



# THE HANDBOOK

2022-2023

GREENS FARMS ACADEMY

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

*The Handbook* is published and distributed by Greens Farms Academy (“GFA” or the “Academy” or the “School”) to members of the GFA community for the purpose of providing information on aspects of student and campus life so that students may gain as much as possible from their experience at the School. Students, parents, faculty, administration, and staff should all read and be familiar with the contents of *The Handbook* so that each member of the community knows and understands our community expectations. While policies in *The Handbook* will generally apply, GFA may take actions that it determines to be in the best interests of the School, its faculty, and its students. *The Handbook* does not limit the authority of GFA to alter, interpret, and implement its rules, policies, and procedures before, during, and after the school year. *The Handbook* is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between GFA and any parent, guardian, or student affiliated with or attending the School. Greens Farms Academy may, in its sole discretion, add, revise, and/or delete policies before, during, and after the school year.

## MISSION STATEMENT

GFA engages students as partners in an innovative, inclusive, and globally minded community to prepare them for lives of purpose.

## Core Values

**Passion:** Our sense of purpose drives us to learn.

**Integrity:** We model and instill shared accountability to our core values.

**Curiosity:** We embrace the power of questions that challenge us to grow.

**Empathy:** We commit to knowing one another and building the connections we need to thrive.

**Excellence:** We all have vast potential: we insist on cultivating it to the fullest extent.

## Philosophy

**Partners:** Our students collaborate with teachers to develop their voices to effect change, to become lifelong learners who take ownership of their education, and have an instinct for self-reflection that builds character and drives improvement.

**Innovative:** Building on a demanding curriculum, our faculty seeks innovative and effective methods to help students cultivate the skills and habits of mind necessary to excel.

**Inclusive:** GFA strives to create a diverse community that values the identities, perspectives, and experiences of all its members.

**Globally Minded:** We empower our students to discover their place in the world and help them to become globally competent citizens engaged in building a sustainable future.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Greens Farms Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, ethnic origin, or any other status protected by applicable law in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## CALENDAR FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

Monday, 8/22 to Friday, 9/2	US Pre-Season Sports Practices
Wednesday, 8/31	Day 1 of Orientation for all Upper School Students Orientation for 5th Grade Students New Family Reception for 5th Grade
Thursday, 9/1	Day 2 of Orientation for all Upper School Students Orientation for New 6-8th Grade Students New Family Reception for 6th-8th Grade
Monday, 9/5	Labor Day (school closed)
Wednesday, 9/6	First Day of Classes for all Middle and Upper School Students Orientation for all LS Students (PreK-4)
Wednesday, 9/7	Convocation (Grades 4-12)
Tuesday, 9/26	Rosh Hashanah (school closed)
Monday, 10/3 - Tuesday, 10/4	Upper School Parent-Teacher Conferences (half-day on 10/3 and no classes on 10/4 in the Upper School)
Wednesday, 10/5	Yom Kippur (school closed)
Monday, 10/11	Columbus Day /Indigenous Peoples Day (school in session)
Friday, 11/11	Veterans Day (school closed)
Monday, 11/21 - Tuesday, 11/22	Lower and Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences Upper School Family Conferences (no classes; virtual conferences will be available)
Wednesday, 11/23 to Friday, 11/25	Thanksgiving Break (classes resume 11/28)
Friday, 12/16	Noon Dismissal for Middle and Upper School No School for Lower School Students
Monday, 12/19 to Monday, 1/2	Winter Break (last day 12/19; classes resume 1/3)
Monday, 1/2	Faculty Professional Day (no classes)
Thursday, 1/10	State of the School
Monday, 1/16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (school closed)
Monday, 2/20	Presidents Day (school closed)
Monday, 3/13 to Monday, 3/27	Spring Break (classes resume on 3/28)
Monday, 3/27	Faculty Professional Day (no classes)
Thursday, 4/6	Lower School, 5th & 6th Grade Grandparents & Special Visitors Day (noon dismissal for Lower School)
Friday, 4/7	Good Friday (school closed)
Friday, 5/26	Noon Dismissal
Monday, 5/29	Memorial Day (school closed)
Wednesday, 5/31	Last Day of Classes for Upper School
Thursday, 6/1 - Saturday, 6/3	Senior Trip
Monday, 6/5	Last Day of Classes for PreK-4 (noon dismissal) Last Day of Classes for Middle School
Tuesday, 6/6	Closing Ceremony for Grades 4 and 8
Wednesday, 6/7	Class Day (Grades 9-12)
Thursday, 6/8	Baccalaureate (Grade 12) Commencement (Grades 9-12)

## **ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND STAFF**

Look for a complete list of administration, faculty, and staff at Greens Farms Academy in the Directory. In addition to each faculty and staff member's name, primary responsibilities and contact information are noted. Faculty, administration, and staff contact information is on the website as well. The list is designed to assist you in determining whom to contact. Except in an emergency, you are asked to contact school officials only during the school day.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

GFA communicates with the parent body using the following media:

- Enotes: Division news, events, and calendar reminders emailed on Fridays from Division Heads
- All-school emails
- Website: Updated with news items, blogs, athletics results, and information for parents, faculty and staff
- Magazine: Alumni news and school features in a publication mailed to the greater GFA community
- Social media: Sharing various aspects of school life with our community via Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, and Vimeo.

## **GOVERNANCE**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for GFA's financial health and long-term stewardship, and is responsible for selecting the Head of School. Unlike the corporate model, however, there are no shareholders. Thus, in effect, the trustees are also the "owners" of the School.

While the board plays a strategic role in the affairs of GFA, the day-to-day management is not its business. Management of the School's operations is in the capable hands of the School's administration. Board members are not the appropriate resource to resolve operational matters.

However, in some respects, running a school is like running a business, and often expertise in certain critical areas — for example, the law, construction, human resources, marketing, and finance — may not be present in a community of scholars. Thus, Boards of Trustees tend to help out in all of these areas and are typically asked to take a leadership role in fundraising.

As is commonplace in independent schools, the board is self-perpetuating, meaning that the trustees select their own successors. However, the nominating process is anything but insular or parochial. Criteria to be considered include diversity of talent and background, willingness to serve and perform the duties required, prior efforts on behalf of GFA, and conformance to the guidelines for makeup of the board as set forth in the bylaws. The board is diverse in terms of talent, background, and stage of life. What the trustees have in common is a devotion to GFA expressed in terms of hard work and generosity.

The board is presently composed of 25 members — nine of whom are officers who serve for one-year terms (with a maximum of 10 consecutive years); 15 of whom are term trustees, who generally serve for a maximum of two three-year terms; and the head of school, who is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the board. Members of the board operate through a series of standing committees. From time-to-time, the board co-chairs also appoint ad-hoc committees for particular needs. Each board member serves on at least one board committee — most on more than one.



The full board meets seven times during the school year, and each committee meets at least three times per year, but many meet more frequently. There are typically at least three trustees on each committee, and many committees also include administration and faculty members, non-trustee parents, and others. For a listing of this year's board members, please consult the Directory or GFA website.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

Should weather or emergency conditions make it necessary to close school, open late, or dismiss early, announcements will be broadcast through the SchoolMessenger Alert system. Please keep your contacts up to date in MyBackPack. If you would like to add additional contacts, please send a note to [alerts@gfacademy.org](mailto:alerts@gfacademy.org). Snow day closings will also be broadcast on a number of local media outlets, including Cablevision Channel 12 (Norwalk) and WTNH Channel 8 (New Haven) as well as on GFA's website: [www.gfacademy.org](http://www.gfacademy.org).

The safety of our students, faculty, staff, and families is our foremost concern, and the prospect of unsafe roadway conditions is the principal factor that drives a decision for a delayed opening or closure. Those decisions are made based on the best available information from local law enforcement, weather forecasting services, and communication with administrators from area school districts. GFA draws from more than twenty different communities, and many GFA students, faculty, and staff travel some distance by car. We're especially cognizant of the 125-150 teenage drivers in our community, most of whom have very little experience with winter driving conditions. Additionally, many students take the bus, and when area public schools close, bus companies tend to follow suit.

## **HORIZONS**

The mission of Horizons at GFA is to partner with low-income students from underserved Bridgeport schools to help them develop strong academic, social and emotional skills, habits of mind, and the resilience to succeed in school and pursue a meaningful, choice-filled life.

Horizons at GFA is an innovative, self-funded program designed to provide access and opportunity to students from Bridgeport Public Schools with the goal of changing their life paths. Horizons emphasizes academics, social-emotional learning, and character development, but also exposes students to a wide variety of social, cultural, and recreational enrichment experiences in science, the arts, and athletics. The organization comprises three integrated programs designed to support students as they progress through their educational journey. The Horizons PreK-8 program is in session for six weeks during the summer and on Saturdays at GFA during the fall and spring, while the high school and college programs operate in Bridgeport weekly throughout the academic year.

The PreK-8 summer session provides instruction in reading, writing, math, and social-emotional learning (SEL) using a custom-built curriculum in each focus area. Guided by a professional faculty in small group settings, which allows for individualized attention, Horizons provides experiences that strengthen school performance while building essential non-cognitive skills. Saturday Academy focuses on continued academic support and community building during the school year.

Horizons high school students receive one-on-one school-year support from coaches and tutors. In addition, students receive SAT prep and the support of a designated college advisor who assists with the college application and financial aid process. Grade-specific programming for each high school grade is also provided during the summer and the academic year.

Students in the College Program participate in community events, attend workshops and receive monthly check-ins from program staff. As they get closer to graduation, they participate in career development training. In addition, they have access to book scholarships and to an



emergency financial assistance fund. In-person academic coaching and tutoring is available for students attending local colleges.

## **PARENTS ASSOCIATION (PA)**

The purpose of the association is to promote a sense of community among parents and guardians of GFA students and to encourage parental involvement in activities, volunteer services, and assistance with specific projects. These three functions will be carried out in agreement with and at the request of the administration and the Board of Trustees. The Parents Association will pursue its purpose in a manner consistent with Greens Farms Academy's Mission Statement. For a list of the PA Executive Board and Class Parents, please consult the directory or the GFA website. The directory may only be used for School-purposes, and not for personal or commercial purposes.

### **Class Parents**

Class Parents are ambassadors within the GFA community. They play a key role in helping new families feel welcome and coordinating social events for students and parents throughout the year. These events are intended to strengthen the positive relationships within the class and should be simple affairs with full attendance as the goal. Whenever possible, hosting events at school or at a public gathering place is preferred.

Good communication between the School and parents is essential. Any concerns about school or child-related issues are best communicated directly between parents and teachers. Class Parents should not handle disputes or pass on information from other parents to the School. This puts them in an awkward position and may lead to misunderstandings or miscommunication.

Class Parents plan activities for each class and use class activity dues to cover expenses. These funds may not be used for other purposes, and money not used in any given year moves forward with the class.

### **Class Parents Use of Email**

Class Parents create email distribution lists using the email addresses supplied by the School. Class emails must only be used for specific class events or PA related information. Class emails may not be used to communicate parent opinion or commentary.

Distribution lists should be created so that email addresses are not accessible (in "blind copy") and messages should have such headings as "GFA sixth grade information," or "GFA Parents Association information" in the subject field. In cases when an email message is the only means of communication sent to parents, the person sending the message must also call any parents who are not on the email distribution list.

If parents have chosen not to publish their email address in the directory, the School will not give out that information for other parents to use.

### **Dragon Shop**

The Dragon Shop is an online store that sells spirit items at a reasonable cost for the school community. The School and the Parents Association have a year-round Squad Locker shop and additionally run semi-regular "pop-up shops" throughout the year. The Dragon Shop can be accessed through the GFA website under the "Community" tab (<https://www.gfacademy.org/community/gfa-dragon-shop>).

## **SAFE COMMUNITY STATEMENT**

GFA believes strongly that open and direct communication among parents is of primary importance in keeping our students safe. To that end, we urge each parent and guardian to do the following:

- Contact families hosting youth gatherings to ensure appropriate supervision.
- Respond to communication from other parents in a timely manner about events taking place in one's home or under one's supervision.
- Supervise youth gatherings that occur in one's home and refrain from allowing unsupervised gatherings.
- Refrain from permitting alcohol or drugs to be served to underage guests.
- Familiarize oneself with and adhere to GFA's Drug and Alcohol Policy as outlined in *The Handbook* or by speaking with one's own attorney concerning the risks associated with permitting underage drinking or drug use while hosting a gathering of youth and take appropriate measures to reduce or eliminate such risks.
- Strive in every way to ensure a safe social environment by maintaining regular communication with one's own children about safe behavior.

## **TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

If students need technical support, they should submit a ticket via the helpdesk portal, email [helpdesk@gfacademy.org](mailto:helpdesk@gfacademy.org), or visit the IT Department and their problem will be addressed in a timely manner.

### **Laptops**

Students in grades 6-12 are required to have a MacBook laptop that meets the minimum specifications detailed on the technology webpage on the Portal. Classroom software can be downloaded through Self Service, a software program installed on all laptops. Tech support and loaners are available for students should they need assistance. Students bringing laptops to school have to abide by the Responsible Use Policy.

### **Email**

Google Workspace provides email and access to Google's suite of software and document storage. Gmail is the primary means of communication at GFA. Faculty and students are expected to check their email at least once a day. Students and faculty can login to Gmail by visiting: <http://www.gmail.com> and entering in their email address (username) and password.

### **Password Manager**

Before accessing Gmail, students and faculty should first create a profile on Password Manager at: <https://passmanager.gfacademy.org/pmuser>.

### **My Backpack**

Parents and students can go to My Backpack, a secure website, for the following:

- Attendance (all grades)
- Parent-Student Directory (all grades)
- Student schedule(s) (Middle and Upper School)
- Semester grades and comments (Middle and Upper School)
- Update your personal information in our database (parents only)
- Re-enrollment contracts & billing Information (parents only)
- Admissions application (parents only)
- Program registration for Summer Academy, Camp GFA, and Summer Sports (parents only)

User information for new families is sent in an individual email over the summer. If you have forgotten your password or user ID, please go to the log-in screen and choose “I forgot my password.” After filling in your user ID or email address, an email will be sent with your user ID and a link to reset your password to the email account that we have on file. If you have any questions, please email [mybackpack@gfacademy.org](mailto:mybackpack@gfacademy.org).

My Backpack Web address: <https://gfacademy.org.seniormbp.com/SeniorApps> (Note the “s” for “secure” in https; please bookmark this address in your Web browser). A link to the system is also available on the portal section of the School’s website.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **ASSIGNMENTS DURING RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Faculty members should avoid major assignments over religious holidays and major assessments the day following a holiday.

### **ASSIGNMENTS DURING SNOW DAYS**

Continuity of our academic classes can be challenging during the winter months. In the interest of minimizing disruption to the academic program, the School may continue Middle and Upper School classes remotely during snow days. When a snow day is announced, the School will notify students and families whether classes will be offered remotely. If that is the case, then faculty members will post any adjustments to the syllabus on their Schoology course pages.

- Students should check their Schoology pages and email during the snow day after 9 a.m.
- Students will be expected to keep up with their homework and complete any adjusted or incremental assignments so classes can resume upon return.
- The instructions from teachers may vary by class.

### **ATHLETICS**

*Please also consult the Athletics sections in each of the divisional chapters.*

### **Code of Ethics and Conduct**

(for competition within the Fairchester and New England Prep School athletic leagues)

In every athletic contest, we expect that students will strive to win, but always within these high standards for conduct and good sportsmanship, regardless of the team level, the score, or the opponent.

- Treat other persons as you know they should be treated, and as you wish them to fairly treat you.
- Regard the rules of your game as agreements, the spirit or letter of which you should not evade or break.
- Treat officials and opponents with respect.
- Accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.
- Honor visiting teams and spectators as your own guests and treat them as such; likewise, behave as an honored guest when you visit another school.
- Be gracious in victory and defeat.
- Be as cooperative as you are competitive.
- Remember that your actions on and off the field reflect on both you and your school.

### **The Fairchester Athletic Association Spectator Policy**

The Fairchester Athletic Association is a group of independent schools that share similar educational missions and athletic philosophies. The association aspires to hold students, teachers, alumni, and parents to standards of behavior that reflect the very highest values in society. Athletic competition should be a forum to model these behaviors and should serve the broader purpose of education in our schools.

The association is committed to providing students with a full, rich athletic program. Important lessons are taught through athletic participation. Games and practices are “classrooms” in which our coaches can teach many lessons. The association acknowledges that athletes and coaches, as well as spectators, can, on occasion, be caught up in the intensity of a particular game or match. This should never be an excuse for irresponsible behavior. Just as good schools expect civility and self-control in the classroom, the same must apply to athletic contests. Sportsmanship, civility, and healthy competition must be an association priority.

With these priorities in mind, the Fairchester Athletic Association has established the following guidelines that govern spectator behavior at all athletic events:

- Spectators will watch games only from those areas defined by each school as “spectator areas.”
- Spectators must not:
  - Run up and down the sidelines, or go onto the field of play during the game;
  - Engage in heckling or taunting or use cheers that are profane or mocking;
  - Call to players, coaches, or officials in an unsportsmanlike manner;
  - Directly “coach” a player by shouting playing instructions, etc.;
  - Deface, damage or remove property; or
  - Use noisemakers indoors.
- The use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco at athletic contests is forbidden.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING**

GFA is committed to the highest standards of care for its students, which includes protecting students from inappropriate or hurtful actions by adults responsible for their care.

In accordance with Connecticut law, GFA’s employees are required to report to the Department of Children and Families (“DCF”) suspected abuse or neglect of children. This duty is triggered when there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm. The responsibility to report rests both on GFA *and* on GFA employees.

The following procedure is established to ensure that reports are made in a timely and effective manner, and that information about students and their families is treated respectfully. We ask that families understand that GFA and its employees are sometimes required to make a report to DCF, and we ask that families support our decisions to do so.

If a school employee learns of a situation of possible abuse or neglect, the employee is expected to consult with the Head of School (or the Head of School’s designee) about the situation, so that appropriate action can be taken to protect the student and timely reports can be made to DCF. The Head of School (or the Head of School’s designee) will review the situation and, in the Head of School’s discretion, may consult with GFA’s healthcare providers, the student’s family, legal counsel, and/or a consultant specializing in the care and protection of children, as may be appropriate. If the abuse or neglect is suspected to come from the student’s family, GFA will identify an approach to help protect the student. In all instances, GFA will protect the confidentiality of the student and the student’s family to the extent appropriate or possible.

If GFA determines that a report should be made to DCF, the Head of School (or the Head of School’s designee) will generally make the first report to DCF by telephone call within 12 hours of notice of complaint as required by law. A written report will follow within 48 hours after making the oral report.

However, any GFA employee who has a reasonable belief that a student is being abused or neglected may (and should) make a report to DCF at any time. In addition, in the event that it is not clear whether conduct reaches a level of reportable abuse or neglect or there is a disagreement about the decision to report, any GFA employee who believes that the incident rises to the threshold for making a report is expected to make the report to DCF.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

*Please also see the Interpersonal Student Relationships section below and the Discipline section under each divisional heading.*

Greens Farms Academy is a community of people — students, faculty, staff, and parents — connected, at its best, by the following principles of conduct. At all times, whether on or off campus, students should conduct themselves with respect for self and others, knowing that they are responsible for the good name and reputation of Greens Farms Academy. The education and human development that brings us together goes beyond the cognitive; it is importantly centered upon elements of citizenship, civility, and respect. GFA expects each of its community members to act in accordance with these standards:

- To conduct yourself with integrity — to be honest with yourself and with others.
- To be considerate, courteous, and fair in your dealings with others.
- To respect the dignity, rights, and differences of all members of the school community in your words and actions.
- To practice self-discipline.
- To be a contributing member of the school community with your own distinctive strengths.
- To be responsible and honor your commitments.
- To help promote an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- To respect school property and the property of all other members of the school community.

We believe in each student's capacity for growth and we keep this in mind when weighing the most appropriate response to behavior that is not in keeping with our community expectations. Students are subject to the rules of our school at any time they are under GFA's jurisdiction. This includes being on campus after hours, riding on GFA vans or school buses, on the train while going to or from school, and while on field trips. If conduct occurs off-campus and causes substantial disruption of the learning environment, the School administration may impose consequences.

If, at any time a student engages in illegal or otherwise inappropriate activity which brings discredit to GFA, he or she may be subject to disciplinary action. Students who knowingly accompany or otherwise abet other students violating one of the major rules may also be subject to disciplinary action. Finally, students who are on disciplinary leave or expelled must obtain permission from the Head of School in order to attend events on campus or school-related events off campus.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Cheating or plagiarizing work is prohibited. A student who cheats or who plagiarizes may receive a failing grade on the work in addition to any other disciplinary action determined by GFA. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following: plagiarism; using materials obtained from unauthorized notes; copying from another student without prior approval of the teacher; using unauthorized aid on an examination, test, quiz, or homework assignment; turning in work done previously for another class as new work; giving improper assistance to another student, or being in possession of unauthorized aids in a test situation. A student who needs to copy notes from a classmate must have permission from that student. Plagiarism is defined as deliberately attempting to pass off someone else's work as your own. Unintentional plagiarism, such as failure to follow directions properly in footnoting or bibliographic listing, can result in an academic penalty on the work. Students should follow the guidelines on proper citation and use of sources issued by their teachers. Entering and using information from anyone else's file is considered an act of plagiarism. It is our intention to use the Honor Code as a tool for teaching students about the expectations for academic work. Repeat violations of the Honor Code are considered serious breaches of our community standards and will be treated as such. We believe these instances are important teaching moments. Please also consult the relevant areas in the Middle School and Upper School sections.

## **Alcohol and Other Drugs**

GFA prohibits students from using, possessing, transferring, selling, distributing, purchasing, or being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal or controlled drug or substance for which the student does not have a prescription on campus, at school events, or school-related functions, on school-sponsored trips, or anywhere the student is under the School's jurisdiction. Students are also prohibited from using medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, in any manner other than as prescribed or intended by the manufacturer.

The School's primary concern is always for the safety and well-being of all GFA students. GFA takes very seriously its role in the prevention of drug and alcohol use by its students, and to that end, GFA expects parents to provide active supervision of parties and gatherings in their homes consistent with the School's rules on drugs and alcohol. New York and Connecticut state laws provide that while a parent or guardian may serve alcohol at home to his or her child under age 21, it is illegal to furnish alcohol to other children under age 21. Parents who choose to serve alcohol to students or who allow students to bring alcohol to their homes should understand that this is in direct violation of GFA's strongly held beliefs, its policies, and state law.

