requested to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the code of conduct and promptly return the acknowledgment to the school.

Teacher Reporting Information

A teacher is required, consistent with Board policy and applicable law, to manage his or her online classroom,

including disciplining students and referring students to the principal or designee to maintain discipline in the online classroom.

Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior which violates the student code of conduct sufficient to substantially interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn will file a report of such behavior with the principal or designee.

The principal and teacher should thereafter follow the procedures set forth in the Student Discipline Code of Conduct procedure and as set forth in Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. 20-2-737-738.

Student behavior which violates state or federal laws as specified in O.C.G.A. 20-2-1184 will result in a report being filed with the police and district attorney.

The Superintendent and/or designee shall develop procedures and guidelines as necessary for implementation of this policy and law.

Reporting Inappropriate Behaviors

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.7(a) - The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.

Student Reporting of Alleged Sexually Inappropriate Behavior

(a) Any student *(or parent or friend of a student)* who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

(b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not

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covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

"Sexual abuse" means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, if a student has allegedly been abused a report of such allegation will be made immediately.

Any report of behavior contemplated in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1184 will be made to the superintendent or his/ her designee.

Discipline Related to Students with Disabilities

This Policy is intended to uphold and comport with specific statutory and regulatory requirements regarding discipline meted out to students with disabilities. This Policy is subject to federal and state law and regulations governing discipline of students with disabilities.

Complaint Procedures

Complaints: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Complainants are expected to address complaints or grievances beginning at the school level with the teacher first and then the administration. Central Office personnel should be contacted next, should parents feel the issues have not been resolved. Conference forms, notes and minutes are kept on file as documentation of the issues.

Complaint procedures under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) are available from the Georgia Cyber Academy Superintendent, Mike Kooi. The complaint procedures describe grounds for complaints, federal programs for which complaints can be filed, information on filing and investigation of a complaint, as well as rights to appeal. The address to which complaints should be filed is included in the procedure. Information regarding complaint procedures is distributed annually to school administrators to share with staff. Copies are also kept on file in
each school's front office.

Grounds for An ESSA Complaint

Any individual, organization or agency (complainant) may file a complaint with Georgia Cyber Academy's Board of Directors if that individual, organization or agency believes and alleges that a violation of Federal Statute or Federal Regulation that applies to a program under ESSA has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that 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

- Title I, Part A
- Title 1, School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003 (a)
- Title I, Part C
- Title I, Part D
- Title II, Part A
- Title III, Part A
- Title VI, Part B
- Title IX, Part A McKinney-Vento Act
- ESSER: CARES, CRRSA, ARP

Complaints originating at the local level as a part of its assurances within ESSA program grant applications and pursuant to Section 9306 of ESSA, an LEA accepting federal funds must have local written procedures for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations of law in the administration of covered programs. Therefore, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education until every effort has been made to resolve through local written complaint procedures. If the complainant has tried to file a complaint with Georgia Cyber Academy to no avail, the complainant must provide the Georgia Department of Education with written evidence of their attempt to resolve the issue with Georgia Cyber Academy.

All Other Complaint Procedures

A. Students, parents/guardians, and any other individual who may have a complaint should address it first at the school level (for example, a complaint about a classroom-related matter should first be addressed with the teacher) and then with school administration. If the complaining party believes the issues have not been resolved by school administration, he or she should send a formal complaint as described in this procedure to the general counsel for the Georgia Cyber Academy (the “School”) Board, whose information is provided below.

B. Conference forms/notes/minutes are kept on file as documentation of the issues.

C. Students, parents/guardians, and any other individual may file a complaint with the Georgia Cyber Academy Board if he or she believes and alleges that a violation of state law or regulation has occurred. The complaint must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the complaint is received unless a longer period is reasonable because the violation is considered systemic or ongoing.

D. A formal complaint must be filed in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint must include the following:

1. Complainant's name, contact information, and relationship to the School.
2. A statement that the School has violated a requirement of state law or regulation.
3. The date on which the violation occurred.
4. A description or explanation or the alleged violation.
5. The names and contact information of individuals who can provide additional information.
6. Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's allegations.