At all times, whether on or off campus, students should conduct themselves with respect for self and others, knowing that they are responsible for the good name and reputation of GFA.

If a designated school official or the school nurse has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, he/she will administer a breathalyzer test. Reasonable suspicion will be based on observable behavior such as glassy eyes, eye redness, unsteady gait, slurred speech, disorientation, inappropriately aggressive behavior, or the report from a credible source that the student consumed alcohol. If a student refuses to participate in the test, he/she will be deemed to have consumed alcohol, based on observable behavior. There are specific procedures governing breathalyzer use for certain Upper School events, like Prom.

## **Computer Misuse**

Please see the Technology Responsible Use Policy below. Misuse of student laptops on school property can be grounds for the School to ban the use of the computer at school for a period of time. Students should be aware that computers should be used for educational purposes while on campus. Middle School students may only use their computers in a classroom and not in the Forum, Front Lawn, or other public areas.

## **Irresponsible Behavior**

Students are prohibited from being rude to a teacher or any other community member, using obscene language, disrupting a class, being chronically absent or tardy, missing obligations, being chronically out of dress code, or being deliberately disobedient. This prohibition extends to students who knowingly accompany others violating one of the major rules.

Reflecting the Code of Conduct's emphasis on community, hurtful or disparaging actions or language represent serious violations of school norms; such conduct is therefore prohibited and will not be tolerated.

## **Theft**

Taking the property of others or school property without permission of the owner is stealing, and will not be tolerated. "Borrowing" such property without permission is also stealing and, thus, prohibited. A student who steals may be required to make restitution for the property in addition to any other disciplinary action.

## **Tobacco and Vaping**

Students are prohibited from using tobacco or any other nicotine products on campus or anywhere the student is under our school's jurisdiction. This prohibition applies to electronic cigarettes, other vaping apparatus, or the use of any related paraphernalia. In the event that a



vaping device is found, it may be tested by the Westport Police to determine the nature of its contents.

### **Truancy & Trespass**

A student who is absent from school without a parent's permission or knowledge, leaves campus without school permission or without signing out, or knowingly provides transportation for such a student will be punished by suspension or deprivation of free time. The beachfront property opposite our campus does not belong to the School and, accordingly, GFA students are prohibited from being on that property without permission.

### **Vandalism**

Willful damage to school property or the property of others is vandalism, and is therefore prohibited. A student who commits vandalism while under school jurisdiction will be responsible for the cost of repair in addition to any other disciplinary action.

### **Weapons and Dangerous Objects**

The possession of any weapons, tools, or objects that threaten the well-being of others (including, but not limited to, firearms, knives, fireworks and firecrackers, etc.) poses a severe threat to the safety of the entire community. Possession or use of any such items or any other dangerous weapon or object is therefore prohibited.

### **Sanctuary Policy**

GFA encourages students who find themselves in potentially dangerous situations to reach out for help from adults they trust at school. Those situations can include, but are not limited to, instances of substance use on campus or at school-related events, chronic substance abuse, or other behaviors that pose a threat to their health and safety or that of members of the GFA community. In those situations, GFA allows students to ask for help for themselves or for others without bringing about a disciplinary response from the School. The School will treat those situations as health and safety issues and protect the confidentiality of the student(s) in question to the extent that is deemed appropriate by the School. The School will expect full cooperation from the student, inform the student's parents and dean, and assess the student's readiness to return to school through the appropriate school counselor. A sanctuary event will not be a part of a student's school records. Sanctuary may be invoked only once with a guarantee that there will be no disciplinary consequences; a second case will be considered after a careful review by the School.

### **Disclosure to Colleges**

It is the School's policy to support students in reporting serious disciplinary consequences to colleges. The college counselors will generally, honestly and fully, disclose if a student has been subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, dismissal or withdrawal from the School. If a student was suspended in 9th or 10th grade, the student's suspension will be expunged at the end of their junior year, provided the student did not accumulate additional suspension during 9-11th grades. If the suspension is expunged, the student does not have to report the suspension.

The student should work closely with the college counselors to ensure that both are responding in a consistent and thoughtful manner. If a student's disciplinary status changes after the filing of college applications, the student and counselor are obligated to inform all schools to which an application has previously been submitted or the school at which the student has submitted an enrollment deposit.

The student and the college counselor are expected to notify colleges within two weeks from the date of the change in status. This policy is in compliance with the National Association for College Admission Counseling's Statement of Principles of Good Practice.

## **Disclosure to Next Schools**

The School works closely with students and families to support the honest reporting of disciplinary matters to next schools. When a student applies to a next school, it is the obligation of the student and the student's parents to notify such school about whether the student has ever been suspended or dismissed from, or experienced any significant change in status at, GFA. If a student's disciplinary status changes after applying to or being accepted to a next school, GFA similarly expects the student and student's family to notify such school of the student's discipline. GFA may also communicate with any secondary or next school, or any other educational institution, regarding the student's disciplinary record.

## **CONCUSSIONS**

GFA's protocols for managing head injuries or concussions, including guidelines for returning to play and to the classroom, are available on the Parent Portal under "Health Services" or can be requested from the nurse's office ([healthoffice@gfacademy.org](mailto:healthoffice@gfacademy.org)). The guidelines are based on available research and may evolve as a result of more recent information on best practices. Please also consult the section below on Learning Support and Academic Accommodations for additional information about learning support in the event of a concussion.

## **COUNSELING**

The purpose of the school counselors is to support students PreK through graduation with any and all issues that may impact success in school, including stress and anxiety, peer relationships, difficult family situations, and the breadth of mental health concerns. The counselor's role includes student, parent, and teacher support and consultation. The counselor's role also includes coordination with professionals in the community with a signed release of information. Our message is that there is no problem too great or too small to be discussed with a counselor.

Contacts with the school counselor will be discreet and remain confidential with the exception of instances where, in the judgment of the school counselor and administration, keeping confidentiality would pose a threat to the safety of the student or members of the school community. Such circumstances could include cases of health and safety emergencies (when students or others are in imminent danger of harm); when there is concern about a student's ability to function academically, emotionally, physically, and/or mentally within the school environment; or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed. Such information may be disclosed to other appropriate faculty and staff, as well as to outside professionals, law enforcement officers, parents/guardians, and others when there is a compelling reason for doing so.

In accordance with state statutes naming school counselors as mandated reporters, a student's confidentiality will not be maintained when school personnel has reason to believe that the individual has been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, when there is an allegation from others of the same, or when there is evidence that parents or legal guardians are neglecting the individual.

All members of the school community are invited to contact one of our counselors to get acquainted or to discuss a matter of concern.

Lower School Counselor: Corinne Kennelly, NCC, 203-256-7218, [ckennelly@gfacademy.org](mailto:ckennelly@gfacademy.org)  
Middle School Counselor: Jackie Woods, LMFT, 203-349-7203, [jwoods@gfacademy.org](mailto:jwoods@gfacademy.org)  
Upper School Counselors: Stephanie VanHatten, LPC: 203-256-7550, [svanhatten@gfacademy.org](mailto:svanhatten@gfacademy.org) and Chelsea McGee, 203-349-7321, [cmcgee@gfacademy.org](mailto:cmcgee@gfacademy.org)

## **DOGS ON CAMPUS**

Students are on the fields and playground throughout the day, therefore dogs may not be walked on campus during school hours. When bringing dogs to campus, owners should always have leashes on-hand and must pick up after their pets. Dogs are not permitted on the turf fields.

## **EMERGENCIES**

GFA has a robust crisis plan in place which has been reviewed by the Director of Security and the Safety Committee. GFA has recently conducted an independent risk analysis, including a review of the School's crisis plan, an inspection of existing security measures, and a review of policies and procedures with the Westport Police Department. Our goals in an emergency are to maintain a safe and comforting environment to the extent possible and to unite students and their parents as quickly as possible. In any emergency situation, we will communicate to parents through the SchoolMessenger App.

## **FACILITIES USE**

Monday–Friday: Students not involved in a faculty-sponsored activity or sport will be required to leave the building by 5:30PM. Students may use the front lobby from the end of the school day until 5:30PM Monday through Friday. Students may also use the library from the end of the school day until 5:00PM Monday through Thursday, and until 3:00PM on Friday. Upper School students waiting to participate in a school-sanctioned evening activity may be in the Cafeteria Annex or Performing Arts Wing. All other areas are off limits after the end of the school day unless a student is under the supervision of a faculty member or coach. All student activities (music, drama, yearbook, etc.) must have a supervising faculty member in the building. Finally, students returning from games should be picked up at the upper pick-up area. If the parents are delayed, or if a student must call home for a ride, he or she may only wait in the lobby of the main building.

Weekends: On weekends, students are only allowed to use the building with faculty supervision. At no time should students leave open or prop open a door and leave it unattended.

Use of the Performing Arts Center by an outside individual or organization must be in-line with GFA's mission. It may not be a recruitment event, or have any fundraising activities or solicitation of donations of any kind, promotion of products or services, or admissions fees. Please note that the facility may not be rented by any for-profit or political organization. Any publicity for the event must be submitted to GFA's communications office for approval before it is released.

## **FACULTY GIFTS**

Gifts to teachers by families are an individual matter, and families should not feel obligated to give teachers gifts. If families are so inclined, teachers always appreciate heartfelt gifts including handmade or class artwork or projects that are particularly meaningful. It is school policy not to solicit or collect funds for gifts at any time.

## **PHILANTHROPY**

The GFA Fund is GFA's annual immediate-use fund that allows for the strategic deployment of resources — where and when they are needed most — and enhances the School's capacity to address emerging opportunities. We ask all parents to support the Fund as their first philanthropic priority. Through the collective power of many gifts, the GFA Fund raises more than \$2.5 million each year.

The GFA Fund impacts our students, staff, and faculty members every day. An important gauge of institutional strength, the Fund supports the core components of the GFA experience. This resource is powerful in its immediacy, and it must be replenished every year to sustain our programs and fulfill the School's mission. The GFA Fund is the primary means for all parents, alumni, grandparents, and friends to help sustain the distinctive features that make GFA special.

Last year, the School approved a new Strategic Direction: *Lives of Purpose*, which will serve as the foundation for a comprehensive fundraising campaign to be launched publicly in conjunction with GFA's centennial in 2025.

Any fundraising conducted at or on behalf of GFA must first have the consent of the Director of Institutional Advancement. The Director of Institutional Advancement is the primary point of contact for all fundraising at or associated with GFA. Employees of GFA may not solicit any individual or organization on behalf of the School without the consent of the Director of Institutional Advancement. Any solicitation using school fundraising lists or a solicitation of the GFA parent body must have the approval of the Director of Institutional Advancement and the Head of School. Under no circumstances will the School provide access to its mailing lists to any for-profit or nonprofit enterprise.

The Office of Advancement is the only school entity authorized to hold events on campus that are intended to raise funds for GFA from members of the school community. Any other entity seeking to hold a fundraiser on campus needs the consent of the Director of Institutional Advancement and Head of School. Parents may not use class emails or phone lists to solicit other parents for fundraising purposes outside of GFA.

#### **HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

The school nurse, Stephanie Pappas, R.N., is available to students from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Thursday, and 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM Friday.

All students in grades 5–12 must submit a health assessment every 13 months. All students in grades PreK-4 are required to submit a health assessment every two years. Prior to entry, new students must submit a health assessment that has been completed within 12 months. The health assessment must be performed by a licensed physician in the United States. Evidence of immunizations required by law must also be on file with the school nurse.

A hot lunch is provided every day for each student at GFA. Students are asked not to bring their own lunches unless a note from their doctor, on file with the school nurse, requires that they do so. The note must be written permission from a physician including the diagnosis of the condition requiring the special diet and a list of foods the student should eat to supplement his/her diet.

#### **Peanut/Tree Nut Allergy Policy**

In order to make our school a safe environment for all students, staff, and visitors, Greens Farms Academy asks all students, parents, faculty, and staff to make every effort not to bring into the school any product that contains peanuts and/or nuts. This includes peanuts, walnuts, cashews, almonds, and all other tree nuts. Please read all food labels carefully. Accidents happen when foods labeled "may contain" or "traces of" are brought to school. GFA has a number of students with food allergies, and some students, when exposed to certain foods, can develop a reaction known as anaphylaxis. It is also important to note that there may be students with undiagnosed food allergies who experience their first allergic reaction at school. Our goal is to prevent life-threatening allergic reactions, and awareness is the key. In order to safeguard all students, peanuts, nuts, and nut products should not be brought on campus to any sporting event, club meetings, or after-school activities, bake sales, or events where students will be present. We appreciate your help to make the School safe for every student.

## **Medication**

Students may not bring, and will not be permitted to maintain, medicine of any kind with their personal belongings. Connecticut law requires a written medication order from an authorized prescriber (physician, dentist, advanced practice registered nurse, physician's assistant, optometrist, and, for athletic events only, a podiatrist) and parent/guardian written authorization for the nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, other designated personnel, to administer medication, including over-the-counter drugs. Prescription medications must be in the original properly labeled container and dispensed by a physician/pharmacist. Over-the-counter medications must be delivered in an unopened, properly labeled container. All medications must be delivered to the school nurse by a responsible adult.

The school nurse, in collaboration with the parent/guardian and the student's physician, will also establish an individualized medication administration plan for any student requesting medication self-administration privileges. The student will be involved in the decision-making process and the student's preferences respected to the maximum extent possible. In a collaborative effort, the school nurse together with the student, the student's parent/guardian, and physician will determine the student's understanding of the student's medication(s) and competency in the administration of the student's medication(s). Based on this determination, the school nurse will allow or disallow self-administration privileges in accordance with state and federal laws. The self-administration of medication(s) shall include self-administration while on school property or during school-sponsored trips. A duplicate dose of life-saving medication provided by the parent/guardian will be stored at the school nurse's office. It is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school nurse in order to update the student's medication administration plan with respect to any medication(s), dosing revisions, and health status changes.

Misuse of the privilege to self-administer medication(s) will result in immediate revocation of said privilege(s). The school will not assume any responsibility for students not in compliance with this medication self-administration policy.

## **Privacy of Health Information**

The school nurse maintains health information on all current students. This information is shared on a need-to-know basis among certain faculty and staff of Greens Farms Academy and, in emergency situations, with outside medical providers. GFA makes every reasonable effort to maintain the privacy of the personal health information of its students.

## **Health Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency, as determined by the school nurse or other responsible staff member, it is the policy of the School to call 911 immediately for EMS assistance and transport to the nearest approved medical facility. Other emergency interventions, as specified in a student's IECF (e.g., administration of EpiPen for anaphylactic reaction), or as ordered by the school medical advisor, will be implemented in the interim, as appropriate. School personnel will attempt to reach you and/or your child's physician at the number(s) provided by you. Your child will receive the medical treatment necessary to sustain life and/or stabilize their condition, as determined by the medical facility. Any further treatment must be authorized specifically by you or the person(s) designated by you.

Parents are expected to keep Emergency Forms up-to-date. Please remember, it is most important that the School have current home, work, and cell phone numbers for parents/guardians, day care providers, or others (relatives, friends, or neighbors) who routinely assume temporary care of the student if the student's parent(s) cannot be reached. Parents will be notified of an illness or injury that may require follow-up medical care.

## **Recommendations for Testing and Medication**

GFA complies with Connecticut laws, which prohibit school personnel from recommending "psychotropic drugs" for any student for behavioral or social-emotional concerns, such as, (1) attention deficits, (2) impulsivity, (3) anxiety, (4) depression, and (5) thought disorders. The

definition includes Ritalin, Adderall, Dexedrine, and other stimulant medication and antidepressants. The law does not prohibit “school health or mental health personnel” defined as school (1) nurses, (2) nurse practitioners, (3) medical advisors, (4) psychologists, (5) social workers, and (6) counselors, from recommending appropriate evaluation of a student and/or consulting with an outside practitioner with the student’s parent or guardian’s consent.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act**

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act). Asbestos Management Plans have been developed for the School and are available and accessible to the public.

This notification is required by law and should not be construed to indicate the existence of any hazardous conditions in our school buildings.

### **HOVERBOARDS**

Due to fire hazard and other safety concerns, hoverboards, also known as self-balancing scooters, are not allowed on campus at any time.

### **INSPECTIONS**

To help maintain overall safety and security on our campus, at school-related events, and on school-sponsored trips, and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, GFA may inspect a student’s person and personal property (including both their own personal property and that of any family members) if the School suspects a student may be violating the law or violating a school rule or code of conduct. All inspections may be done without notice and without consent. The Head of School and authorized staff members may search a student’s pockets, backpack, gym bag, electronic devices, or other personal property, as well as any automobile(s) used by the student (including both their own and that of any family member they may be using). Inspections are generally carried out with at least two individuals present. A student’s locker or desk is the property of GFA and is at all times under the control of the School. The School may perform general inspections of lockers and desks at any time.

No student may possess any illegal substance, contraband, or any other object that constitutes a threat in the School’s sole discretion to the health, safety, or welfare of any person or persons on school property. Contraband is all substances or materials prohibited by school policy or state or federal laws, including, but not limited to: controlled substances, drugs, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, guns, knives, weapons, or incendiary devices. All illegal, illicit, or disruptive items or items of general nuisance to the educational process may be inspected and taken possession of by staff. Storage, return, or destruction of such items shall be at the discretion of the Head of School or the Head’s designated agent.

### **INTERPERSONAL STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **Commitment to Respectful and Healthy Relationships**

GFA is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of its community. Such an environment precludes behaviors that are disrespectful of, and physically and/or emotionally harmful to others. All members of the GFA community play important roles in maintaining these standards and intervening, as appropriate, when they witness or otherwise become aware of behavior that conflicts with community standards.

Awareness and acceptance of individual identity are central tenets of GFA. GFA expects all members of the GFA community to treat others with civility, respect, and dignity and to interact (whether in person or electronically) politely and appropriately. Before acting, students should give careful consideration to how their communications – whether through words, appearances, actions or otherwise – may negatively impact others. All students are valued members of the GFA community, which presents unique opportunities to develop lasting partnerships with peers, faculty, and staff. GFA strives to help students develop such close connections. However,



GFA expects these relationships to be appropriate and healthy. GFA endeavors to promote this through education and intervention.

With these goals and interests in mind, as well as the legal requirements of the State of Connecticut, GFA has established policies to help students manage these interpersonal relationships safely and appropriately.

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with the Head of School, division heads, deans, advisors, the school nurse, and/or school counselor with any questions or concerns regarding these policies. GFA believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to preventing serious misconduct from occurring and essential to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability, and positive peer leadership.

### **Transgender and Gender Non-conforming students**

GFA will work closely with students and their families to strive to honor their wishes concerning use of GFA facilities, participation in athletics, the accuracy of student records, use of preferred name and pronouns, and privacy, in accordance with applicable law, and to the extent that GFA's campus facilities reasonably permit.

### **Sexual Intimacy and Consent**

GFA recognizes that sexuality is a normal part of human nature, and its discovery is often a part of adolescence. However, any level of sexual intimacy can bring with it physical, psychological, and emotional challenges that can be overwhelming to students. Therefore, GFA does not endorse or condone sexually intimate activity by or among students and advocates postponing sexual intimacy until students are past adolescence.

Students who would like to talk about the meaning of sexual intimacy in a relationship, or who engage in sexually intimate activity and then want to report or discuss the situation, are encouraged to reach out to a trusted adult or the school nurse or school counselor so that appropriate support may be provided. Under certain circumstances, GFA may be obligated to report to government authorities (including the Department of Children and Families ("DCF") and the local police).

If students are found to have engaged in sexually intimate activity, or in a situation that suggests they have been sexually intimate, GFA will generally first respond to the situation as a health issue. This may include notification to parents/guardians and, as appropriate, referral to GFA healthcare providers.

It is imperative that students understand and appreciate that certain sexual activity may violate the law. Following Connecticut law, GFA prohibits students from engaging in non-consensual sexual activity, considering it to be egregious misconduct and a major disciplinary violation. Consent means the voluntary, positive agreement to engage in specific sexual activity. However, certain circumstances may make it impossible for a person to legally give consent.

- By law in Connecticut, there can be no consent to sexual intercourse, oral sex, or any penetrative act if the individual is under the age of 16.
- Consent cannot be obtained from someone who is asleep or otherwise mentally or physically incapacitated (whether due to alcohol or other drugs, or some other condition).
- Consent cannot be obtained by threat, coercion, or force. In other words, if threat, coercion, or force is used, any agreement does not constitute consent.
- Consent is ongoing and may be withdrawn at any stage during an encounter.
- Consenting to one behavior does not obligate a person to consent to any other behavior.
- Consenting on one occasion does not obligate a person to consent on any other occasion.

Communicating consent means:

- The person is legally capable of giving consent.
- An ongoing verbal interaction, taken one step at a time, to an expressed and honest “yes.”
- Asking permission to engage in specific activity and to progress to new, different, or more intimate activity – regardless of who initiated the contact.
- Being clear about desires and expectations.
- A clear “yes.” The absence of “no” should not be understood to mean that there is consent.
- Remaining open to and respecting another’s expression of disagreement to engage in a particular activity. “No” means “no” in any sexual encounter.

GFA may be obligated to report sexual activity that violates the law, including rape, sexual assault, and statutory rape. Sexual activity, of any and all kinds, is prohibited between any student or applicant and any GFA employee.

### **Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, Sexual Assault and Harassment**

GFA does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment or discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, and sexual harassment (collectively referred to as “interpersonal misconduct”). This includes harassment or bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. GFA is dedicated to preventing interpersonal misconduct by fostering a positive school culture and providing a curriculum that encourages social skills development. We work to enhance students’ abilities to develop healthy relationships and to take positive action when they witness or experience any form of interpersonal misconduct. GFA is also committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the GFA community.

Interpersonal misconduct is prohibited on GFA’s campus and the property immediately adjacent to school grounds, on school vehicles and at GFA-sponsored events, activities, athletic contests, and off-campus trips. School-owned technology may not be used to intimidate, harass, threaten, or bully another student. In addition, interpersonal misconduct is prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by GFA, if such conduct: (a) creates a hostile environment at school for a student, (b) infringes on the rights of a student at GFA, or (c) substantially disrupts the educational process or GFA’s orderly operations. Asking for and distributing nude or otherwise suggestive photographs is strictly prohibited and a serious violation of school rules. Though interpersonal misconduct that occurs outside of the above locations may be outside of the School’s disciplinary reach, we still encourage families and students to share potential incidents with a trusted staff member (as discussed in more detail below) if GFA may need to have a heightened awareness of protecting students’ safety while at school.

#### *Aggressor*

A student or faculty/staff member who engages in bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or retaliation towards another person.

#### *Bullying*

Connecticut has adopted a law relative to bullying in schools, which broadly defines bullying as (A) the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral, or electronic communication such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student, or (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student that: (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at

school, or (v) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

#### *Cyber-Bullying*

Cyberbullying is bullying behavior that uses electronic means like mobile phones, computers, the Internet, or other social media communication tools.

#### *Faculty/Staff*

Faculty/staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, dining services workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

#### *Harassment or Discrimination*

Harassment or discrimination is behavior that the School determines is pervasive or severe and has the purpose or effect of: (a) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; (b) interfering unreasonably with a student's academic performance, or (c) creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on the student submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior.

Harassment and discrimination can take many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to, limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams, or activities based on certain characteristics, as well as slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, emails, texts, or cartoons regarding a legally protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes. Harassment also includes sexual harassment (as defined below).

#### *Hazing*

Hazing means recklessly or intentionally subjecting a student to a physical or mental health injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite to membership into or continued membership in any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, fraternity or sorority, or other similar group.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: (a) requiring indecent exposure of the body; (b) requiring any activity that would subject the student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation or extended isolation from social contact; (c) confinement of the student to unreasonably small, unventilated, unsanitary, or unlighted areas; (d) any assault upon the student; or (e) requiring the ingestion of any substance or any other physical activity which could adversely affect the health or safety of the student.

#### *Hostile Environment*

A hostile environment refers to a situation in which certain misconduct causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

#### *Racial Discrimination*

Racial discrimination is a type of discrimination (as defined above). Racial discrimination involves treating a target unfavorably because the target is of a certain race or because of personal characteristics associated with race (such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features). Racial discrimination can occur when the target and the person who inflicted the discrimination are the same race or color.

### *Retaliation*

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports misconduct (including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment), provides information during an investigation, or witnesses and/or has reliable information about such misconduct.

### *Sexual Assault*

Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced or coerced into sexual activity without giving consent. Sexual activity includes, but is not limited to, touching or fondling, either directly or through the clothing, of another's intimate areas or any contact, intrusion, or penetration of another's sex organs, anus, or mouth.

### *Sexual Contests*

Sexual Contests describe circumstances when individuals compete with one another to achieve sexual goals or milestones. Examples of sexual contests include, but are not limited to, keeping lists of sexual exploits, winning a prize for accomplishing a sexual goal, or being expected to accept a consequence for failure to achieve a sexual goal.

### *Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment (as defined above). Sexual harassment includes unwilling and unwanted sexual attention, regardless of gender, from anyone with whom a person may interact in the course of attending GFA or being present at GFA-sponsored activities.

Examples of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include (regardless of whether the intent or consequence of such behavior is to make the target feel uncomfortable): (a) offensive body language (staring and/or leering at a person's body or standing/brushing too close); (b) offensive or unwanted sexual comments, abuse, jokes, insults, delivered verbally or in writing; (c) derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, or drawings; (d) pressure for sexual activity (such as hazing or threats as well as repeated requests after rejections); (e) offering favors or benefits in exchange for sexual acts, or threatening mistreatment if one does not engage in sexual acts; and (f) offensive or unwelcome physical advances (including kissing, hugging, pinching, grabbing, groping, "playful" slapping, etc.).

### *Target*

Any student against whom bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment has been perpetrated.

### Legal Definitions and School Policies

In accordance with GFA's mission, values, and standards of conduct, GFA has supplemented and/or provided broader protections against bullying, discrimination, harassment, and other inappropriate conduct than may be required under applicable laws. In essence, GFA's standards may be stricter than the law and GFA may impose discipline accordingly. For example, although the law defines "bullying" as "repeated" actions, under the School's policies, a single instance may be sufficient to rise to the level of bullying and, therefore, warrant disciplinary action or other corrective measures. GFA's efforts to enhance its protection of students in no way expand an individual's rights under applicable laws. Further, GFA may modify and amplify the standards set forth above and use its discretion in the interpretative enforcement of all ideals and standards of conduct.

### Reporting Complaints

A student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or who has witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by GFA, is expected to report the matter promptly (either orally or in writing) to the Head of School, or to any other administrator or faculty member with whom the student is

comfortable speaking. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of these individuals, the student may ask another adult or a classmate to help.

With respect to reporting sexual assault in particular, students are strongly urged to speak to a trusted adult on campus or at home, to the school nurse and/or school counselor. When making such outreach, students may share as little or as much information as they would like.

Parents/guardians of a student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about such conduct, are urged to immediately notify the Head of School or the school counselor. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has witnessed interpersonal misconduct, or has relevant information concerning such an incident or any incident of retaliation, are strongly encouraged to contact one of these administrators immediately.

GFA expects students and parents/guardians not to make anonymous reports. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously and disciplinary action will generally not be taken against an individual solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

GFA cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting interpersonal misconduct, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, GFA will disclose such information with discretion, on a need-to-know basis.

### False Complaints

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, GFA expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts by all community members when making a complaint or participating in an investigation, including by not making knowingly false or exaggerated accusations of interpersonal misconduct or retaliation.

### Responding to Complaints

The goals of an investigation, and any supportive, disciplinary, or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation, are to correct the situation to the extent reasonably possible and to take steps to prevent repetition of the incident and retaliation.

When a complaint is brought to the attention of the Head of School or the Head of School's designee, an assessment is made to determine the initial steps appropriate to protect the well-being of the students involved (including both the alleged targets and aggressors) and to prevent disruption of the learning environment while the investigation is undertaken. GFA may use strategies, such as increased supervision, stay-away mandates, and personal safety plans, as may be appropriate to prevent further misconduct, witness interference, and/or retaliation during the course of and after the investigation.

The Head of School or Head of School's designee will appoint an appropriate person or persons to conduct an impartial and prompt fact-finding investigation of the complaint, which may include the appointment of an external, neutral fact-finder(s). This investigation may include (but is not necessarily limited to) interviews with the complainant, alleged target(s), alleged aggressor(s), and any other witnesses or parties who have information relevant to the alleged incident. GFA may consult with faculty, GFA's healthcare providers, the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and/or the alleged aggressor(s), or any other person deemed to have knowledge about, or circumstances surrounding, the complaint. The investigation may also include the review of any relevant emails, text messages, photographs, or social media activity.

If a student refuses to participate or cooperate at any stage of an investigation, or is unable to do so for whatever reason, including without limitation, pending criminal charges, the School may take action, including proceeding without a statement from the student, or to require the student to withdraw from school. Since honesty is expected in all dealings, giving inaccurate, misleading, or incomplete information about the facts in an investigation will likely compound both a student's culpability and the severity of the School's response.

GFA neither tolerates nor engages in retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint about interpersonal misconduct or cooperating in an investigation of such a complaint. GFA will not take adverse action against a student for making a good faith report of interpersonal misconduct. Any form of retaliation against a student for filing a complaint, or participating in the investigation of a complaint, is prohibited.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will generally make the following determinations:

- Whether and to what extent the allegation of interpersonal misconduct has been substantiated.
- Whether any disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and, if so, how it will be implemented.
- Whether counseling, or a referral to appropriate services, should be offered to targets, aggressors, or family members of the affected students or targets.

The Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will determine any appropriate disciplinary action for a student who is found to have committed an incident of interpersonal misconduct; in the Upper School, the Head of School may incorporate the advice of the Judicial Council. The range of disciplinary actions will balance the need for accountability with the goal of teaching appropriate behavior, and may result in disciplinary notice, meetings with the school counselor, mandatory counseling, suspension, dismissal, and/or any disciplinary action deemed appropriate by GFA.

Information about consequences or other corrective action may be shared with the GFA community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise. Resources such as counseling or referral to appropriate services are available to all students – including the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s) – during and after an investigation.

#### *Notification to Parents/Guardians*

GFA will generally notify the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and the alleged aggressor(s) promptly after a complaint has been filed, upon completion of the investigation, and to report the conclusion of the investigation. Parents/guardians of the target(s) will generally also be notified of any action to be taken to prevent further acts interpersonal misconduct or retaliation.

In all situations, the amount of information shared by GFA may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student and employee records, other confidentiality or privacy considerations, and/or concerns regarding the integrity of the investigatory processes.

#### *Notification to Government Authorities*

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under Connecticut law to DCF, law enforcement or other appropriate government agencies may be notified. At any point after receiving a report of misconduct, including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, or sexual harassment, GFA may notify local law enforcement or other government agencies. If GFA receives a complaint involving students from



another school, GFA may notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

## **LEARNING SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Learning Support program was created to help support the individual learning needs of students to meet established curriculum requirements. The support program provides help to students through collaboration with parents and the appropriate professionals involved in the student's education.

Any student, parent, or faculty member can consult with the Learning Specialists and/or Reading Specialist (in the Lower School) to problem-solve learning issues or teaching paradigms. The relevant Specialists will make recommendations that are intended to help students better succeed in classes. Such recommendations may be based in whole or part on the student's psycho-educational testing, consultation with outside professionals, and/or best practices. The recommendations made are not considered modifications to the School's program or curricula, in that they are meant to facilitate a student's learning without fundamentally altering the school program.

### **Lower School Learning Support**

In the Lower School, student support is offered by a team of one Learning Specialist and two Reading Specialists (primarily for K-2). GFA acknowledges that it is not unusual for our youngest students to develop at different rates. The intent is to provide early support for students in grades K-2 to meet their developmental needs. As a student moves into 3rd grade, it becomes increasingly difficult for students to leave the classroom setting; therefore, more limited academic support is available for students beyond the second grade.

The Lower School Learning Specialists provide academic support services to students who are experiencing difficulty and are recommended for assistance. They act as a liaison to promote communication among students, parents, faculty, and administrators. After a collaborative process, a Learning Profile and an informal Education Plan may be developed to support the student and summarize the student's learning and cognitive profile for teachers. In the Lower School, the classroom teacher, Learning Specialist, Reading Specialist (K-2), and Head of Lower School monitor the student's progress.

When the School suspects that a student may have a learning difference, the Learning Specialist, after consultation with the student's parents, Division Head, homeroom teacher, Reading Specialist, and Counselor, collects information to determine an appropriate intervention. If the student needs an evaluation, the Learning Specialist may provide a list of outside professionals or assist the parents in pursuing an evaluation from the school district. Once the evaluation is complete, the Learning Specialist reviews the findings and prepares a summary of the cognitive and academic profile of the student with the necessary recommendations and accommodations. This summary is then sent to all teachers of the student. The summary is revised and updated as needed.

Upon request, the Learning Specialist can provide names of outside professionals (tutors, psychologists, counselors, doctors, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.) for any student in need of additional academic or emotional support.

### **Middle and Upper School Learning Support**

The Middle and Upper School Learning Specialists provide academic support services for students who are experiencing chronic, ongoing academic difficulty, who have been referred by a faculty member, or who have a formal psychoeducational evaluation on file with the School. Considering evidence of student learning decline, the Learning Specialist will determine a plan of intervention that may include strategies for the classroom, a structured plan to guide the teaching team, and/or a limited number of individual or small group sessions with a student. If

the student requires ongoing additional support, the Learning Specialist may coordinate with outside providers, tutors, educational coaches, etc.

When a parent shares the results of a psychoeducational evaluation performed by a properly licensed or certified professional, the Learning Specialist will meet with the Student Support Team to determine the type and extent of services and accommodations to be provided. The Learning Specialist will then write a summary or Learning Profile for the student, which will be shared with teachers of the student. The Learning Specialist will also facilitate the requests for accommodations on College Board (PSAT, SAT, AP) and ACT exams. Parents must make a written request to the Learning Specialist a minimum of three months prior to the exams in order to allow for processing time.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

GFA does not discriminate against qualified applicants or students on the basis of disabilities that may be reasonably accommodated and, therefore, will discuss with families whether the School will be able to offer their child the appropriate accommodations to assist academic success.

The School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with equal access to the School's programs and services, in accordance with applicable laws. For students who seek additional support or curricular adjustments, the School requires documentation indicating that the student's disability substantially limits a major life activity. Students who present the School with appropriate documentation of disability will be granted those requested academic accommodations that are supported by the documentation and considered reasonable in this educational setting. Any adjustments to the academic program would be made through an interactive process between the student's family and the Head of School, Division Heads and Learning Specialists. No waivers of academic graduation requirements will be granted.

Even after supportive services and accommodations have been put in place, a student may still not be able to satisfactorily fulfill the School's academic requirements. In such instances, the student's homeroom teacher, advisor, the Head of School, Division Head, and/or other support personnel may decide that the accommodations put into place may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School. At that time, the Head of School and/or Head of School's designee will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to remain at the School.

### **Accommodations for Concussions**

To provide accommodations for a student who has suffered a concussion, the School requires (1) a medical evaluation updated by a physician every two weeks, and (2) parental authorization for the school nurse to exchange information with the student's physician. When the student returns to school, that student should not attend outdoor or indoor recess where running and active or contact play are possible. Depending on the duration of symptoms, the School and family may also consider whether the student should be placed on medical leave until such time that the student can resume normal academic activities. Once a student has been medically cleared to return to sports or other physical activities that carry risk of injury to the head, the academic accommodations will be terminated.

At the request of a physician, Greens Farms Academy can temporarily provide accommodations, as appropriate and reasonable and at the discretion of the School. Possible accommodations may include:

- Shortened day or modified schedule
- Rest breaks during the day as needed
- Dismissal home if necessary

### **COMMUNICABLE ILLNESSES**

GFA may exclude any student who (a) has a communicable illness, (b) has been exposed to an infected person, and/or (c) has traveled to an area impacted by a communicable illness, if the School determines, in its sole discretion, that such exclusion is appropriate for the welfare of the student or the GFA community. GFA may also screen students or require students to be screened by appropriate medical professionals to determine whether they pose a health risk to

the community. The School's decisions shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the illness, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable illness, and an analysis of the identified risks and available alternatives for responding to an individual with a communicable illness.

If and when appropriate, GFA will disseminate information to students and families regarding campus health and safety issues through internal communication channels. For example, the School may provide families with information about the nature and spread of communicable illnesses, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an epidemic or outbreak. We encourage all parents and guardians to contact medical professionals with any questions or concerns about communicable illnesses or immunization issues.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

In accordance with Connecticut law, GFA requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Proof of immunization should be recorded and signed by a medical professional. A student with a qualified medical exemption must provide the School with a DPH Exemption form pursuant to state law. A Medical DPH Exemption form must be signed by a medical professional, attesting that the student is exempt from a specific vaccine(s) because of medical reasons. Students who do not provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or qualify for an exemption will not be permitted to attend GFA or participate in any GFA activities.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease impacting campus or the GFA community, the School may, in its sole discretion, exclude non-immunized students, including those who were granted a valid religious exemption prior to April 28, 2021 or a medical exemption, from school and all GFA activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, GFA may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Connecticut DPH.

### **MEDICAL LEAVE**

This policy is founded on the belief that a student's physical, social, and emotional well-being is essential for the student's success. We prize academic challenges; however, we know that students in distress are not able to focus fully on their learning.

#### **Family-Initiated Medical Leave**

When a student's physician or primary behavioral care provider and the family, together determine that a student's physical and/or psychological health takes precedence over the student's school responsibilities, the family may request from the relevant Division Head a medical leave of absence.

To grant a request, GFA requires (1) a Medical Leave Request Form, completed and signed by the dedicated treating health care provider; (2) an Authorization for Exchange of Health and Education Information Form, signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s), which allows the School to communicate on an on-going basis with the student's health professionals about medical and/or psychological concerns as they pertain to the school environment; and (3) where relevant, regular communication between the dean and the academic point person at the institution providing academic support.

The Division Head will provide both forms to the parent(s) or guardian(s). If the School does not receive the two signed forms, the student will be marked absent for the days spent away from school. If there are changes in the student's treatment care providers, new forms must be provided to allow for continued communication about the student's health. There may be some

circumstances in which GFA is unable to authorize a Medical Leave despite having received the requisite forms.

Open communication between the family and the School is especially important in these circumstances. Our goal is to balance the student's and family's need for confidentiality with the School's need to know particular information so that we can respond to the student's needs appropriately.

### **GFA-Initiated Medical Leave**

There may also be occasions when GFA determines that a student's health problem or behavior interferes with the student's capacity to adequately maintain schoolwork (such as completing homework or taking assessments) and/or has a potentially negative impact on the school community. In such circumstances, GFA may require that a student initiate a medical leave, consistent with the protocols listed in this policy. Our interest is making the overall school community safe by ensuring that an individual's problem is being addressed with professional help.

If the Head of School, Division Head and School Counselor determines that a student (or GFA community member) poses a threat to the student's physical safety or the safety of others in the school community, GFA will require a safety evaluation to be completed by a licensed mental health professional as a condition of the student's return to school, or as a condition of the student's continued enrollment. The safety evaluation will determine if there is an imminent risk for the student's safety or the safety of others.

The School will provide at least three referrals for the evaluation for families to choose from and will require that parents sign a consent for release of information form with the chosen provider and the School. This will allow the School to support the student and create the opportunity to establish collaboration with the provider so that the School can provide the most effective support upon the student's return. The School will require that the student and family follow the evaluator's recommendations in full.

Reentry meetings will be held upon return to campus following the evaluation and/or psychiatric hospitalization. The School may contact 211 and/or 911 as deemed appropriate by the HOS/Counseling team to provide an evaluation immediately on site.

### **Medical Leave Procedures**

The Division Head will inform the student's advisor, teachers, and coaches that the student is on medical leave. The Division Head will ensure that the student has access to assignments and determine a reasonable schedule for completion of the work, with the Dean taking the lead in the Middle and Upper Schools. The school counselor or school nurse will be the contact person for the student, family, and community professionals regarding medical or psychological matters.

It is possible that a medical leave will compromise the student's ability to complete academic work. In more extreme circumstances, an alternative course of study such as summer work, repeating a class, working with a tutor, moving to a pass/fail status for a period of time, or repeating a grade may be required, as determined by the Division Head. In rare instances, a student may not return.

In the Upper School, a student who spends part of a semester on Medical Leave may miss enough school for the semester to be taken on a pass/fail basis, but a student who accrues significant absences will not automatically lose credit for the semester.

In the instance of a medical leave, a student's medical needs take precedence over participation at school; as such, a student who is on medical leave may not attend GFA events on or off campus without express written permission from the Division Head.

## **Returning to School After Medical Leave**

In order for a student to return to school after medical leave, the family must provide the school counselor or Division Head with a written letter from the treating health care provider attesting to the student's capacity to resume normal school activities and listing any appropriate restrictions. After the school counselor or nurse consults with the student's treating health care provider and determines the student's readiness to return to school, the Division Head will, in most cases, call a meeting with the parent(s), the student, and the school counselor or nurse before authorizing the student's return to school. The School may require a second opinion and that the student remain in treatment for the medical or psychological issues as a condition of reentry. In that case, the school counselor will confirm that treatment is continuing, under the authority of the signed Authorization for Exchange of Health and Education Information Form. If a student returns to GFA without these requirements being met, the student will wait in the nurse's office until a parent can pick the student up or resolve the matter. The guiding principle of re-admission from a medical leave is the School's confidence that the student can return safely; and that the student's return will not compromise the student's continued recovery, interfere with the School's ability to serve other students' needs, or place an undue burden on the School. The decision regarding any student's return to school from a medical leave remains in the sole discretion of the School.

## **MULTIPLE HOUSEHOLDS**

In order for the School to communicate most effectively with parents and support each student, teachers and administrators need to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Additionally, information regarding who the primary caregiver is should be communicated to the School, in the event of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from school, parent involvement in field trips, or other issues, the School should be informed.

The School expects separated or divorced parents to cooperate and partner with the School with respect to their child's education. For this reason, the School will not get involved in parental disputes or custody issues.

These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and assistance in minimizing the School's phone calls for clarification is very important. Unless otherwise specified, each parent for whom the School has current contact information will receive a copy of the student's report card, as well as other informational mailings and electronic communications during the year.

## **PERMISSION TO PUBLICIZE**

Throughout the year, GFA provides information to the public and to the media about the School's programs and student accomplishments. We post photos and videos of our students online, and we use photos and quotes from students in school publications such as the admission catalog and the GFA Magazine.

### **Photography**

GFA may photograph its students, faculty, and staff in connection with the activities of the School and to reproduce such images to promote, publicize, or explain the School or its activities. This includes the right, without limitation, to post images to the GFA website, to official school social media accounts, and to publish such images in the student newspaper, alumni magazine, and promotional materials such as marketing and admission publications, advertisements, fundraising materials, and any other school-related publication.

These images may appear in any of a wide variety of formats and media now available or that may be available in the future, including but not limited to print, website, broadcast, videotape, and electronic/online media. Parents are asked to inform the communications department if their child is not allowed to be included in the School's public relations and promotional efforts.

As a general practice, students in photographs are not identified, especially online, unless it is a public announcement such as a major award.

### **Press Releases**

When GFA students distinguish themselves in academics, the arts, athletics, or other school-related activities, we often send a press release to the student's hometown newspaper. These releases may include a photograph naming the student(s).

If you do not wish your child(ren) to appear in a photograph, to be named with his/her picture, to have his/her work posted under the GFA name, or his/her name or a photograph containing his/her likeness to be included in a school press release, please contact the communications office at 203-256-7526 or email [communications@gfacademy.org](mailto:communications@gfacademy.org). While the School strives to abide by parent/guardian wishes, we do not guarantee use of a student's name or image will never occur.

FAILURE TO CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE TO REQUEST THAT YOUR CHILD(REN)'S NAME AND/OR LIKENESS NOT APPEAR IN THESE MATERIALS WILL CONSTITUTE CONSENT FOR SUCH USE.

### **RIDESHARE SERVICES**

Parents should be aware that many rideshare companies, such as Uber, have policies that prohibit transporting unaccompanied minors. The School prohibits the use of these services by students, and will not take responsibility for calling car services for students.

### **RECORDS ACCESS**

GFA is committed to protecting the confidentiality of educational records. Accordingly, the School takes steps to protect access to such records, and to individually identifiable information derived from such records. In protecting these records, the School strives to balance students' and parents' interests related to such records with the legitimate educational interests of GFA and its school officials and teachers. A student's official school record includes the student's transcript and academic records created and maintained by the School. A student's record does not include email communications to or about the student, records of disciplinary actions, investigation records of any kind (such as disciplinary, harassment, hazing, bullying etc. except for any record placed in the student file such as a letter home to parent, etc.), recommendations provided to the School regarding the student's admission, medical records, or any other record deemed by the School to be confidential records of the School.