E. The complaint must be delivered electronically to Georgia Cyber Academy Board Counsel, Chris Adams, and Board Chair, Kenneth Tennyson:

Chris Adams, Esq.
Krevolin Horst
adams@khlawfirm.com

Kenneth Tennyson, Georgia Cyber Academy Board Chair: ktennyson@georgiacyber.org

F. For a complaint directed to the Board, within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint, the Board or Board Designee will issue a Letter of Acknowledgement to the complainant confirming that the complaint has been received and informing the complainant as to additional information needed, the ways in which the Board will investigate the complaint, and any other pertinent information. The complainant will promptly and in writing inform the Board of whether he or she will provide additional information and otherwise respond to the Board's Letter of Acknowledgement.

If additional information or an investigation is necessary, the School, through the Board, will complete its investigation and issue a Letter of Findings within 60 calendar days of receiving all requested information from the complainant or notice that the complainant has provided all information of which he or she is aware.

If a violation has been found, the School, by and through the Board, will take corrective action as promptly as reasonably possible and in no event later than 60 days from the date of the Letter of Findings.

G. If the complaint is not resolved at the Board level, the complainant has the right to request review of the Board's decision by the Georgia State Charter Schools Commission ("SCSC"). The Board will upon request provide the complainant with the information needed to request SCSC review.

Discrimination Notices

Non-Discrimination Policy

Georgia Cyber Academy shall not discriminate in their educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Georgia Cyber Academy Human Relations Act.

GCA is committed to creating a safe, healthy learning environment for all students that enhances personal safety and encourages respect, dignity, and equality among students. GCA complies with the following laws:

Non-Discrimination

(Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title II, Sec 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001)

The Georgia Cyber Academy (GCA) Board of Directors is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying.

In accordance with federal and state laws and local policy, the GCA Board of Directors prohibits the acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and exclusion towards any individual on the basis of the individual's actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race or ethnicity, ethnic group identification, ancestry, nationality, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age, alienage, veteran status, parental status, family status, or marital status in admission or access to its programs, facilities, services, activities, employment opportunities, or any aspect of operations. GCA provides equal access and opportunity to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated (outside) youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities, and prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and exclusion towards any individual or group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or other designated (outside) youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society.

If students and/or parents have concerns, then they should bring such concerns, in writing, to the attention of their grade band principal. If employees have concerns, then they should bring such concerns, in writing, to the attention of their immediate supervisor. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries and concerns regarding the Board's non-discrimination policies:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Title IX also prohibits gender- based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, and **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

GCA has designated the following individual to investigate alleged violations of **Title VI**, **Title IX**, **Age Discrimination Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990,** and **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:**

Nikki Perrilloux, Title IX Coordinator
1745 Phoenix Blvd., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30349
Office: 404-334-4790 Fax: 404-684-8816
nperrilloux@georgiacyber.org

GCA has designated the following individual to investigate alleged violations of **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** against students**:**

Kascha Adeleye, Instructional Support Services Director
1745 Phoenix Blvd., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30349
Office: 404-334-4790 Fax: 404-684-8816
kadeleye@georgiacyber.org

Georgia Cyber Academy also complies with **the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")**.

GCA has designated the following individual to investigate alleged violations of **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"):**

J. Brock Tarno, Special Education Director
1745 Phoenix Blvd., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30349
Office: 404-334-4790 Fax: 404-684-8816
jtarno@georgiacyber.org

Under the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, no public elementary school or state or local education agency that provides an opportunity for one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society.

The following individual has been designated to investigate alleged violations of the **Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act**:

Mike Kooi, Superintendent
1745 Phoenix Blvd., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30349
Office: 404-334-4790 Fax: 404-684-8816
mkooi@georgiacyber.org

REPORTING DISCRIMINATION

Any person who believes that he or she has been the victim of discrimination should report the alleged discrimination within thirty (30) days of the occurrence by:

- Email
- Fax
- Telephone
- Sending a letter by mail
- Filing a complaint in person

Once a complaint has been made, designated personnel will begin an investigation, track progress, and determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes a violation of Title VI, Title IX, Title II, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act , or the Boy Scouts Equal Access Act, and take appropriate action.

For further information from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) on notices of non-discrimination, call 1-800-421-3481 or visit the website for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area.