Parents may be permitted, at the School's discretion, to examine their child's permanent record file at a convenient time in the presence of a school official. The official school transcript is issued by the School upon request made by other schools and in accordance with GFA policies.

### **STUDENTS TURNING 18 YEARS OF AGE**

Some students enrolled at the School will reach the age of 18 before graduation. In the United States, age 18 is the age of majority, which means that legally, an 18 year old student is able to enter into contractual obligations on the student's behalf (and is required to abide by those obligations). Therefore, the School requires all students, upon their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, to review the Enrollment Contract that their parents or legal guardians signed on the student's behalf and execute an Addendum to that Contract, which provides as follows:

- permission for the School to discuss and release information and records to the student's parent(s) and legal guardian(s) about any issues relating to the student's enrollment at the School, including, but not limited to, academic records, academic performance, health matters, disciplinary issues and financial matters; and
- authorization for the School to interact with the student's parent(s) and legal guardian(s) as if the student were under the age of 18.



The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will continue to be responsible under the terms of the student's Enrollment Contract, including being solely responsible for the payment of the tuition and fees related to the student's enrollment at the School.

### **STUDENT MEDIA INFORMATION**

In order to portray its program accurately and vibrantly, the School makes a concerted effort to highlight the accomplishments of our students and faculty, as well as to publicize the strength of the entire program offered by the School, in a variety of media formats. Student Media Information—including student names, photographic images (for example, portrait, picture, video, or other reproductions), audio recordings of students' voices, video recordings of students, and/or reproductions of students' work and likenesses—may be used for educational and/or promotional purposes in print and electronic media. Outlets for publication of Student Media Information may include, but not be limited to, the School magazine, marketing materials, the School website, press releases, social media outlets (including, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter), newsletters, and local newspapers.

While the School strives to abide by parent/guardian wishes, we do not guarantee use of a student's name or image will never occur. Parents are asked to contact the School if they would like to opt out of the use of Student Media Information.

### **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS ON CAMPUS**

GFA has installed video cameras at certain open and public spaces on campus, such as all official entrances to the campus as well as at key campus crossroads. GFA seeks to balance the security, safety, and other benefits derived from the use of video surveillance with any privacy concerns of the School's employees, students, families, and guests. In all cases, security equipment is used in a manner that adheres to legal statutes and ethical standards where the right of privacy is concerned and is not used where there exists a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in restrooms, locker rooms, etc. These surveillance cameras record visual footage in each location, but do not record any sound or other audio.

### **TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE**

The Responsible Use Policy must be adhered to at all times. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the Responsible Use Policy. Greens Farms Academy maintains and makes available to its students, faculty, and staff a wide array of technology to promote educational excellence and enhance learning at our school. Use of technology is a necessity in today's world — however, that use demands responsibility on the part of the users. It is expected that all GFA students, faculty, and staff will adhere to the same code of conduct that governs all other aspects of life within the School's jurisdiction.

Technology resources are the property of Greens Farms Academy. GFA may investigate, monitor, and access any information stored or transmitted over the network. Students and faculty are warned that any transmission of information including text, video, and image files may be reproduced indefinitely without the owner's knowledge or consent. Once information is sent, it is nearly impossible to retrieve.

All technology devices such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, eReaders, and smart devices that connect to the School's wireless network or phone network are governed by the School's Responsible Use Policy.

For students, violation of the policy may result in, but is not limited to, revocation of network access, suspension of computer use, in addition to other disciplinary action determined by the School. The School's jurisdiction also includes any and all student off-campus electronic communication that has or may have an adverse impact on the School, faculty, or other students.

## **Network**

- No one may attempt to bypass any security system of the network.
- Passwords must be kept confidential and not shared. Users are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their usernames and passwords and are responsible for activities that occur under the account. Users must immediately notify the technology department of any unauthorized use of their account or any other breach of security. Users should always log off or exit from their accounts at the end of use.
- Music files and any other large copyrighted files may not be downloaded or emailed through the school network.
- Torrent clients, VPNs and other peer-to-peer sharing software is not allowed on school- or student-owned computers.
- Students are restricted from accessing certain websites containing inappropriate content when they are using the GFA network on campus.
- Distribution, storage, or viewing of pornography on the GFA network is strictly prohibited.
- If students use a web service from their smartphones or tablets while on campus, GFA is not responsible for the content they access.

## **Software and Hardware**

- No one may break copyright laws. If a program is added to a computer, it must have been purchased by the individual or the School. Unauthorized removal or duplication of any GFA licensed software is prohibited.
- Academic use of computers and the network takes precedence over all other activities.
- Office365 is provided for student laptops as part of the GFA volume purchasing licensing program through Microsoft. Students can access Office365 by going to <http://www.office365.com> and using their GSuite credentials.
- This software must be removed from the student laptops upon the student's graduation or departure from school.
- Distribution, storage, or viewing of pornography (or inappropriate material) on personal or school-owned devices is strictly prohibited.
- Software will be made available to students via Self Service, a software portal installed on all laptops before the start of school.

## **Internet**

The Internet is to be primarily used for academic research. Areas of the Internet that would be objectionable to parents or teachers are off limits to all students. Even though GFA has an Internet filtering system, it does not provide 100 percent blocking of objectionable sites. If an objectionable site is encountered accidentally, students must click out of that area immediately.

- Students should never give out personal information over the Internet.
- Chat rooms may be accessed only as part of a class assignment and only under that assigning teacher's supervision.
- Game playing is not allowed during the academic day unless required and supervised by the teacher.
- Instant messaging may only be used during free time and not during class or supervised study halls.

## **Social Networking**

- The School may create accounts for students on sites and supervise student participation for curricular purposes.
- All members of the GFA community are prohibited from posting content that offends and causes embarrassment to others on websites, blogs, or any other public or private Internet forum or community.
- Students are prohibited from writing disparagingly about Greens Farms Academy, a faculty/staff member, or a fellow student on a website or social media platform, or from posting anything that indicates that the student has broken school rules on campus or at

a school-sponsored event. On electronic media as elsewhere, students may face disciplinary repercussions for behavior unbecoming to a GFA student.

- With the foregoing in mind, the School encourages students and parents to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability when accessing social media and the School's network.

### **Sexting and Sexually Explicit Material**

The School prohibits students from creating, requesting, sending, or possessing any written message, image, or video that contains explicit representations or references to sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or nudity. Connecticut law prohibits anyone (regardless of age) from disseminating obscene or pornographic images of minors, and the School may contact law enforcement should any student violate this policy.

### **Email**

- Email messages that are anonymous or signed with a pseudonym may not be sent from the school network or from outside the School.
- Chain letters, spamming, and solicitations are prohibited. Students may not use broad email lists (e.g. all school emails) in an inappropriate way (e.g. jokes, insults, frivolous comments).
- Because email is written, its tone is difficult to determine. Take care to write emails that are not harmful to the recipient or disrespectful of someone mentioned in it. Email should not take the place of a telephone conversation or a conference.
- Be aware that email can be forwarded to others.
- Please allow at least 48 hours for responses to your emails.
- Please be discreet in using email for confidential information.

### **e-Safety Policy**

GFA incorporates online and remote learning programs in its curriculum and program. The purpose of this e-Safety policy is to help ensure a safe, secure, and supportive online and remote learning environment for students, employees, and all members of the GFA community, consistent with the GFA's standards, mission, policies, and protocols. The School strives to create such an environment while also making it as effective and user-friendly as possible. At all times, however, the school's online and remote learning environment is subject to the requirements and limitations of the GFA's online and remote learning technology.

This e-Safety policy is intended to work in concert with the School's other rules and policies, including those set forth in *The Handbook*. Students and parents are therefore expected to continue to comply with all GFA policies and standards of academic and social behavior as stated in *The Handbook* and elsewhere, including, but not limited to, the School's interpersonal student relationships, technology responsible use, and attendance policies. This policy sets forth additional, modified, and/or clarified expectations for the School's online and remote learning environment.

- **Dress Code:** When visible in the online and remote learning environment, and in any related interactions, students are required to adhere to the dress code policy as stated in *The Handbook*.
- **Cyberbullying and Online Conduct:** When participating in the online and remote learning environment, and in any related interactions, it is of the utmost importance that students maintain and model the highest standards of conduct, respect, and integrity, including by refraining from any activity that might constitute or contribute to cyberbullying or other prohibited interpersonal conduct.
- **One-on-One Interactions:** GFA faculty, advisors, counselors, coaches, and administrators will provide virtual one-on-one meetings with students as appropriate. The School will seek to limit one-on-one interactions to those necessary to support the

academic and social well-being of students and families.

- **Recording:** Online and remote learning sessions and communications should not be considered confidential and will be recorded. Students and parents are prohibited from (a) recording any part of any online and remote learning program, and (b) sharing, broadcasting, and/or making public any materials created or recorded by the School, its employees, or anyone else in relation to GFA's online and remote learning programs.
- **Risk Management:** All members of the GFA community are responsible for maintaining a safe online and remote learning environment. In that spirit, while the School will strive to support and ensure students' safety in the online and remote learning environment, students and their families are also expected to employ appropriate safeguards and manage risks appropriately.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Information distributed electronically should be treated the same way as print sources. Rules against plagiarism as cited in The Handbook do apply. All information must be properly documented. Students should seek advice from their teachers or the librarian about citing sources. In foreign language classes, the use of electronic translators for any other use beyond the dictionary is not allowed.

### **Recordings**

Audio and visual recordings (e.g. of a class or meeting with a teacher) are only permitted with the explicit consent of the parties being recorded.

### **TRAFFIC SAFETY AND DROP OFF/PICK UP**

We urge everyone to be extremely cautious when driving on or near the campus. In the morning as school opens and in the afternoon at dismissal, traffic is exceptionally heavy. It is essential that all students exercise extreme caution when walking on or near the driveways and parking areas at these times. For students' safety, students may only cross the driveway using a crosswalk, must always walk on the grass or sidewalks rather than on the driveway, and must never walk behind parked cars.

Students may only be picked up along the driveway at the top parking lot and not at the exit gate, outside the gym, at the back of the Performing Arts Center, or on the road across from the Head of School's house.

All parents/guardians must observe the following traffic safety rules:

- The speed limit on campus is 15 mph, slower as conditions warrant.
- Talking on cell phones and/or texting while driving on campus is prohibited.
- When dropping off a student, ensure the student has stepped away from the vehicle, is on the sidewalk, and is walking away before allowing the vehicle to move and depart.
- When parking for events or on those rare occasions when you need to help carry something for your child, parents should park in either of the Squash Center parking lots.
- Drivers should not leave their vehicles unless they are parked in a designated parking space. Double parking is prohibited.
- For large weekend events such as Homecoming, we ask that you park at the Greens Farms train station so that we can preserve our lawns.
- All pedestrians must use the marked crosswalks and obey crossing guards.

All parents/guardians must observe the following drop off/pick up procedures:

- Form two lanes in the driveway. Right hand lane is for drop-off and pick-up. Left lane is for exiting or access to parking. Stay in line until ready to depart.
- Cars dropping off or picking up students must wait in line in the right hand drop-off lane. Pull up only when the cars ahead have moved.

- Regardless of your child’s grade, cars should advance along the right hand curb as far as directed by GFA personnel in order to allow as many cars as possible to unload or pick up simultaneously.
- At the drop-off area, keep the left lane open for emergency access and for the departing cars after drop-off or pick-up of students. Once your child has been dropped off or picked up, you may enter the left lane for departure.
- Parents picking up Lower School students will be issued a name card to be placed on their vehicle’s dashboard. This allows Lower School families to move into the left lane to move ahead to pick up Lower School students in the Lower School pick up area.
- Middle and Upper School students are expected to depart their vehicles from the flagpole forward. Students must depart their vehicle when and where directed to by any GFA faculty or staff member.
- Lower School students who ride with older students who use the parking areas must be escorted both to and from the courtyard of the Lower School.
- Lower School students waiting for carpools or parents will be dismissed to their cars only when a teacher on duty sees that their ride is safely in the loading zone.
- Dropping off and picking up students must be at curbside. Under no circumstances are students allowed to leave or enter a car in the center lane. In addition, students should use the door closest to the school when exiting their cars and should proceed directly to the sidewalk.
- The drop-off area includes the lanes along the sidewalk that extends down the driveway to the flagpole, the red tiled area, and the sidewalk that extends past the red tiled area down to the basketball court. The entire length of the drop-off area should be used in all weather conditions.
- The center parking lot is for faculty and staff parking only. Dropping off in the center faculty lot is prohibited.
- Do not drop off or pick up students anywhere in the area of the front gate, gymnasium, back gate, fitness center, or along the driveway during morning arrival or afternoon dismissal times; proceed in the right-hand lane to main drop-off and pick-up area.
- Do not park along the curb in front of the Coyle Gym during afternoon dismissal times. Cars left in this area create a hazardous situation for students trying to board Westport yellow buses.

## **TUITION PAYMENT AND REFUND**

GFA’s Tuition Payment and Refund Policies are as stated in the Enrollment Contract. Please refer to the Enrollment Contract for definitive information. Please note that for students in good standing, re-enrollment contracts will generally be issued at the end of January 2022.

## **WEEKEND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the case of snow or inclement/dangerous weather on a Saturday or Sunday, the School may cancel any non-GFA-related activities scheduled to take place at the School (e.g., SAT prep, basketball, etc.). The Director of Campus Master Planning and Engineering will generally contact the person responsible for running the activity and communicate the decision. The School also may cancel squash clinics and lessons on Saturday or Sunday in the event of snow or dangerous/inclement weather.

## **WHISTLEBLOWER**

The Greens Farms Academy Board of Trustees (“the Board”) and the administration of Greens Farms Academy prohibit conduct that is detrimental to the School’s community, resources, facilities, or reputation. This policy is intended to cover concerns that could have a significant impact on GFA, such as concerns relating to financial reporting or unethical or illegal conduct. To ensure that the School is notified of such conduct, the board has created this policy so that community members may effectively report suspected illegal or other improper conduct

detrimental to the School's community, resources, facilities, or reputation by a school representative without fear of personal or professional retaliation.

**PROCEDURE:** Any student, applicant, or family who is aware of suspected illegal or improper activity must report, in good faith, that activity to a senior School administrator or member of the board. Contact information for Board members is available through the Business Office or the Office of the Head of School. The reporting party will not be subject to any retaliatory action by the board, the School, or any of its members for the act of making a good faith report.

All good faith reports should contain the following information:

1. A clear allegation containing as much specific information as possible, including dates, locations, witnesses, and any other relevant facts; and
2. The name(s) of the person(s) filing the report. the School will accept anonymous reports but has a clear preference that the author identifies themselves in order to improve the School's ability to respond to the allegation. The reporting party's confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible within the limitations of law and the need to conduct a competent investigation.

**FOLLOW-UP:** A senior school administrator or board member will communicate to the reporting party whether his/her report will or will not be investigated. A summary of the findings of an investigation may be communicated to the reporting party, if appropriate under the circumstances of the report and subsequent investigation. Based on the findings of any investigation, the board and the School will take remedial, disciplinary or other action if appropriate.

**FORMAL COMPLAINTS OF RETALIATION:** Any acts of retaliation against a reporting party are prohibited, and must be reported to a school administrator or board member immediately. All allegations of retaliation will be thoroughly investigated.

**FALSE REPORTING:** The intentional filing of a false report can have an unfair and damaging impact on innocent third parties, and are therefore prohibited. Just as the board and the School promise not to retaliate against anyone who makes a good faith report, they will not tolerate any reports made in "bad faith."

**METHOD OF COMMUNICATION:** In order for this policy to be effective, the policy must be broadly communicated to the school community. This communication shall include publication in the Employee Handbook, The Handbook, and the school website.

# LOWER SCHOOL

## PHILOSOPHY

The Lower School recognizes early childhood and the elementary school years as a crucial time for the development of self-image, self-esteem, and self-reliance. We emphasize academic, physical, and social skills, aesthetic exploration, intellectual curiosity, competency in all areas, and a genuine love of learning. Fundamental to everything we do is the understanding that every student is a unique individual. We understand further that each student possesses an “intellectual thumbprint,” a unique blend of cognitive strengths and relative areas for growth that leads to the development of the student’s own learning style. With the underlying conviction that students learn best when they are happy and stimulated, we provide students with the materials and experiences necessary to develop creativity and problem-solving skills. In the supportive and nurturing environment of small classes, we seek to address the needs of the group while honoring the individual needs of each student through a highly interactive academic program; we stress experiential learning, study skills, a full program of music, art, world languages, technology, physical education, health, life skills, library classes, community service, weekly assemblies, field trips, and frequent interaction with students in all grades. We seek to present our students with attainable challenges designed to uncover and develop each student’s potential and to help each student grow in knowledge, understanding, the desire to learn, and an appreciation for the diversity in the world around them.

We believe in the importance of building a moral community in which each student makes a valuable contribution. Therefore, we emphasize kindness, honesty, integrity, cooperation, self-reliance, and compassion: universal values that lead to the growth of inner sturdiness in every child.

The partnership between the parents and the School is extremely important to the educational process and sets the tone for future success. You can support your child by:

- Reading this handbook and the weekly Enote
- Ensuring that your child arrives at school and gets picked up on time
- Ensuring that your child gets adequate sleep and a nutritious breakfast
- Giving your child the opportunity to walk into his/her classroom independently
- Encouraging your child to be responsible for his/her assignments and belongings
- Reading to your child daily
- Notifying the School of family issues that may impact your child’s learning
- Contacting your child’s teacher via email if you have questions regarding the curriculum and daily assignments or with other issues related to the classroom
- Allowing your child to become a problem solver by helping him/her to handle his/her own problems, responsibilities and assignments

## GENERAL POLICIES

### **Absence**

On days when a student is absent, a parent must contact the school office by 9:00AM to report the absence and its reason. An email should be sent to [lsattendance@gfacademy.org](mailto:lsattendance@gfacademy.org).

A student’s absence inevitably translates into missed work, which will need to be made up as soon as possible. On the student’s first day back to school, they should meet with teachers to find out what has been missed.

Since we believe that nothing can take the place of a student’s physical presence in school, illness, family emergencies, or religious holidays should be the only reasons for absence from school. Students may request extra help to cover missed work. Students may also request extra

time to study for any tests and quizzes that might have been missed, though such requests must be made following the return to school.

When a student is absent for religious reasons, for a family emergency, or illness, work completed or assigned on that day will be deferred. To avoid any misunderstandings, we expect that parents and their children will be thoughtful enough to let teachers know about such absences well ahead of time.

Parents should not withdraw their children from school for any but the above reasons, and especially not just before or after vacations or extended holidays. Such absences are disruptive to class procedures, cause extra work for teachers, and may adversely affect a student's well-being and academic progress. When, in the judgment of a family, an extended absence must take place, parents must advise the Head of Lower School in writing, at least one week in advance. The following policy will apply to extended absences without approval from Head of Lower School:

- Teachers will not be required to provide work in advance of the absence or help for missed work after a student's return. The Head of Lower School will provide the names of tutors who can assist in catching-up should that be required.
- Papers or reports due during an extended absence must be submitted on time, or they will be considered late.
- After a lengthy illness or injury, the School may request written permission from a physician for a student to resume normal activities.

If a student needs to be excused for an appointment during the school day, parents must communicate with the homeroom teacher stating the departure time and the reason for the absence and sign their children out in the Lower School Office. If early dismissal is required on a regular basis, parents must send a formal request to the Head of Lower School. On any day that a student leaves school early, the student must check out with the teacher and the adult must sign the student out before leaving.

### **After School Care**

After School Care is offered five days per week, from 2:50–5:30PM, for students in grades PreK–4 for a reasonable fee. In addition to indoor and outdoor games and activities, students will be given time for snack, homework, and reading. We ask that interested families commit to anywhere from one to five days per week prior to the opening of the school year so that we can plan accordingly.

### **Attendance**

Students may begin arriving at school at 7:45AM and no later than 8:00AM ready to begin the school day. Attendance is taken five minutes after the school start time, and tardiness is recorded and will appear on report cards.

### **Birthdays**

We consider birthdays an important day in a child's life. Birthdays will be celebrated once a month during Lower School Assembly with the birthday song for students in grades K - 4. Students do not bring in their own birthday treats. Instead, the School will provide a nut-free birthday treat once a month for students in grades PreK - 4 to be shared in the classroom. All Lower School birthday celebrants may have a non-uniform day (playclothes attire) on their birthday. Should a student's birthday fall on a day we are not in session, students should talk to their teacher to select another day.

If a student is planning a birthday party outside of regular school hours, we ask you to be sensitive to the feelings of classmates. Parties that include either all the boys, all the girls, or the entire homeroom or grade are strongly encouraged. Parties in which one or two children have been excluded have a negative impact on the classroom dynamic. If you plan a party that does not include the entire grade, transportation to the party should be arranged in such a way that



the students do not leave together directly from school. Birthday party invitations, gifts, and party favors must be exchanged outside of school. If any of these items come to school, they will be sent home with the child who brought them. Please remind your child that he/she should not discuss birthday party plans in school.

### **Electronics**

In the Lower School, use of electronic devices may only be used while students are supervised by GFA personnel and for educational purposes. While we greatly value the use of technology as a learning tool, electronics can become a source of distraction; we aim for our students to produce constructively rather than to consume mindlessly. Electronics include, but are not limited to personal laptops, cell phones, smart devices (tablets, watches, tracking devices, fitness trackers) and e-readers that connect to Wi-Fi. Lower School students may not wear fitness trackers, smart watches, or digital watches to school and school-related activities.

### **Lost and Found**

All books, notebooks, and articles of clothing must be clearly marked with the student's name. The School makes an effort to return any items marked with a name directly to the student.

In the Lower School, lost-and-found items are deposited in the bin by the double door leading to the "specials" wing (southern part of the wing). Please check for lost items on a regular basis as lost items will be donated to charity at the end of each month.

### **Transportation**

#### Bus/Van providers and contact information:

CTS Transportation, Samantha Doheny at 203-499-9069 or [sdoheny@ridewithcts.com](mailto:sdoheny@ridewithcts.com)

B and B Transportation, David Prud'homme at 203-393-9750 or [david@bandbtrans.com](mailto:david@bandbtrans.com)

Westport Dattco, Joe Scappatura at 203-226-4884 x2092 or [joe.scappatura@dattco.com](mailto:joe.scappatura@dattco.com)

#### GFA Contact Information:

GFA Transportation Coordinator home to school is Tom Everard, [teverard@gfacademy.org](mailto:teverard@gfacademy.org) or 203-256-7528.

GFA Train Coordinator is Linda Martino, [lmartino@gfacademy.org](mailto:lmartino@gfacademy.org) or 203-256-7509.

All Lower School parents and caretakers must use PikMyKid to indicate their child's dismissal plans. PikMyKid is a mobile phone-based application that allows families to make changes to their student's dismissal plans, "Announce" their arrival in the car line, and facilitate a more efficient dismissal process. We will utilize PikMyKid in conjunction with our traditional car tags for the car line.

On any day when a Lower School student plans to go home with someone other than the person who usually picks him/her up (such as a friend from school, a family friend, or a relative), both the parent and the person who will drive the student must advise Maureen Fracassini by emailing Lower School transportation ([lstransportation@gfacademy.org](mailto:lstransportation@gfacademy.org)) and include the student's homeroom teachers by 12:30PM informing the School how the student will be going home and giving permission for the change. Except in the case of an emergency, we cannot accept transportation changes by telephone, nor can we accept those submitted after 1:00PM.

For those students who ride the GFA vans or buses, they may accompany, or be accompanied by, a friend provided they have met the following two conditions:

- The student's parents have confirmed with Tom Everard 203-256-7528 at least 24 hours in advance to make sure that there will be enough room; and
- Parents of both students have communicated the plan with Maureen Fracassini.

Given that our students' safety is of the utmost importance to us, we require that all students riding in GFA vans wear seat belts at all times. If a student should refuse to abide by this rule, we will not allow the student to ride in the vans.

In order to minimize stress for our students at the end of the school day, we ask that you communicate any planned dismissal changes to your child ahead of time. Students without this knowledge can become anxious and are easily distracted from their school work. Lower School students who are not picked up promptly at dismissal time will be escorted to the Lower School office to wait for their ride. The adult picking the student up must park and come inside the School to retrieve the student and escort him or her to the car. Students who are still on campus after 3:10 PM may be brought to Aftercare for an additional fee.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Basic Schedule**

The Lower School includes PreK through grade 4. In addition to the core subjects (math, language arts, and social studies), art, library, music, physical education, science, technology, and life skills/health are offered throughout the week as well. Other activities, such as the daily recess periods, the assembly program, field trips, and music and holiday programs are integral to the academic curriculum. Student participation in and attendance at all field trips and music and holiday programs are required.

### **Evaluation of Progress & Conferences**

Teachers work with students to help them learn to evaluate their academic work in relation to their own abilities and talents, and to the academic standards of the School. Following the fall and spring semesters, parents will receive detailed written reports.

While some portions of the reports may occasionally be appropriate to read directly to the students, the School stresses that the information is written to and for the parents. It may be more appropriate and helpful for parents to read the reports privately and then to discuss with their children the implications of their teacher's commentary.

If there is any significant change in a student's level of achievement or effort during the year, parents will be notified. If, in the judgment of the School, a student's progress or development is not sufficient to predict success at the next grade level, the School may require that the student complete academic work during the summer, or that the student repeat the grade, or that parents look for placement in another school that better meets their student's needs. These decisions are made only after thorough review of the child's progress, additional testing where appropriate, and conferences with the parents. Finally, MAP Growth is administered to all students in Grades 2-4 twice yearly to determine what they already know and what they are ready to learn.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the year, once in early November, and again in spring. These conferences are designed to enable the School and parents to exchange information and work together to maximize a student's potential for growth and development in all areas at school.

Should any student encounter serious academic difficulties in any academic area during the year, a conference will be scheduled with the parents, the homeroom teacher, and any other pertinent people. At that conference, measures will be arranged, appropriate to the specific needs of the student. In addition, any time parents wish to conference with one or more teachers and/or the Head of Lower School, they should contact those individuals to arrange a mutually convenient time.

### **Extra Help**

In the Lower School, students receive extra help as needed within the self-contained classroom or through group work with our learning and reading specialists. In addition, while teachers hope that students having difficulty with a specific course will learn to advocate for themselves, teachers will occasionally ask students to attend an extra help session.

It is not possible to establish a regular program of extra help for an individual student within the homeroom setting. If such regular support is needed, the homeroom teacher, the Head of Lower School, and our learning and/or reading specialists will work with the parents to arrange tutoring or support services outside of the school day.

### **Extracurricular and After-School Clubs**

The after school program offers a number of activities to students in grades K–4 for an additional fee. Activities are offered from 3:00–4:00PM, Monday through Thursday. Detailed information about the fall offerings, including fees and sign-up procedures, will be emailed to all Kindergarten–Fourth Grade families prior to the opening day of school.

Many parents choose to have their children involved in various activities outside of school. GFA encourages this sort of activity, as it is important to help a child uncover and develop those gifts and talents that may not be addressed at school. The School makes the precautionary suggestion, however, that it is easy to allow an active, motivated child to become over-programmed. We encourage parents of children whose afternoons are heavily scheduled to monitor their energy levels closely and make modifications to their schedules as necessary.

### **Field Trips**

In order to broaden a student’s perspective and to help them integrate what they are learning in the classroom with the world around them, each class takes at least one field trip each year. The School assumes that in registering a child, the parents understand the importance of these trips and agree to their children’s full participation in this off-campus phase of the School’s operation.

### **Homework**

Beginning in grade 1, a small amount of homework is assigned on a regular basis.

One of the most positive ways parents can assist their children is to help them establish a place and a routine for study. It is crucial for each student to have a predictable routine for completing work that fits the cycles of one’s family life. The actual study place and position in the home is very important. In general, a child’s homework environment should be quiet, well-lit, and comfortable. Study places should be “low stimulus” areas where the telephone, computer, television, and other people are unlikely to interrupt concentration.

Each child presents a unique blend of work habits, work styles, learning differences, thinking preferences, study skills, motivation, and experiences. For that reason, the length of time required to complete academic work, whether done at home or at school, will vary from child to child. If a parent finds that his/her child spends an inordinate amount of time on homework, please contact his/her teacher immediately so that a better plan can be formulated.

### **Learning Support and Academic Accommodations**

*Please refer to “Learning Support and Academic Accommodations” in the School Policies section.*

### **The Penelope G. & John S. Dawson Library**

The Lower School Library serves the faculty, students, and parents of GFA. The collection reflects the needs of the curriculum and provides research and pleasure reading for the community. The library is open during regular school days from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Monday through Thursday, and 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM on Friday.

Lower School students are encouraged to check out books as often as they wish and are given regular time to browse in order to make choices. PreK and Kindergarten students may check out books for one week; First and Second Grade students may check out books for two weeks; Third and Fourth Grade students may check out books for three weeks. If a student needs materials for additional time, the student may renew the items, provided they are not requested by someone else. Overdue reminders will be given to students, and a bill for lost materials will be sent home

at the close of the school year. Faculty may reserve specific collections for use in the library or classroom.

The library also offers a comprehensive selection of databases to support research. The Library Database page is accessed by students and faculty through Schoology. The link is located on the My Portal homepage, under Other Resources. The librarian is always available to assist students and faculty in the use of these resources.

For the good of the community, everyone is asked to follow the library guidelines listed below. If a student violates the guidelines, he or she will be asked to leave the library.

Library guidelines:

- Help to keep the library a welcoming place by being considerate of other students and faculty.
- All library materials must be checked out.
- No food is allowed in the library.

Donations may be made for library materials to be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one through the library's Birthday and/or Honor Book programs. Selection of material is made by the librarian with appropriate labeling placed in the material to designate the gift. In general, donation of material such as used books, textbooks, and videos is discouraged. Approval for donations must be obtained from the librarian.

### **Recess**

Recess for Lower School students is a time to relax and have fun as well as a time to practice social skills. It gives students the opportunity to exercise and re-energize. Imaginative and unstructured play is an important part of your child's day, and playground safety is a priority. There are several adults on playground duty at all times. All students will go outside when weather permits. Parents should be sure their child has clothing and footwear suitable for the weather.

Since an outdoor recess periods are held every day, even on cold days, please note the following:

- A doctor's note is required for a student to stay inside during recess due to injury.
- If your child is too ill to go outside, they should not be in school.
- All students should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical Education at GFA is committed to creating student-centered, engaging environments that flex with student needs so that all feel included, challenged, and known. In addition to promoting fun and the joy of play, Physical Education will highlight healthy warm-up routines that build good pre-play habits; foster skills and strategies; develop agility, balance, coordination, and strength; and introduce the concept of partnership in team settings.

Competition will be healthy and age-appropriate, with an emphasis on competition-specific conflict management and upon learning from adversity and moments of temporary discomfort. Mindfulness strategies will be employed at the conclusion of each class so that students return to the classroom ready to learn.

### **Athletic Attire**

Grades PreK-4: Except for appropriate shoes, students will not need to wear special clothing for their P.E. classes. Since students are required to wear sneakers every day to school, they will be prepared for each P.E. class. Also, students will be expected to wear clothing appropriate to the weather for any outdoor P.E. classes.

## **SERVICE LEARNING**

Service is at the core of who we are. It is a manifestation of our motto, *Quisque pro Omnibus* --Each for All, and furthers our mission of preparing students for “a life of purpose.” Through the program, students practice empathy, understand citizenship, and begin a lifelong habit of service. To fulfill this vision, our service program engages all students, offers repeat experiences, builds sustained, mutually beneficial relationships with community partners, focuses on active participation, offers opportunities for student voice and leadership, is connected to the broader program, and offers opportunities to reflect. Our Service Learning Program involves all of our Lower School students and is an important part of our curriculum. Each grade level engages in a different, year-long project, some on campus, others with off-campus partners. In addition, the entire Lower School contributes to several school-wide service donation drives and fundraisers.

## **DISCIPLINE**

*For more information on the School’s policies regarding discipline and behavior, please see the Code of Conduct and Discipline section and the Interpersonal Student Relationships section under School Policies.*

GFA is concerned with the total development – intellectual, emotional, physical, and social – of its students. Standards of behavior are designed to make our school run smoothly and enable students to have the best possible environment in which to study, learn, and grow. Our goal is to encourage students to abide by and take personal responsibility for the following Lower School Code of Conduct:

- Be kind to others
- Respect everyone’s right to learn
- Take responsibility for yourself and your school

At GFA, we assume our students are kind to one another, responsible, and honest. We remember at all times that no one ever has the right to hurt another person’s body or feelings, or to harm the environment. Unkindness and dishonesty are destructive to both students and the School. Students and parents should understand that while at school or participating in a GFA-sponsored event, any act of dishonesty, or any incivility directed toward any person, is a violation of school rules and will lead to appropriate consequences.

In the Lower School, the classroom and homeroom teachers work with students to help them learn to apply the Code of Conduct to all aspects of behavior. Occasionally, behavior problems may be referred to the Head of Lower School. In such instances, and following a thorough discussion with the student in question, the teacher and the Head of Lower School will plan measures appropriate to the age of the student, the student’s needs, and the nature of the offense. In the event that a child continues to make choices that violate our school rules and/or disrupt the harmony of our school community, the Head of Lower School will work with the student in question, the student’s parents and the student’s teachers to devise and implement a school/home program.

GFA views certain types of offenses as most serious. A parent conference with the Head of School and/or the Head of Lower School will be scheduled immediately should a student become involved in an incident of stealing, academic dishonesty, leaving the campus without permission, or the possession or use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol. Penalties for such offenses could range from in-school suspension to dismissal. Because the tone as well as moral climate of our school is so important to us, incidents of bullying, extreme incivility, or repeated incivility will receive an equally swift and severe response.

While riding on any school bus at any time, students are expected to meet the same standards of conduct as in school. Disciplinary offenses on buses or in school vans will be handled in the

same way as offenses committed at school. Continuing offenses will lead to a student's permanent removal from the bus. Finally, students are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct when they are involved in any school-sponsored activity, whether on or off campus, at any time.

## **DRESS CODE**

We ask for parent cooperation to ensure that students leave home in correct attire. All clothing and personal articles should be clearly marked with the child's name. Students may wear small, non-distracting jewelry, including earrings and analog watches. Valuable items should not be worn on campus and students should arrive with a fresh face, free of make-up.

The purpose of our daily dress code is for students to look neat and be comfortable and appropriate for school.

### **Regular Dress Uniform PreK-4**

All PreK and kindergarten students are expected to leave a full set of dress code clothes in school.

Shirts: White, light blue, or navy, solid color full-buttoned oxford with collars; White, light blue, forest green or navy, solid color polo-style shirt; classic navy, forest green, or white turtleneck

Sweaters: White, navy, or forest green solid color cardigan or pullover, flat-knit or cable, crew-neck or v-neck, traditional fit and length

Sweatshirts: Navy blue sweatshirts with GFA lettering; all sweatshirts must show GFA lettering. No commercial sweatshirts or commercial hooded sweatshirts are permitted in class. Microfiber fleece jackets, pullovers and vests may be worn in navy blue only.

Pants: Khaki or navy chino pants; khaki or navy corduroy pants. Denim, cargo, leggings, athletic pants or work pants are not permitted.

Shorts: Khaki or classic navy Bermuda shorts may be worn in September, October, April, May, and June.

Skirts: Knee-length kilt (A-line or pleated) or jumper in gray or GFA Belmont plaid. Shorts, navy leggings, or stockings are required under kilts and jumpers.

Stockings: White, navy, or forest green solid color stockings or tights may be worn. Navy leggings may be worn underneath a skirt if (and only if) the top of the leggings touches the sock line. Leggings can be worn if they look like tights.

Socks: White or navy socks may be worn.

Shoes: Athletic sneakers should be worn at all times to allow for participation in the active play and learning that typifies a Lower School day. Not permitted: sneakers with lights or embellishments, cleats, clogs, sandals, platform shoes, UGG boots, Doc Martens, or floor marking shoes.

Hats: Hats are not permitted in the classrooms.

Backpacks: Students may use any standard backpack of their choice. However, backpacks with wheels are not allowed in the Lower School.

### **Formal Dress Uniform K-4**

Students wear the formal uniform for special occasions throughout the year:

**Please note, PreK students do not wear formal dress uniform.**

Shirts: White, full-buttoned short or long sleeve oxford-type dress shirt with plain collar

Sweaters: Navy, plain knit cardigan or flat knit crew or v-neck with embroidered school emblem.

Skirt: GFA Belmont Plaid kilt or GFA Belmont Plaid jumper, knee-length

Pants: Tan khaki pants; khaki knee-length shorts may be worn during the months of September, October, April, May, and June

Socks: Navy dress socks; navy tights may replace socks in winter

Shoes: Clean sneakers

The following suppliers carry the GFA formal uniform:

- The online store at [www.dennisuniform.com](http://www.dennisuniform.com)
- Items such as pants, shirts, sweaters, socks, and shoes may also be purchased through retailers such as Lands' End.

The faculty and administration may use their discretion to determine the appropriateness of a student's appearance.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## GENERAL POLICIES

### Absence

If a student is absent a parent must email [msattendance@gfacademy.org](mailto:msattendance@gfacademy.org) by 9:00AM to report the absence and reason for it. Absence without notification from a parent will be considered unexcused until a note from the parent is received.

Students must make up all work missed during an absence. Because this is difficult for both students and faculty, we expect that illnesses, family emergencies, or religious holidays will be the only reasons for absences; such absences will be excused.

For those who are unable to do this (either because of illness or other reasons) should call a peer or monitor their Schoology pages for daily assignments. Those who have excused absences may request extra help to cover missed work. In addition, deferred tests or quizzes should be rescheduled immediately after a student's return.

Students who miss school may not participate in athletic games or extracurricular activities on the same day without prior approval from the Head of Middle School.

Students who need to miss a class or activity because of temporary illness must obtain permission from Ms. Pappas, the school nurse.

Absences for any other reason, unless arrangements have been made in advance with Mr. Meyer, are unexcused, and the following policy will apply:

- Papers or reports that are due on the day when an absence is unexcused must be submitted on time or be considered late.
- If a student misses a test, he/she will be expected to make it up at a time specified by the teacher.
- Teachers will not be expected to provide extra help to cover missed work.
- The absence will be entered as "unexcused" on the student's record and report card.

After a lengthy illness or injury, the School may request written permission from a physician for a student to resume normal activities.

### Attendance

Students are expected to be in their homeroom or Advisory at the start of the school day where attendance is taken. Students who arrive after that time will be marked "unexcused tardy." In the event of tardiness, students must sign in with Mrs. Skiba, who will change the students' attendance status to an excused tardy. If a student who is tardy does not sign in, then the student will be marked unexcused tardy/absent. After three unexcused tardies, a detention may be given. Middle Schoolers are required to attend school for the entire day. Regular dismissal hours are Monday through Thursday at 3:15 and Friday at 2:45PM. All students not using the van or bus service must be picked up in the upper parking lot. No one may be picked up at the end of the day by the gym(s), front or back gates, or train station. If a student is staying after normal dismissal hours, the student must sign in with Mrs. Skiba and stay in the study hall room no later than 5:30PM. After the last teacher leaves the Middle School, students must wait in the front hall reception area. If a student is to stay late regularly, a parent needs to communicate that to Mrs. Skiba.

If a student must leave early for an appointment, a parent or guardian should contact Mrs. Skiba by email, telephone, or written note. The student must sign in or sign out on the sheet located on Mrs. Skiba's door each time he/she leaves or returns to campus. If a student fails to sign out,



he/she may face disciplinary action. An early dismissal due to illness can only be approved by the school nurse, and at no time may a student leave campus due to illness without permission of the school nurse. The School will then contact the parents/custodians. If approved, a student must speak with Mr. Meyer or Mrs. Skiba before signing out in the middle school office. It is expected that students will arrive in a timely fashion to all classes and other commitments during the school day. Regular attendance is critical to academic success at GFA. Understanding that a number of absences may be unavoidable, the School is happy to help accommodate students and families in those situations. However, if the number of absences for the year reaches 20 percent of the total school days, the School may decline to issue credit for the completed school year.

### **Extended Absences and/or Vacations**

There may be occasions when a student misses school for reasons that are not illness-related. While we discourage this, we recognize that occasionally there may be legitimate reasons for an extended absence.

If a student will miss an extended period of time (more than three days) for reasons other than illness, the parents should request permission in writing, well in advance, from the Head of Middle School. Once permission has been granted, the student should complete a Permission to Miss School Form from Mrs. Skiba and then have all teachers sign it at least a week in advance.

Please note that if the absence will be longer than 10 school days, it is possible that the request will be denied.

If the extended absence is approved, the parents will be responsible for hiring tutors (GFA or non-GFA) to cover material missed during the absence. The student's teachers will inform the tutor(s) of work that will be covered during the extended absence; however, it is not the responsibility of GFA teachers to provide extra help in order to cover material missed during an extended absence.

For a truly extended absence (to be determined with the Head of the Middle School), the expectation is that the tutor(s) will formulate and grade any tests and quizzes during this period on a pass/fail basis, as GFA faculty will not email tests and quizzes back and forth. However, should a student return to GFA with work not completed, the student will be responsible for all work missed, even if this exceeds the two major assignments a day policy.

In the unlikely event that a student misses a longer period of time (to be determined by the Head of Middle School), it is possible that the student's transcript will reflect a pass/fail for the semester.

It is our experience that extended periods of absence have a negative effect on a student's academic standing and connection with the School. We ask that parents carefully consider the consequences and then, if requesting an extended leave for their child, please give ample notice to allow for planning and the least degree of disruption for the student.

### **Cell Phone Use**

In the Middle School we discourage the use of cell phones, but in some cases, parents of children in the Middle School want the security of being able to reach their children before or after school, especially those children who ride the train. However, students may not use their phones for any purpose while on campus. Students will be expected to turn their phones in to their advisor or homeroom teacher at the start of the day. If you have a message you wish to get to your child, please contact Mrs. Skiba in the Middle School office (256-7512). Cell phones found during the school day will be taken and kept on Mr. Meyer's desk until the end of the day. Chronic offenders may not be allowed to bring their phone to campus. In order to allow for effective running of class trips, students may not bring their cell phone on field trips or overnight trips.

### **The Gillian Scholey Colhoun Library**

The Middle and Upper School Library serve the faculty, students, and parents of GFA. The collection reflects the needs of the curriculum and provides research and pleasure reading for the community. The library is open during regular school days from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Thursday, and 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM on Friday.

The library is a quiet or silent place for students and faculty to work during their free time and while in class.

Books may be checked out for three weeks; videos may be checked out for three days. If a student needs materials for additional time, he or she may renew the items, provided they are not requested by someone else. Overdue reminders will be emailed to students, and a bill for lost materials will be mailed home at the close of the school year. At the discretion of the librarian, reference materials, magazines, and materials on reserve may be checked out overnight and returned before school the next morning. Faculty may reserve specific collections for use in the library or classroom.

The library also offers a comprehensive selection of databases to support research. The Library Database page is accessed by students and faculty through Schoology. The Library Resources link is located on the My Portal homepage, under Other Resources. The librarian is always available to assist students and faculty in the use of these resources.

For the good of the community, everyone is asked to follow the library guidelines listed below. If a student violates the guidelines, he or she will be asked to leave the library.

Library guidelines:

- Help to keep the library a welcoming place by being considerate of other students and faculty. Respect the study areas designated as silent, or quiet and collaborative.
- All library materials must be checked out.
- No food is allowed in the library.

Occasionally, the library will be unavailable due to special programs, meetings, and the like. Every effort will be made by the librarian to notify the faculty and students of these situations ahead of time.

### **Lockers**

All Middle School students will be assigned both a book locker and a gym locker. Books, coats, and backpacks should be stored in book lockers. While historically GFA has been a community where students have not needed to use locks on their lockers, we understand that some families may wish to use one on their child's book locker. If your child would like to use a lock on his/her book locker, we ask that he/she requests a school-issued lock from Mrs. Skiba. All athletic equipment should be stored in gym lockers where students must use a combination lock issued by the Athletic Department. The School cannot be responsible for lost articles. All belongings must be marked clearly with the student's name.

### **Lost and Found**

All books, notebooks, and articles of clothing must be clearly marked with the student's name. The School makes an effort to return any items marked with a name directly to the student.

### **Parent Connection Meetings**

Parent Connection meetings consist of a series of casual parent meetings at school throughout the year when parents meet to discuss social and emotional development topics related to their children. These meetings are intended to provide a forum for general issues faced by students in the Middle School. The Head of Middle School, who facilitates these connections, will ask for agenda items from parents and release the agenda for the meeting to parents beforehand.

Specific concerns about your own child, your child's teacher, or more specific questions about the program are better suited to direct conversations with the Head of Middle School.

### **Parent Messages**

Parents' messages to students received before 1:00PM will be posted on the student's locker or emailed. We cannot guarantee that messages received after 1:00PM will be received by students, unless there is an emergency.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

It is our belief that a child's education is best served by a partnership between the School and home. In order to facilitate this relationship we believe in regular communication between the teachers and the parents. Formal communication through Parent Conferences will happen during each semester (fall and spring) and also through end-of-semester report cards. Additional communication can take place at other times either directly with the child's teacher, the child's advisor, or the Grade Dean. Normally concerns about a specific class should go to that teacher, while social concerns would go to the advisor and academic concerns that cross multiple classes would go to the Grade Dean.

### **Parties (Birthday and Other)**

We often forget how deeply a child's feelings can be hurt and for how long the consequences of such feelings can last when he or she is excluded. Therefore, we ask parents to be especially sensitive to include their son or daughter's entire class, grade, or gender when planning social events. Otherwise, please schedule the party during one of the two longer vacations so that inevitable discussions of the party and its attendees will not cause anger or resentment. Also, if the list of guests for a party grows to the size where it will include close to half of the class or gender, we ask that parents seriously consider inviting the entire class or shrink the size of the guest list. In Middle School, this can be especially difficult as some members of a group of friends may feel excluded, whether that is the intent or not. Invitations are not to be handed out at school unless all students or all of one gender will receive one. We ask that parents think about how students are transported to parties from school. When a small group leaves for a party together from school in the same car, feelings are almost always hurt; another meeting place for all guests is strongly encouraged. In particular, please be sensitive about groups getting together before a dance and do not plan a sleepover for a group after one of our dances. Finally, the School strongly recommends having a certified lifeguard at class pool parties.

When honoring your child's birthday at school, celebrations should be restricted to your child's advisory or homeroom group in the morning.

### **Visitors**

To arrange for a guest to visit the School, Middle School students should contact the Head of the Middle School.

Visitors are expected to dress comparably to GFA students, to comply with the School's rules of conduct, and to be introduced to the Head of the Middle School and to the teacher of each class they attend. A student who has a visitor must meet all school appointments.

At social functions, guests of students who have obtained prior permission from the Head of Middle School must enter GFA accompanied by their host or hostess and be introduced to the head chaperone.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Academic Grading Policy & Grade Reports**

Grades and/or reports of student progress are issued at the end of each semester. Interim reports are sent at any other time where there is a significant change in level of achievement or effort. Fifth grade students will receive written reports from each of his/her teachers at the end

of the first semester and then grades with written reports in English, math and social studies at the end of the year. GFA grades students in accordance with the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Scale
A+	97-100	4.33
A	93-96	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.67
F	0-59	0.0

Honor and High Honor rolls are calculated each semester for students in grades 7 and 8; a student on the Honor Roll shall have a 3.33 average. High Honors requires a 3.67 average. Each department determines the relative value of homework, quizzes, tests, papers, projects, and class discussion in calculating grades. The criteria for grading in each course will be explained to the students at the beginning of the year and published in Course Policy Sheets, which are distributed by teachers during the first week of school. Questions about the derivation of an average or about a teacher's comments on reports should be directed to the classroom teacher involved.

Any student whose final average in a continuing subject (math and foreign language) is below a C- will be expected to do summer work before being allowed to take the next course in that subject. Any student who fails the second semester in a continuing subject will be required to do summer work in that subject. A student who fails a required course for the year may be asked to make it up in the summer or to repeat the course the following year. A student failing more than one course or having low grades with minimal effort may not be given a contract or have his/her contract withdrawn for the following year.

### **Effort Point Guidelines**

#### 5: Excellent

Evidence exists of work beyond the required assignments, and class participation shows evidence of exceptional effort

#### 4: Very Good

Homework is always done carefully and promptly, and class participation is consistently good

#### 3: Satisfactory

Homework is turned in regularly, and the student is usually prepared for class

#### 2: Needs Improvement

Unexcused or frequent lapses in class preparation or turning assignments in on time

#### 1: Unsatisfactory

Chronic failure to turn in assignments on time or failure to be prepared for class

### **Academic Probation**

If warranted, a student will be placed on academic probation for receiving two or more semester averages in core academic classes below a C-.

If a student meets the above criteria for one semester, at the midpoint of the following semester, the Grade Dean will check the student's academic averages and effort grades, and if there continues to be concern around one or both, the Head of Middle School will contact the student's parents to coordinate a meeting to discuss the student's status.

After this meeting with the parents, the student will be placed on academic probation for that semester.

A student will also be placed on academic probation for failing a course during one semester, or for substandard effort in the opinion of the faculty. In this instance, the student will be placed directly on academic probation.

An eighth grader who meets any of the above criteria during his or her spring semester will be placed on academic probation for his or her ninth grade year.

In addition, a student may be placed on academic probation due to special circumstances as determined by the Head of Middle School.

If a student remains on academic probation for another semester, it is possible that the School may withhold the student's enrollment contract for the following year. Probation alerts the parents and child that they ought to consider whether GFA is the right school. At this point, a family should begin to search for a more appropriate match. However, we also want to give a student committed to being at GFA every chance to succeed within a specific time frame.

### **Extra Help**

If a student is having difficulty in a specific course, the student should seek extra help from the teacher during mutually free time. It is best for students to take the initiative in making appointments for help, but teachers may require a student to attend such sessions. Extra help sessions are required appointments and take precedence over all other school activities except regularly scheduled classes, interscholastic athletic competition, and seminars. Should there be any difficulty in finding a mutually convenient time to meet for extra help, the student should see the Grade Dean. It is not possible to establish a regular program of extra help for an individual student. Where such regular assistance is needed, the School may recommend outside tutoring.

### **Homework**

Homework can be a valuable opportunity for students to practice skills learned during class. However, homework should be relevant and appropriate in both the amount and type. Students in fifth grade should expect approximately 60 to 75 minutes in total per night with no official homework assigned over the weekend. Students in the sixth through eighth grades should expect approximately 30 minutes per subject per night of homework. These are broad guidelines that can differ from student to student. If you find that your child's work is taking more than the assigned time on a regular basis, then please contact the teacher, and we will see how to best help your child finish the work in a timely manner.

### **Learning Support and Academic Accommodations**

*Please refer to "Learning Support and Academic Accommodations" in the School Policies section.*

### **Schedule**

Students participate in a mandatory athletic program during the day with exclusive use of all fields, tennis courts, and facilities. Fifth and sixth graders will have classes after their athletic practices on Monday through Thursday, while the seventh and eighth graders will end their day with their practices on those days. Dismissal for all middle school students is at 3:15 Monday through Thursday and 2:45 on Friday. Interscholastic games are usually scheduled after school. Parents should note that due to academic commitments, students will not be excused prior to the end of the school day without permission from Mr. Meyer. Requests to leave campus for

periodic religious school or other commitments must be supported by a note from a parent stating the reason, and such requests must be approved by Mr. Meyer prior to departure.

### **Section Changes**

During the school year, if a student moves from a regular section of a course to an advanced section, the student's grades will be carried over to the new section. However, if a student moves from the advanced section to the regular section of a subject, the previous grades will be dropped.

### **Study Halls**

Students are expected to be in study halls when not in class or in extracurricular activities.

### **Tutoring**

It is our hope that students needing extra help will first work with the relevant teacher; however, we are aware that there are students who may need more consistent assistance, and therefore a tutor will be helpful. Parents or students who wish to explore tutoring (for remedial or enrichment purposes) must first consult with Mr. Meyer, the Head of Middle School, and/or the Middle School Learning Specialist, Jodi Kupersmith,, regarding the need for and advisability of tutoring. Tutoring should be an option only after extra help options have been exhausted and there has been a careful examination of the student's work habits. The Learning Specialist will then provide a list of tutors including GFA faculty and non-GFA tutors (as well as a description of the range of fees normally charged by tutors). However, please note that we do not have a review or evaluation system for non-GFA tutors that assesses their pedagogical skills or places them under any kind of School supervision. It is expected that families will communicate with the learning specialist as to the nature of tutoring that is being conducted so that the School and the tutor can work together in order to best assist the student.

It is GFA policy that teachers may not tutor students whom they currently teach. In addition, students may not be tutored during the school day (7:45AM-3:15PM on Monday through Thursday, 7:45AM-2:45PM on Friday)

## **ATHLETICS**

### **Fifth and Sixth Grade**

In grades 5 and 6, all students are required to participate in the athletic program all three seasons and are given the opportunity to develop their skills and to learn about the rules and strategies in the majority of the sports offered in grades 7 and 8 and in the Upper School.

All students will be rotated through the following offerings:

#### Fall

Intramural: Cross-country (Girls and Boys), Field Hockey (Girls), Flag Football (Boys), Floor Hockey (Boys), Soccer (Girls and Boys), Volleyball (Girls)

Recreational: Fitness

#### Winter

Intramural: Basketball (Girls and Boys), Squash (Girls and Boys), Wrestling (Girls and Boys)

Recreational: Fitness

#### Spring

Intramural: Baseball (Boys), Lacrosse (Girls and Boys), Softball (Girls), Tennis (Girls and Boys)

Recreational: Fitness

In the fifth and sixth grades our focus is on the development of skills, encouraging healthy lifelong habits, and having fun. In support of these goals, students will practice skills and participate in intramural games that will take place on campus and will occur during the fifth and sixth grade sports period (1:15 to 2:15).

Fifth and sixth graders will not be permitted to participate in the seventh and eighth grade athletic program.

### **Seventh and Eighth Grade**

The seventh and eighth grade athletic program is designed to encourage students to become comfortable with and cognizant of their physical abilities and potential by providing opportunities for the development of sport-specific skills, coordination, self-confidence, and sportsmanship at a time of significant physical growth. A part of this process is challenging students through interscholastic competition.

Each student is required to participate in the seventh and eighth grade program for all three seasons, and will be afforded the opportunity to select multiple preferences in advance of each season. All efforts will be made to accommodate each student's first preference; when circumstances require adjustment in order to ensure manageable roster sizes that are conducive to safe and substantive participation for each child, students will be assigned to secondary preferences.

Students will be given an opportunity to change to another program during the prescribed sampling period, which will be the first 10 academic days of each season. After this period, a student will only be permitted to change programs with the permission of the Assistant Athletic Director, Middle School Athletics & Physical Education.

The athletic department offers a non-team program at all times. A qualified instructor organizes games and activities that teach skills in a variety of sports and provide opportunities for fitness and fun.

Sports practices take place year round, Monday through Thursday from 2:15 - 3:15 PM. Teams in each sport play interscholastic games with area schools. Games for these teams will primarily be on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please do not schedule other activities or appointments on these days.

Students are required and expected to attend all practices and games, for the integrity of the program and for the quality of the students' experience. Outside appointments (including doctor's appointments) and activities (including town travel and premier teams) should not conflict with school games or practices. Should there be any unavoidable schedule conflicts, parents should write a note to or contact the coach or the Middle School Athletic Director immediately, and well ahead of time when possible.

Due to the addition of the GFA Fitness Program, independent studies are not offered. If you have questions, please contact the Director of Athletics or Assistant Athletic Director, Middle School Athletics & Physical Education.

### **Participation of 7th and 8th Graders in Upper School Athletics**

GFA subscribes to the research that the social-emotional benefits of participation in sport are best realized when students compete with their peers (students of about the same age or grade who share sport and non-sport experiences in common). As a result, GFA expects each 7th and 8th grade student to participate in the Middle School Athletics program.

In exceptional cases, 7th/8th Grade students may be permitted to participate in the evaluation period for Varsity teams (please see the Upper School Athletics section for more information on

evaluation periods). In order to receive permission to participate in the evaluation period for Varsity teams, a Middle School student must receive a recommendation from their Middle School coach on the basis of their extraordinary ability, commitment to the sport, and positive contributions to the Middle School program.

*For Team Sports* (soccer, field hockey, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, baseball, lacrosse, softball, ultimate frisbee): if, in the judgment of the Varsity coaches, Middle School coaches, the Director of Athletics & P.E. and the Assistant Directors of Athletics, a Middle School student would be a significant contributor to the Varsity team and if their participation would not meaningfully affect the participation of a deserving Upper School student or students, 7th and 8th grade students will be given permission to participate on a Varsity team.

*For Individual Sports* (golf, squash, tennis): Middle School students will participate in intramural competition to determine standing (e.g. “pyramid matches”) and must demonstrate objectively that they possess outstanding ability that will allow them to compete at the highest interscholastic levels (e.g. all-conference, all-New England levels), so that their participation would not meaningfully affect the participation of deserving Upper School student or students.

*For Timed Sports* (cross-country, track): Middle School students must demonstrate objectively (e.g. time trials) that they possess outstanding ability that will allow them to compete at the highest interscholastic levels (e.g. all-conference, all-New England levels), so that their participation would not meaningfully affect the participation of deserving Upper School student or students.

In the event that a Varsity team is suffering from player availability to an extent that jeopardizes the team’s ability to participate in games, 8th Grade students may be invited to participate in Varsity games and practices. In the event this is necessary, all efforts will be made to maintain the integrity of the Middle School program and commitments made to peer schools for scheduled games.

GFA remains mindful of the wealth of established and affirmed research that articulates the heightened risk of overuse injuries and “burnout” among youth athletes as a result of overtraining. Students will not be permitted to participate in both a 7th/8th Grade game or practice and a Varsity game or practice on the same day. Middle School students may be invited to participate in Varsity games or practices at the Varsity coaching staff’s discretion on days on which there are no Middle School Athletics activities.

7th and 8th Grade students may not participate in sub-varsity games.

## **Athletic Teams**

### Fall

Interscholastic: Cross-country (girls and boys), field hockey (girls), flag football (boys), soccer (girls and boys), volleyball (girls)

Recreation: Fitness (girls and boys)

### Winter

Interscholastic: Basketball (girls and boys), squash (girls and boys), wrestling (girls and boys),

Recreation: Fitness (girls and boys)

### Spring

Interscholastic: Baseball (boys), Lacrosse (girls and boys), softball (girls), tennis (girls and boys)

Recreation: Fitness (girls and boys)



## **Awards**

Recognition for excellence and sportsmanship in athletics occurs often and for many at GFA, including at morning announcements, in website news items, in one-on-one remarks from coaches at practices and games, and during the season-end team meetings.

## **Locker Rooms**

The School is not responsible or liable for the students' personal property. Be sure the student's name is clearly marked on every piece of clothing and equipment. The School will issue each student a locker and a lock in the locker room. Students are required to use the lock issued. Students should keep their locker locked at all times and not share their combination with anyone else. Students should put all gear in their lockers after every use. All gear left out of lockers at the end of the day will be placed in the locker room Lost and Found box.

## **Medical Responsibilities**

**Physical examination requirements:** To participate in any athletic practice or game, a student must have had a physical examination within 13 months of participation, and the blue Physical Examination Form must be on file with the school nurse before the student can be allowed to participate in any athletic practice or game.

**Student Emergency Medical Information Form:** Families are also required to file the Student Medical Emergency Information Form with the school nurse, a copy of which is given to coaches. Each coach must have copies of these forms for all players at all times during practices, scrimmages, or games. The Student Medical Emergency Information Form contains valuable information about allergies and tetanus shots, emergency contact numbers and consent statements, and must be on file with the school nurse before students can be allowed to participate in any athletic practice or game.

## **Practice Dress**

- Beginning in grade 5, each GFA student must purchase a GFA reversible tank top, or "pinnie," that will be used by all teams in each season in the Middle and Upper School Athletic program. These pinnies will be readily available year-round for purchase online as needed.
- Any T-shirt (in good condition and in good taste)
- Solid color athletic shorts (no cutoffs). These shorts are needed for basketball, soccer, and softball
- Athletic socks
- Cleats/sneakers appropriate for the sport
- Spandex shorts are permitted in practice. Certain sports permit them to be worn in games, provided they are the same color as the game shorts (e.g., basketball and lacrosse permit them, soccer does not). Accordingly, students should consult with their coaches.
- Students should have sneakers at school on a daily basis in the event that bad weather forces practices indoors.
- No jewelry may be worn during any athletic activity

## **Uniforms & Equipment**

In advance of each relevant season, the Athletic Department will provide notice of any athletic clothing/equipment and certified, required safety equipment that must be supplied by the student. Game jerseys will be supplied by the Athletic Department. Game jerseys are to be returned to the appropriate athletic office on the final game day of the season.

All school uniforms and equipment issued to students will remain the property of the School and must be returned promptly at the end of the season. It is the student's responsibility to wash the uniforms (generally warm water/cold rinse) and to care for uniforms and equipment properly during the season. It will be the student's financial responsibility to replace any unreturned, lost,

or damaged uniform/equipment issued. No uniforms or equipment for the next season can be issued to students until they have returned their previous season's uniform/equipment, or until they have paid the invoice.

## **SERVICE LEARNING**

Service is at the core of who we are. It is a manifestation of our motto, *Quisque pro Omnibus -- Each for All*, and furthers our mission of preparing students for "a life of purpose." Through the program, students practice empathy, understand citizenship, and begin a lifelong habit of service. To fulfill this vision, our service program engages all students, offers repeat experiences, builds sustained, mutually beneficial relationships with community partners, focuses on active participation, offers opportunities for student voice and leadership, is connected to the broader program, and offers opportunities to reflect.

All Middle School students engage in Service Learning through our House program. Students in the Middle School are divided into four different Houses connected to the GFA environment (Audubon, Marsh, Orchard, and Sound) and with their housemates students will learn about their aspect of the campus and develop projects related to their house. Each grade also focuses on different social justice issues over the course of the year through a dedicated curriculum. In addition, 6th, 7th and 8th graders will have the opportunity to engage in service outside of GFA by signing up for the service activity of their choice at the beginning of the school year. Such activities include but are not limited to: Tutoring in one of two inner-city schools and/or performing environmental activities at Sherwood Island. The Middle School also contributes to several donation drives and fundraisers: the Thanksgiving Food Drive, Angel Tree, Ugly Sweater Day for Save the Children, Halloween candy drive for local shelters and toiletry/sock drives for the Midnight Run.

## **DISCIPLINE**

*For more information on the School's policies regarding discipline and behavior, please see the Code of Conduct and Discipline section and the Interpersonal Student Relationships section under School Policies.*

The GFA Middle School expects that all community members are respectful of themselves, others, and the GFA space. The GFA Middle School ensures these community expectations using a reflection-based system. When infractions of basic community expectations occur, students will generally engage in advisor and/or dean reflection meetings to debrief the infraction and better understand how to positively contribute to the Middle School community. These reflection meetings will typically take place during the school day. Infractions of basic expectations generally include, but are not limited to: tardiness, dress code infractions, inappropriate study hall behavior, inappropriate cell phone or computer use, disruptive behavior in community spaces, swearing or unkind language, and not being in an expected location.

Repeated or blatant infractions of community values will generally result in a before-school intervention meeting with (in some combination): the grade dean, division head, advisor, and/or parent(s). Blatant infractions of expectations typically include, but are not limited to: malicious physical contact, digital harassment, vandalism, stealing, insensitive or hateful language, and academic dishonesty. Generally, intervention meetings will generally take place from 7:00-8:00 AM, and parents will be given 24-hour notice of all intervention meetings. In-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsion may also occur for repeated or flagrant infractions.

While students are expected to read, understand, and abide by the Code of Conduct stated in this publication, some rules are considered serious enough to warrant immediate disciplinary action by GFA.

A Middle School student who is suspended may be subject to removal from an elected or appointed office by the administration.

If a student is suspended from GFA, he/she and the parents will meet with the Head of Middle School and a Grade Dean; this meeting is generally followed by a letter to the parents, a copy of which will be placed in the student's file. A student who repeats an offense for which he/she has already been suspended may be expelled from GFA. In the case of an expulsion, the students and parents will meet with the Head of School and the Head of Middle School, and this meeting will be followed by a letter from the Head of School.

## **DRESS CODE**

### Formal Dress Uniform

Students wear the formal uniform for special occasions throughout the year:

Blazer:	Navy blue blazer with GFA emblem
Shirt/Tie:	White full-buttoned collared dress shirt with the GFA tie, or blouse
Pants:	Tan khaki pants and belt
Skirt:	Gray flannel kilt, hemmed to a reasonable length (no more than three inches above the knee)
Shoes:	Sneakers, dress shoes (not open-toe or open-heel) or boots; no sandals, Birkenstocks, or high heels
Socks:	Dark socks; with kilt, navy knee socks or navy tights

Formal uniform suppliers:

- The online store at [www.dennisuniform.com](http://www.dennisuniform.com)
- Items such as pants, blazers, shirts, sweaters, socks, and shoes may also be purchased through retailers such as Lands' End.

### Regular Dress Code

The purpose of our daily dress code is for students to look neat and be comfortable and appropriate for school. The dress code also serves a democratic function, allowing students from all backgrounds to attend school and feel like part of the community. As such, we ask students not to wear or bring items to school that might be seen as exclusive.

Shirt: Solid-colored, collared, long or short sleeved oxford dress shirts, blouses, or polo shirts that tuck into pants or kilt. Striped shirts in the above style may be worn as an eighth-grade privilege after a certain point of the year at the discretion of the Head of Middle School. Solid-colored knit sweaters are optional. Denim shirts and sleeveless shirts are not acceptable, nor are long-sleeved shirts under short-sleeved shirts.

Pants: Chinos, corduroy, or wool pants; solid colored and traditional fit (no cargo, leggings, jeggings, nor baggy fit).

Kilt: The GFA Belmont plaid or gray flannel kilt, hemmed to a reasonable length (no more than three inches above the knee)

Shoes: Sneakers, dress shoes (not open-toe or open-heel) or boots; no sandals, Birkenstocks, or high heels. In addition, students must keep their shoes on both inside the building as well as when playing outside.

Notes regarding the regular dress code:

- All clothing must be in good repair, clean, properly worn, and in good taste.
- Students are not allowed to wear hats in the building at any time.
- Students may wear GFA sweatshirts and fleeces as part of the dress code. In extremely hot weather, adjustments to the informal dress code may be announced.
- During warm weather months (September, October, April, May, and June), students may wear solid-colored Bermuda-style shorts (hemmed about an inch above the knee)
- Parents of students wearing kilts more than 3 inches above the knee will be informed and those students may be banned from wearing kilts to school for a period of time.

## **HONOR CODE**

Our community is one that is based upon honor and trust. By setting clear expectations for students, we are raising the standard for their behavior and helping them take greater responsibility for their own learning environment. In order to help facilitate this type of community we have instituted an Honor Code. Each student signs that he or she understands and supports the following statement:

To take full ownership of my efforts with pride and integrity, I pledge that I will complete all of my own academic work independently and without assistance. I pledge that I will be honest in all my encounters and noble in my intentions. I pledge that I will show respect for individuals and their property and that I will treat others' belongings with care and consideration. I make these pledges to ensure that I always make good decisions which validate my own honor and my commitment to the Greens Farms Academy Middle School community. I understand that this Honor Code is an extension to the guidelines set forth in the GFA Code of Conduct and the Responsible Use Policy.

In addition, students are expected to sign their name to the following pledge on all tests and quizzes during the course of the year:

I will abide by the letter and spirit of the GFA Honor Code.

# UPPER SCHOOL

## GENERAL POLICIES

### **Attendance**

The key to a successful experience at GFA is full immersion in the community: regular attendance is the foundation of everything we do. GFA seeks to partner with parents and students to ensure the kind of regular, timely attendance that makes possible a student's full engagement in the program.

In addition, a certain level of attendance and promptness is necessary to ensure that a student can reasonably be expected to succeed in the full academic program: a student who misses too much school simply cannot engage in the same kind of learning as a student who is in the building.

We track attendance carefully and keep parents informed when absences accrue at an unsustainable rate. When a student's attendance is a concern, the dean will generally speak with a parent or guardian to make a plan for the student to stay caught up on academic work and to minimize any future absences. This may include curtailing future school-related activities that involve missing class.

A student who accrues more than 12 absences in a semester will generally be able to receive credit for that semester's courses on a pass/fail basis; a student who accrues more than 16 absences will generally lose course credit.

In the event of an extended absence for medical reasons, the Medical Leave attendance policy supersedes the regular attendance policy.

A student who is late to class three times will serve a detention. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to class, that will be considered a cut class and incur an appropriate consequence.

Planned Absences: a student who needs to miss school for any reason — for a full day or a partial day — should use the Absence Request Form to communicate with teachers and the Dean a week in advance; a student who misses school without communicating properly will serve detention.

A student who will miss significant school due to outside athletic or extracurricular commitments must secure the School's formal written approval in advance via the dean. After that, the student works with the relevant Dean to make a plan for continuity of academic work; in such instances, the absence limit may be modified.

Unplanned Absences: in the event of an unplanned absence, parents should email [usattendance@gfacademy.org](mailto:usattendance@gfacademy.org) as soon as possible, and preferably prior to 8:00 AM.

### Daily Procedures

#### *Mornings*

Classes begin promptly at 8:10 (9:00 on Thursdays); students should arrive on campus in time to be seated and prepared when class begins.

Upon arrival, students sign in to indicate their presence on campus.

### *During the Day*

A student who becomes ill during the day must go to the nurse's office; if the student needs to be sent home, the nurse will contact the student's parents.

Any student who leaves campus before dismissal for any reason must always sign out.

Once the dean institutes senior sign-out—typically early in the year—seniors whose parents have signed the relevant permission form may sign out and leave campus during free periods and lunch.

### *Afternoons*

The academic day ends at 3:15. Athletics and theater programming generally end by 5:30PM. Students are free to leave at the end of the academic day or after their last after-school obligation. Students who do not have an after-school commitment should leave campus no later than 5:30.

### *Sleep-in/Early Departure*

For juniors and seniors who have a free first or last period, the deans institute sleep-in and early sign-out, typically early in the year for seniors and during the winter for juniors. These students must sign in by 9:15 (10:05 on Thursdays).

## **Advisory Program**

Advisory groups meet once a week, and advisors meet individually with advisees on a regular basis. A student's advisor is generally the first resource when the student or parents have a question, concern, or need. Ninth-graders are assigned to groups before the start of school; new groups are formed for 10th grade, based partly on input from students, and those groups stay together for the next three years, though students may request a change at the end of the year.

## **College Guidance**

The College Guidance Office at GFA offers individualized and professional advice, support, and advocacy to GFA students and families. GFA's College Guidance team partners with Upper School students and their advisors on course selection, and provides information on enrichment opportunities, and application procedures, including essay writing and financial aid. Programming is offered to students and families throughout the year.

GFA's College Counselors work to provide students with the tools and information they need to identify colleges that will be the best match, not only meeting each student's needs academically but also providing the appropriate environment for continued personal and intellectual growth. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their college process; in doing so, they learn about themselves and become more independent. GFA families are encouraged to be open-minded about exploring a range of colleges, allowing parents, students, and college counselors to work together to find the right match for each student. GFA's College Counseling team values the relationships we establish with families in the course of our partnership and continuously seeks to provide timely and valuable advice.

Our familiarity with colleges and their respective admissions officers is essential to our being able to guide GFA students. The College Counselors routinely visit colleges, network with college admission professionals, attend conferences and workshops, and invite college admissions professionals to campus to meet students. Please refer to the GFA website for additional details about College Guidance at GFA.

## **Discipline**

*For more information on the School's policies regarding discipline and behavior, please see the Code of Conduct and Discipline section and the Interpersonal Student Relationships section under School Policies.*

At all times GFA Upper School students are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty, be considerate of others, and respect school property. Upper School administrators and faculty communicate community expectations to students. When violations of community expectations occur, the School endeavors to treat those violations as learning opportunities for the student, who are generally guided through the learning process by a combination of adults including the student's teacher, advisor, dean, or an Upper School administrator.

Minor disciplinary infractions typically result in the student earning detention and/or on-campus restriction (OCR). This may be due to an accumulation of warnings (in the case of multiple class tardies, for example) or earning a detention/OCR immediately such as after an unexcused absence from class or for failing to sign out properly. Students are notified of the detention/OCR by email. Detentions are served during cycle 9. Students may do homework during detention but may not use a computer or other electronic device. Students serve OCR by attending a study hall during a free period. If a student misses a detention or OCR period due to an excused school absence, they must serve it at the following opportunity.

More serious violations of community expectations may result in a student earning on-campus separation (OCS). A student serving OCS will be required to be on campus during the academic day and will not attend class, other community events, or any after-school activities. The student will engage in a variety of activities including quiet reflection/writing, service, and meeting with various community members including the student's advisor and dean. On-campus separation is not part of a student's official school record and is not reported when applying to college or university.

Students who have engaged in a serious act of misconduct on or off-campus, in person or via technology, or through any other means may be suspended from school, prohibited from attending school activities, or expelled from school. A student who has been suspended and engages in additional serious violations may be expelled.

Students who are separated from school for disciplinary reasons are prohibited from being on school grounds or attending school activities on or off-campus for a designated period determined by the School. Suspension and expulsion are part of a student's official school record. However, if a student was suspended in 9th or 10th grade, the student's suspension will be expunged at the end of their junior year, provided the student did not accumulate additional suspension during 9-11th grades.

### *Judicial Council*

The purpose of the Judicial Council is to review serious violations of the School's Code of Conduct and Honor Code and make recommendations for disciplinary consequences to the Head of School. The Head of School chairs the Judicial Council and oversees all hearings. The Council consists of students and a faculty member. The Head of Upper School is also in attendance during council hearings. Members of the Council maintain strict confidentiality to preserve the privacy and dignity of all students involved in council hearings.

Judicial Council members are nominated by faculty, vetted by deans, and voted for by the student body. Should a council member violate confidentiality, the student will be removed from the Council and subject to a hearing. Furthermore, if a student on the judicial council is brought to a judicial hearing, the student will be removed from the council.

Process: prior to a judicial hearing, the student and their dean meet to review details of the rule violation. During the hearing, the student is accompanied by the student's dean and, if the student chooses, the student's advisor or another faculty advocate. The Dean presents the details of the case, and the student's advisor or faculty advocate may speak on the student's behalf. The student also addresses the Council and answers questions posed by council members. The student, dean, and advisor are not present during Council deliberations. The student's family members and/or lawyers are not permitted to attend the Judicial Council hearing.

Once the Judicial Council agrees on an appropriate disciplinary response, they make a recommendation to the Head of School. The Head of School has the final authority in all decisions. In some cases, the Head of School may decide to bypass the judicial council process.

### **Dress Code**

With input from students and faculty, GFA created the following Upper School dress code to align with our school's mission and core values.

- *Partnership and Integrity:* Students cultivate responsibility and judgment when they can make individual decisions within the context of the school community
- *Inclusivity:* The dress code makes room for all students to belong
- *Excellence:* The dress code provides the clarity students need so they can feel ready to do their best work daily
- *Purpose and Connection:* Our formal uniform is a visible manifestation of our shared purpose

### **Regular Dress Code**

1. Basic principle: certain body parts must be covered for *all* students. Clothes must be worn in a way such that body parts generally considered as “private” are covered with non-see-through material. Students must wear a shirt, bottoms, and shoes. A shirt must have fabric on the front, back, and sides, including under the arms. Sports bras, bralettes, crop tops, and drop arm tank tops are not allowed.
2. Students may not wear:
  - Violent language or images, profanity, or pornography.
  - Images or language related drugs, alcohol, or any illegal item or activity.
  - Bathing suits or pajamas
  - Flip-flops
  - Ripped and/or torn clothing, including ripped jeans
  - Headgear that obscures the face (except as a religious observance or medical concern).

### **Formal Uniform**

In the Upper School, students wear the formal uniform at regular intervals throughout the year.

Blazer: Navy blue blazer with GFA emblem or earned Varsity Honor Society sweater. We will mail you a GFA emblem in August. Additional emblems available in the uniform exchange.

Shirt/Tie: White full-buttoned collared (long or short-sleeved) shirt with the GFA tie, or white blouse

Bottoms: Tan khaki pants and belt or the grey kilt

Shoes/Socks: Black or brown dress shoes or clean sneakers with dark socks; with kilt, navy knee socks or navy tights

Certain courses or events may include assignment-specific dress as part of the curriculum. Dress guidelines for such should be in line with the values above.

If asked to do so by their coach, team members may change into their GFA uniform at lunch on the day of a game.

### **Driving Regulations**

During the school day, Only seniors and, as allowed, juniors, may park on campus. Student cars must be registered at school and display the assigned parking permit. Students who drive on campus must obey all traffic signs, park only in designated student parking lots, and exercise extreme caution.



*Students are not permitted to go to their cars during the school day for any reason. If a student needs to retrieve something from their car, permission must be secured from a faculty member.*

## **Household Rules**

These are designed to ensure the kind of community environment we all need to function at our best, in accordance with the School's mission and core values:

- We come together daily to interact with one another in a variety of settings; **cell phones** should not detract from the social experience of being at school. They also must be put away during class.
- Students are welcome to use **headphones** to listen to music while working in the library or sitting in a quiet space, but should not play music out loud on speakers. They should not use headphones or earbuds while walking around the building.
- Students should not make **phone calls** in the hallways or in other public spaces. Please make phone calls in a more private area like an unused classroom, a stairwell, or outside the building.
- Students may leave **backpacks** in their lockers, classrooms, or common spaces. Backpacks are not allowed in the cafeteria during lunch and may not be left in hallways or the McGrath Gallery during announcements or assembly.
- **Athletic facilities** such as the fitness center and Bedford or Coyle gym may at times be open during the school day; students must follow the guidelines for those spaces.
- Activities in **common spaces** must not be loud enough to disturb others or nearby classes, and should not involve roughhousing. During the school day, students may be **outside** on the front lawn or between the library and Performing Arts Center. Students may not be in any other outdoor areas without a faculty member present.
- **Food and drink:** students may eat in the Cafeteria, outside, or in other locations for special occasions. Seniors may eat in the McGrath Gallery. In all cases, they should clean up after themselves. A student who has **damaged school property** should always inform a faculty member or a dean.
- Students must not **record or photograph** anyone without their explicit consent.
- Students should not use the **elevators** unless they are physically unable to use the stairs.

## **The Gillian Scholey Colhoun Library**

*Please refer to the Library section in the Middle School portion.*

### **Lockers**

All Upper School students will be assigned both a book locker and a gym locker. Books, coats, and backpacks should be stored in book lockers. All athletic equipment should be stored in gym lockers where students must use a combination lock issued by the athletic department. The School cannot be responsible for lost articles. All belongings must be marked clearly with each student's name.

Students who wish to secure their book locker may use combination locks issued by the Administrative Assistant to the Head of Upper School. Students may use their own combination locks as long as they give their combinations to the Upper School Administrative Assistant.

### **Lost and Found**

All books, notebooks, and articles of clothing must be clearly marked with the student's name. Smaller items such as cell phones and jewelry will be kept with the receptionist and larger items will be kept in the Upper C-Wing Lost and Found. At intervals, unlabelled items in the lost and found will be donated to a local charity

## **Service Learning**

Upper School students are encouraged to engage in service and are introduced to the various opportunities available to them during an assembly in the fall. Some opportunities occur during the school day while others are outside school hours. Students may work on individual projects or with a group of friends, advisory group, or athletic team. The community service board, made up of upper school students, oversees service clubs and projects.

## **Community Service Board Leadership**

Co-Presidents: Molly Duffy & Paige Parisi

Vice President: Brendan Howard

Secretary: Nancy Duer

Treasurer: Paige Bierman

## **Student Council**

Chair: Annie Dizon

Twelfth Grade President: Jack Merzon

Twelfth Grade Representatives: Elle DeAddio, Lauren Lior, and Brendan Howard

Eleventh Grade Representatives: Devin Agah, Neil Chaudhari, Jack Pegler, and Jakob Zapanta

Tenth Grade Representatives: Izzy Kittredge, Phoebe Bryan, Tyra Stephenson, and Sofia Atehortua

Ninth Grade Representatives: Elections are held in the fall

## **Student Organizations, Clubs, and Activities**

There are a range of clubs available to students, each with its individual mission and leadership. Students learn about clubs during our annual fall clubs fair and all club information can be found on the Student Council Schoology page. While joining clubs is not mandatory, it is encouraged. Students may also start a new club if one doesn't already exist in their area of interest.

## **Visitors**

To arrange for a guest to visit the School, Upper School students must ask for permission from the Head of the Upper School. Visitors are expected to dress comparably to GFA students, to wear a name tag throughout the day, to comply with the School's rules of conduct, and to be introduced to the appropriate Division Head and to the teacher of each class they attend. Students who have a visitor must meet all school obligations. Visitors should sign in with security upon arrival, and those who do not have permission will be asked to leave.

At social functions, guests of students must enter GFA accompanied by their host or hostess and must be introduced to the head chaperone.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

*For more detailed information about the academic program and requirements, please see the Upper School Curriculum Guide.*

## **Academic Grading Policy and Grade Reports**

Grades and/or reports of student progress are released to My Backpack at the end of each semester. Faculty contact parents any time that there is a significant change in a student's level of achievement or effort. For year-long courses, only the year grade appears on the transcript. GFA grades students in accordance with the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Scale
A+	97-100	4.33
A	93-96	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67

C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.67
F	0-59	0.0

Honor and High Honor Rolls are calculated for each marking period; a student on the Honor Roll shall have a minimum B+. High Honors requires a minimum A- average.

The criteria for grading in each course will be explained to students at the beginning of the year and published in the course policy sheet.

A senior who fails a course will be required to make up the credit before receiving a diploma. An underclassman who fails a course for the year will be required to repeat the course the following year. A student who earns a D in a course may be required to do summer work in the subject and pass a placement test by August 1 in order to move on to the next level in that subject. If a student experiences significant difficulty in any course, the Head of Upper School, the Dean and the appropriate Department Head may recommend summer work or an appropriate summer program to prepare for the next year's coursework.

### **Effort Point Guidelines**

#### 5: Excellent

Evidence exists of work beyond the required assignments, and class participation shows evidence of exceptional effort

#### 4: Very Good

Homework is always done carefully and promptly, and class participation is consistently good

#### 3: Satisfactory

Homework is turned in regularly, and the student is usually prepared for class

#### 2: Needs Improvement

Unexcused or frequent lapses in class preparation or turning assignments in on time

#### 1: Unsatisfactory

Chronic failure to turn in assignments on time or failure to be prepared for class

### **Academic Probation**

If it is warranted, a student will be placed on academic probation following

- failure in one or more courses;
- a grade in the D range in two or more courses;
- a grade point average below 1.67; or
- academic performance that raises concerns about a student's ability to find future success in the GFA coursework.

When a student is on academic probation, the Dean will check his/her grades at the midpoint of the following semester. If there has not been significant improvement, the School may begin a counseling-out process. If a MS student enters the US on academic probation and meets one of the criteria listed above at the end of first semester, a counseling-out process may begin.

The School may withdraw a contract at the end of the year if a student has a dramatic change in academic performance in the second semester. These terms will be explained at a meeting between the parents and the Head of Upper School. Probation alerts the student and parents that they ought to consider whether GFA is the right school; however, we also want to give a

student committed to being here every chance to succeed within a specific time frame designated for that improvement.

### **Academic Withdrawal**

If a student must withdraw from school for any reason, his/her parents must meet with the Head of Upper School and complete a form notifying the School of the withdrawal. If a student withdraws from GFA and subsequently wishes to attend an internal student event at school, such as a dance or coffeehouse, she/he must first get permission from the Grade Dean.

### **Add/Drop Policy**

After the course selection process concludes in May, students commit to their choices. Once school begins, students may change or drop courses during the first 10 school days of the semester if schedules and enrollment limits allow; a student who is considering such a request should speak with the dean immediately. Any changes must have the approval of the Head of Upper School, the Dean, and the student's advisor, in addition to other signatures required for course changes. For seniors, the college counselor's signature is also required. Only a Department Head can approve a course change for any course that has criteria for admittance. After the add/drop period, any course change must be approved by the Head of the Upper School, but any dropped course will be noted as a "Withdraw – Passing" or "Withdraw – Failing" on the student's transcript. Such course drops after the deadline should be rare and are not encouraged.

### **Head of School Distinction**

The Head of School Distinction is awarded to a student whose commitment to excellence derives from his or her interest in the academic material beyond a concern for grades. The Head of School Distinction is non-GPA based. To earn this distinction a student should

- invest in the life of the classroom;
- take an active and pivotal role in the daily work of the class;
- model the intellectual qualities of courage, appropriate risk taking, and willingness to hear and offer alternate points of view;
- demonstrate enthusiasm and curiosity about the class and the material; and
- show a genuine commitment to learning for its own sake.

For a student to be eligible for Head of School Distinction, three or more of the student's teachers for that academic period must vote affirmatively for the student to receive the distinction.

The Head of School distinction is noted on the student's transcript. A student who has been censured by the Judicial Council for academic dishonesty is disqualified from earning a Head of School Distinction for that semester.

### **Homework and Assessments**

Students should expect to spend roughly 45 minutes to prepare for each class, or 60 minutes for advanced classes. Teachers post assignments for the upcoming week by the end of the day on Friday, and the most successful students typically take some time over the weekend to survey the upcoming work and plan out when to do it. Faculty will post major assessments on Schoology at least two weeks in advance, and will return major graded assignments before another assignment of the same type is collected.

Homework over the weekend or over a vacation will not be longer than a daily assignment, though a teacher may suggest review work for a student who has performed poorly on material that will be needed for future success in the course.

GFA recognizes that religious obligations may from time to time prevent students from preparing their daily assignments. In such cases, teachers will permit students to postpone any tests, quizzes, or homework due dates with 48 hours' notice. For certain widely observed

holidays (traditionally Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Easter), teachers will assign no homework to any student for that night.

Work can pile up at times, and advisors are good resources to help students manage their workloads. A student who is facing more than two major assessments on the same day or four in one week may decide to speak with his/her advisor, who will help the student coordinate with teachers to move the date of one assessment.

Students who wish to sit for an AP Exam should speak with the teacher or with Ms. Shairer, who coordinates standardized tests, in October.

### **Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete grade is an excused extension of a term grade with a defined timeline. The classroom teacher initiates the process after a discussion with the student; the teacher and the student's Dean must agree on the timeline. The Dean sends a note to the family, the Head of Upper School, and the teacher. Missing the deadline to complete work may result in a "o" for the work missed; if the work is deemed essential for the course content, it is possible to fail the course in its entirety. The Head of Upper School will make this decision in consultation with the teacher and the Dean.

### **Learning Support and Academic Accommodations**

*Please refer to "Learning Support and Academic Accommodations" in the School Policies section.*

### **Meeting with Teachers**

If a student is having difficulty in specific courses, the student should meet with teachers during mutually free time and arrive with specific topics to discuss. Students should typically take the initiative in making appointments for help, though a teacher or Dean may require such a meeting. Such meetings are required appointments and take precedence over all other school activities except regularly scheduled classes and athletics. It may not be possible for a teacher to meet with a student more frequently than once per week; if a student needs more frequent assistance, the Dean or Learning Specialist may suggest outside tutoring until adequate progress has been made.

### **Off-Campus Programs of Study**

Each year GFA offers qualified students the opportunity to apply to approved off-campus programs of study for a semester or a year: Maine Coast Semester School (Maine), High Mountain Institute (Colorado), Island School (Bahamas), Oxbow (California), The School for Ethics and Global Leadership (Washington, D.C. or Johannesburg, South Africa), School Year Abroad (China, France, Spain). All programs provide rich, alternative learning experiences students could not otherwise experience. These programs are approved by the School because of the compatibility of their academic program with that of Greens Farms Academy. The School will consider other programs on a case-by-case basis.

Students must be pre-approved by GFA before they may apply to any off-campus program. The School will only pre-approve students who are in excellent academic standing and who have the maturity to handle the added work needed to make necessary transitions. Pre-approval involves three steps: (1) the student submits a written statement to the Director of Global Education explaining why he or she wants to attend the program; (2) the student meets with the Director of Global Education to discuss program options and how an off-campus program will impact course selection; (3) the student's parents/guardians meet with the Director of Global Education to conclude the review process and to receive the approval to apply to an off-campus study program.

The student and his/her family are then responsible for completing the admission and financing applications directly with the off-campus program. The individual programs have the final choice of which of GFA's pre-approved candidates to accept through their admissions process.

The School may set a reasonable limit on the number of students who can attend off-campus programs during any given academic year. No student will be permitted to attend more than one semester or year-long program during his or her time in the Upper School at GFA.

Students who have completed an off-campus program are required to give a presentation about their experience to the full student body at a special assembly the following fall.

Families of students attending year-long programs will be required to put down a deposit to hold the student's place for the following year. Families of students attending semester-long programs will be required to pay pro-rated tuition at GFA based on the number of weeks the students are off-campus. In some cases, families will also need to hire a tutor to work with the student on material he or she may have missed while away.

In order to guarantee a smooth transition back to GFA, students returning from Fall Semester programs are expected to return to their GFA classes as soon as possible. Students departing on Spring Semester programs are expected to attend classes at GFA until their program start date.

Students will receive grades from the program at which they study, not GFA for the semester or year they are away.

### **Prizes**

GFA recognizes outstanding achievement by its students through awards given at the end of the year. Unless otherwise noted, all awards are voted on by departments or the US faculty.

Lucie Bedford Warren Award — To a senior who has achieved academic honors through consistent and conscientious application to academic matters, has contributed significantly at the same time to the extracurricular activities of our school, and who has typified the warmth and generosity of spirit of Mrs. Warren

Francis Burr Hardon Citizenship Award — To the senior who, in the judgment of the faculty, has demonstrated outstanding citizenship

David K. King Senior Scholarship Award — To the senior who has shown excellence of attitude and effort in his or her academic pursuits

Valedictorian Distinction — Awarded to the senior with the highest academic average based on junior and senior years at GFA. A student who spent part or all of junior or senior year studying at an approved off-campus program is eligible; that student's GPA will be adjusted to allow for accurate comparison.

Salutatorian Distinction — Awarded to the senior with the second highest academic average based on junior and senior years. A student who spent part or all of junior or senior year studying at an approved off-campus program is eligible; that student's GPA will be adjusted to allow for accurate comparison.

Class Prizes — (grades 9–11) For the greatest interest and most consistent effort in academic studies

Lynne A. Laukhuf Citizenship Prize — (grades 9–11) To the student whose citizenship, concern for others, and contributions to extracurricular activities best exemplify the high standards of Greens Farms Academy

The College Book Awards — To juniors for academic and extracurricular achievement

The Angela Van Acker Community Service Award — To a senior for initiative and commitment to community service at Greens Farms Academy and either local or global service to others

The Jane Kentor Dean '52 Alumni Award — To an underclassman for outstanding service to Greens Farms Academy

The Wagner Award — To the student with the highest academic achievement in the Upper School

The Cum Laude Society — A national honor society that inducts seniors and juniors who best exemplify the characteristics of superior scholarship and integrity. A faculty Cum Laude committee makes these decisions

The Barbara Hellwig Rose Outstanding Athlete Award — To the female student who has exhibited superior skills in athletics, while also demonstrating a respectable level of sportsmanship

The Edward J. Denes, Jr. Outstanding Athlete Award — To the male student who has exhibited superior skills in athletics, while also demonstrating a respectable level of sportsmanship

The Marijane W. Beltz Sportsmanship Award — To the female student who best exemplifies the high ideals of good sportsmanship as she pursues excellence in athletics

The David M. Perry Sportsmanship Award — To the male student who best exemplifies the high ideals of good sportsmanship as he pursues excellence in athletics

The Class Athletic Prize — To the male and female students in grades 9, 10, and 11 who have demonstrated sportsmanship, commitment, and excellence in athletics

The Distinguished Athlete Award — Given, when merited to recognize and honor extraordinary ability and achievement at an unparalleled level throughout one's high school career.

The World Perspectives Award — To a student who has demonstrated outstanding initiative, creativity, and scholarship in the study of global issues

The STEAM Award — To a student who has demonstrated an impressive integration of research, design and innovation to address a real-world problem

The Sustainability Award — To a student who has demonstrated exemplary curiosity about environmental issues and whose research showed thorough consideration of the environmental, social, and economic components of a sustainable solution to a local problem

The Visual Arts Award — To the senior who has demonstrated devotion, conscientious spirit, and the joy of exploration while pursuing the realization of his/her artistic potential

The Visual Arts Purchase Award — To a student who has produced an exceptional piece of original artwork, which will be added to the School's permanent collection

The Music Award — To a senior for contributing to the growth and success of the program through the highest proficiency and involvement in the classroom and in performance, and by seeking constantly to expand his or her knowledge of music

The Theatre Award — To a senior or seniors for superior dedication, involvement and commitment to the theatre program at Greens Farms Academy during her or his Upper School years.

Susan Conlan Mathematics Award — To the student who has shown the most interest in the study of mathematics

The GLaD Prize — To the student who has shown creativity and originality in mathematics.

The Barbara Conlan Biology Award — To the student who has shown the most interest in the study of biology

The Roger B. True Science Award — To the student who has shown deep interest and strong achievement in the study of science

The Roger B. True Research Award — To a rising junior or senior who will continue significant scientific research in independent study during the upcoming year

The Joan Loomis French Award — To the student who has demonstrated the greatest skill in understanding, writing, and speaking French combined with passion for the language

The Martha Laffaye Spanish Award — To the student who has shown the most proficiency in spoken and written Spanish and love and understanding of the language

The Mandarin Award — To the student who has demonstrated exceptional achievement and enthusiasm for the Chinese language and culture

The Ronald G. Whittle History Award — To the student who has best combined ability and interest in the study of history

The Creative Writing Award — To a junior or senior who has demonstrated excellence in creative writing, developed a love for the written word, and shared this love with the school community and/or the world at large

The Amy Schwartz and OJ Burns Award — To a student who has demonstrated a genuine love of language and literature and found his or her voice both in the written word and in collaborative discussions.

The Upton English Award — To the student who has approached the subject with perception, appreciation, and scholarly interest

## **Study Hall**

The following rules apply to study halls:

- The study hall room should be a quiet space; students may ask to use the breakout space for group study.
- Video games and watching movies are not allowed during study hall.
- Students being excused from study hall for the purpose of meeting with a teacher or taking make-up tests must present a note from their teacher upon their return to study hall.

## **Tutoring**

Tutoring may be worth considering after other avenues of extra help have been pursued; if a student is experiencing difficulty in a particular subject, and the parents and/or the student would like to explore tutoring in that subject, they should consult with the learning specialist, who can provide the family with a list of tutors with whom we have worked productively over a number of years, including both GFA faculty and non-GFA tutors. GFA faculty may not tutor their own students, nor may they tutor any student during the normal school day (7:45AM to 4PM). If GFA facilities are used for tutoring purposes, the tutoring must be completed by 7PM on Mondays through Fridays. There can be no tutoring conducted using GFA facilities on Saturdays or Sundays or over a long weekend. Tutors who are not members of the GFA faculty may not tutor on the GFA campus. Please note that we do not have a review or evaluation system for non-GFA tutors that assesses their pedagogical skills or places them under any kind of School supervision.

Families must communicate with the Head of Upper School as to the nature of the tutoring, so the School and the tutor can work together to best assist the student.

## **HONOR CODE**

I have an opportunity as a member of the GFA Upper School to conduct myself with integrity and honor in all of my actions and interactions at school; to respect my peers and teachers and their property; to take responsibility for our campus and our culture.

I will do my best to make the most of that opportunity.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Students are required to follow the guidelines set forth by their teachers and outlined in their course policy sheets, which are accessible on Schoology. Students are expected to turn in their own work. Submitting someone else's ideas as one's own inhibits the student's ability to learn and the teacher's ability to teach. It is dishonest and violates our Honor Code. The best way to avoid academic dishonesty is for students to talk to their teacher, advisor, and any other trusted adult to ask for help.

There are many forms of academic dishonesty. Below, we outline a few examples, to help students understand and avoid breaking the Honor Code.

- **Cheating:** Evading the work intended in any academic assignment by using unauthorized materials or by being dishonest in any way.
- **Plagiarism:** "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (Random House Dictionary)
- **Fabrication:** The construction or invention of any information that is false in any aspect of academic work.
- **Multiple Submission:** Submitting whole or partial parts of a work previously turned in as an assignment to fulfill a later or unrelated academic assignment.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Knowingly aiding another individual's act of academic dishonesty.
- **Unfair Advantage:** To obtain any forbidden or selective information in an academic exercise that other students do not have the means to obtain or which puts other students at a disadvantage. For example, if a student is taking a class that his/her sibling or friend has previously taken, the student may not seek any unfair advantage regarding



the course from that sibling. This includes the use of past homework, test or essay questions, paper topics, or other resources not made available to the rest of the class. Similarly, if a student uses a source--Google Translate, a graphing calculator, or an online source--that has not been explicitly allowed by the teacher for that assignment, that would constitute unfair advantage and academic dishonesty.

- **False Citation:** To credit an incorrect or false source for quotes and ideas that were knowingly not obtained from the source indicated.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration:** To work with any other person or gain any outside assistance on an academic exercise that was specifically assigned to be individual work or for which permission to collaborate was not obtained from the teacher.

We encourage students to ask parents for help, but students must always do their own work. Students are not permitted to gain unauthorized assistance from parents. Such assistance constitutes academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.

### **Deadlines, Communication, and Responsibility**

It is expected that students adhere to their teachers' deadlines and curriculum. However, if a student feels that he or she may not meet the deadline, he or she is encouraged to communicate clearly and in a timely manner with his or her teacher to establish a new deadline for the honorable completion of the assignment with a late penalty. It is better to complete an assignment honorably and lose points for lateness than to make a mistake regarding plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

### **ATHLETICS**

The GFA athletic program offers competitive teams and non-team programs. The competitive teams emphasize success through the development of skills, conditioning, hard work, positive self-esteem, and cooperative effort. Each team plays a schedule of interscholastic games. The teams practice in the afternoons, four or five days a week.

The non-team programs emphasize fitness and ability in a variety of "lifetime" sports by providing an opportunity to play and learn in non-competitive settings; these generally meet two to three days a week after school. In order to graduate from Greens Farms Academy, Upper School students are required to fulfill the following athletic program requirements:

- **Grade 9:** required program participation for three seasons, two of which must be on a team
- **Grade 10:** required program participation for three seasons, two of which must be on a team
- **Grade 11:** required program participation for two seasons, one of which must be on a team
- **Grade 12:** required program participation for two seasons

"Program participation" means participating in any of the team or non-team programs each season. This includes completing an approved Athletic Independent Study or Independent Activity Study, and participation in the annual musical or play.

"On a team" means participating on any GFA team offered each season. This includes serving as a full-time manager of a team (see "Team Managers" in this section), or satisfactorily completing an approved Athletic Independent Study. Students that participate in the annual musical or play will also be considered to be "on a team" out of respect for the collaboration that those productions require and the lessons our students learn in participating.

Students will satisfy their "program participation" requirement each season as listed below. In the event a student fails to satisfy the "program participation" requirement each season, the student must make up that season prior to graduating. If, at the completion of the student's senior year, the student has not fulfilled the "program participation" requirement, the student

must develop and fulfill a suitable program during the ensuing summer, with the approval of the Head of School, before the student can be considered as having graduated from GFA.

## **Teams**

### Fall

Interscholastic: Cross-country (girls and boys), Field Hockey (girls), Sailing (girls and boys)\*, Soccer (girls and boys), Fall Stage Production, Volleyball (girls)

Recreational: Personal Fitness

### Winter

Interscholastic: Basketball (girls and boys), Squash (girls and boys), Wrestling (girls and boys), Winter Stage Production

Recreational: Personal Fitness, Spinning\*, and Climbing\*

### Spring

Interscholastic: Golf (girls and boys), Lacrosse (girls and boys), Softball (girls), Sailing (girls and boys), Spring Stage Production, Tennis (girls and boys), Track and Field (girls and boys), Ultimate Frisbee (girls and boys)

Recreational: Personal Fitness

\*Participation in these programs requires travel to off-campus sites for class/practices and may also require payment of additional costs associated with hiring instructors, equipment/space rental, etc.

## **Athletic Team Credit**

Students will receive credit for being “on a team” if they participate in more than 85 percent of the team’s practices and more than 85 percent of the team’s games (not including fall pre-season practices). Note: this is an absolute number, i.e. it does not take into account whether the absence was “excused” or “unexcused.” Exceptions may be made in extreme cases at the Athletic Director’s discretion. If a student does not participate in 85 percent of the season, or quits the team, he or she will not receive credit and will have to make up the season.

A student who attends a practice or game, but who does not fully participate at the discretion of the coach, shall nevertheless be counted as being “present” for that practice/game. This includes a player “on the bench” who does not play at all and a player who cannot participate due to an injury or illness, but who is helping the team in some capacity with the coach’s knowledge and approval.

Students who receive credit for being “on a team” in the Upper School will receive points toward the Varsity Letter, Varsity Honor Society Sweater, Varsity Watch, and Excellence in Athletics Plaque (see Athletic Recognition Awards for explanation of letter, sweater, watch and plaque) as follows: 1 point for being on a JV team; 2 points for being on a varsity team.

Students will receive credit for participating in a non-team program if they do not accumulate “unexcused absences” totaling more than three for the season.

## **Athletics Add/Drop Periods**

Students may change their athletic selection during the first ten school days of each athletic season. A student who is considering such a request should speak with the Assistant Director of Athletics, Upper School as soon as possible.

Any changes must have the approval of the Assistant Director of Athletics, Upper School and the coach/supervisors involved. After the add/drop period, any change must be approved by the

Director of Athletics & P.E. and will only be permitted in the event of extraordinary circumstances out of respect for the experience of students that have been committed to a team throughout the season.

### **Evaluation Periods**

If the number of students enrolled to participate in a varsity sport exceeds the number of students practicable due to space, safety, and other important considerations, then an evaluation period will be established to determine that sport's varsity roster. Evaluations will occur at the beginning of each season, with predetermined start and end dates that will be made clear to each student.

In such an event, roster assignments will be determined by our coaching staff. All efforts will be made by the Athletic Department to accommodate students who are not selected for the Varsity roster in their alternate choice (i.e. playing on a sub-varsity team; playing on another Varsity team that has roster space; participating in a non-competitive Athletic offering for credit).

7th and 8th graders interested in trying out for a varsity team may participate in an evaluation period with permission (please see the Middle School Athletics section for more information on the participation of 7th and 8th Graders in Upper School Athletics).

### **Sub-varsity Teams**

The sub-varsity experience at GFA prioritizes providing each student an opportunity to be a part of a team-oriented culture that emphasizes the ways in which players can help each other become better teammates both on and off the field and the unique bonds that form between teammates during games, practices, and bus rides. While the expectation for each student is that they will do their best in practices and games, camaraderie and working with peers to accomplish a collective goal are the focus.

GFA endeavors to provide every student that elects to play a sport that opportunity, and will offer multiple sub-varsity teams when possible. However, if the number of students enrolled to participate in a sub-varsity sport exceeds the number of students practicable due to space, safety, and other important considerations, priority will be given to 9th/10th graders, new GFA students, and students that participated in the evaluation period but were not selected for the Varsity team.

All efforts will be made by the Athletic Department to accommodate students who are not able to participate in their chosen sub-varsity sport (i.e. playing on another varsity or sub-varsity team that has roster space or participating in a non-competitive Athletic offering for credit).

### **Attendance and Absences**

During a season of participation, attendance at every practice and game is required, including weekend games. This is essential both for the integrity of the program and for the quality of the student's experience. All efforts should be made to meet this requirement. Should a student decide to "cut" or be late to a practice or game with no discussion with his/her coach, the consequence will be sitting out the next game or other suitable consequences at the discretion of the coach.

Note: If a student misses two or more academic classes on any given day, he/she may not participate in a practice or game that day without first receiving the permission of the Dean of Students or Head of Upper School.

Scheduling conflicts: Parents are urged to check their child's practice and game schedule before scheduling doctor's appointments or other activities so that scheduling conflicts can be avoided. However, we recognize that from time to time unavoidable scheduling conflicts will arise. It is very important that these conflicts be discussed with the coach as soon as they are known. Clear, advance communication with the coach allows the coach the opportunity to discuss the absence

with the student, adjust practice, create a game plan in ample time, and minimize the amount the student will miss.

Being excused: The time may arise when a student will need to be excused from a practice or game. The procedures to follow depend on the circumstances, and are listed below:

- Only the coach can excuse a student from attending a practice or game, with the exception of the circumstances described below. Normally, such permission will require a note beforehand from the parent or, in the case of a serious illness or injury, a physician. If a conflict suddenly arises and the student cannot locate the coach, the student should speak with a member of the athletic department.
- If the student does not come to school on a given day, the Head of Upper School will determine whether the absence is “excused,” “allowed,” or “unexcused,” and the coach will rely on that determination.
- If the student is at school and needs to leave prior to completing all classes due to illness, he or she must get written approval (a note) from the school nurse or the Head of Upper School. When possible, the student should make every reasonable effort to talk with the coach or a member of the Athletic Department before leaving and to give them the note.
- If the student completes all classes but feels too ill to attend a practice or game, the student must bring a note from the school nurse to the coach before the practice/game begins. If the student cannot locate the school nurse, he or she should go directly to the coach.

Returning to play after an illness/injury: If a student has been removed from play by a physician, the Athletic Director, coach, or GFA’s Athletic Trainer must receive written permission from a physician for the student before being allowed to return to play.

Satisfying the non-team athletic “program participation” requirement is based on determining whether absences are “excused” or “unexcused.” To assist in planning and to provide predictability and consistency in these determinations, coaches will use these guidelines:

An “excused absence” is any absence for which the coach has given specific permission directly to a student before the practice or game, or for which the School has excused a student. An “unexcused absence” is any other absence (including an “allowed absence”).

Students will normally be excused for:

- serious illness or injury (with a note from school nurse, trainer, parent, or doctor. Note: The coach, after talking with the student, may require or request that the student attend part or all of a practice or game);
- serious family situation (religious observance, family emergency, etc.);
- school-related required activities, i.e., activities that are required and that only meet at certain specified times, such as a class trip, ERB testing, etc.;
- other justifiable reasons at the discretion of the coach after full discussion with the student, and parent if necessary, well in advance of the practice/game; or
- one doctor’s appointment and one college visit in a season.

Students will normally not be excused for:

- minor illness or injury that does not prevent attending a practice/game (in the judgment of the school nurse, trainer or coach);
- not having the required clothing/equipment at school;
- non-GFA-required activities (such as town team games, musical instrument lessons, karate classes, etc.);
- non-emergency family situations (attending sibling’s homecoming, leaving early/returning late for/from vacation, etc.).

Transfer Points: Current students who have attended other high schools will be credited with appropriate points for their participation on athletic teams at the high school level once they play on a GFA team. To receive this credit, students must provide the Athletic Director with

written confirmation from their parent or former school certifying the student's level of participation.

### **College-Bound Student-Athletes**

Most universities and colleges offer intercollegiate sports that are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization founded in 1906 that has established rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid. The NCAA has three membership divisions: Division I, II, and III. Institutions are members of a division according to size and scope of the athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships. Division I and II programs can offer athletic scholarships in addition to need- and merit-based academic scholarships. Division III programs can offer need- and merit-based academic scholarships, but no athletic scholarships are offered. The Ivy League (DI) typically only offers need-based aid.

If a student is planning to enroll in college as a freshman and wishes to participate in Division I or II sports, they must be certified through the NCAA Eligibility Center. The Eligibility Center analyzes a student's academic information and determines if they meet the NCAA's initial eligibility requirements. Students should start this process early, usually by the end of junior year. See a member of the College Guidance Office for specific information.

All coaches, student-athletes, and their parents should be aware of NCAA rules regarding recruiting. These regulations include:

- When/what types of communication may occur (email, phone/text message, fax, face-to-face, etc.) between college coaches and prospective student-athletes
- When off-campus contact (frequently defined as face-to-face interaction beyond "hello") is permitted between college coaches and prospective student-athletes
- When unofficial visits to an NCAA member institution's campus may occur
- When official visits to an NCAA member institution's campus may occur

If a student aspires to participate in athletics at any level (Division I, II, or III), he or she should reach out to both the Athletic Director and the College Guidance Office. They will help counsel the family through the process and ensure compliance with NCAA rules and regulations.

### **Independent Study**

An Athletic Independent Study is normally granted to a student who wishes to participate in an athletic activity not currently offered at GFA. These must be structured athletic programs that meet regularly for a minimum of three weekdays and in which the athletes are coached and given opportunities to compete or otherwise utilize their skills. A student can fulfill his or her "team requirement" if the independent study involves a full-time commitment to a team sport. An Athletic Independent Study is not granted for taking "lessons" in a sport or athletic activity (e.g., tennis, swimming, horseback riding, karate, etc.).

Permission for an Athletic Independent Study may be requested by submitting the Athletic Independent Study Proposal Form (available on the GFA parent portal) before the first day of the applicable season at the latest. At the end of the season, to receive credit for fulfilling the athletic independent study, the student must submit the Independent Study Follow-Up Form (available on the GFA parent portal) to the activity's coach/instructor and return it by the appointed deadline. Failure to do so will result in the students receiving no credit for the independent study and may also jeopardize future independent study requests. No points toward the Varsity Letter or Varsity Honor Society are given for independent studies.

Student engagement in the GFA community through partnership with faculty, staff, and peers outside of the classroom is a critical part of the Upper School experience. As a result, rising 9th grade students and new students may be granted an Athletic Independent Study credit for no more than two seasons during their first year in the Upper School. Students are invited to meet with the Assistant Athletic Director, Upper School to discuss appropriate GFA's offerings and opportunities for substantive community engagement.

## **Locker Rooms**

The School is not responsible or liable for students' personal property. Be sure the student's name is clearly marked on every piece of clothing and equipment. The School will issue each student a locker and a lock in the locker room. Students should keep lockers locked at all times and should not share the combination with anyone else. Students should put all gear in their locker after every use. All gear left out of lockers will be placed in the locker room lost-and-found box.

## **Managers**

Juniors and seniors, and on a few occasions freshmen and sophomores, may satisfy one season of their athletic requirement by being a team's full-time manager. This requires that the student be present at all games, attend practices at the discretion of the coach, and do the work expected of a manager. Team managers will receive one point toward their GFA letter and/or varsity honor society sweater. Normally, students may be a team manager only one season each year.

## **Medical Responsibilities**

**Physical Examination Requirements:** To participate in any athletic practice or game, including GFA's pre-season practices, a student must have had a physical examination within 13 months of participation, and the blue Physical Examination Form must be on file with the school nurse before the student can be allowed to participate in any athletic practice or game.

**Student Emergency Medical Information Form:** Families are also required to file the Student Medical Emergency Information Form with the school nurse, a copy of which is given to coaches. Each coach must have copies of these forms for all players at all times during practices, scrimmages or games. The Student Medical Emergency Information Form contains valuable information about allergies and tetanus shots, emergency contact numbers and consent statements, and must be on file with the school nurse before students can be allowed to participate in any athletic practice or game (including pre-season practices).

## **Practices/Recreational Programs**

Most Upper School teams meet Monday–Friday, beginning at 3:30PM, and ending by 5:30PM. Most team practices occur on campus. Some teams' practices such as basketball and tennis may run later on some days due to sharing facilities or using off-campus facilities. Coaches will inform their athletes of practice times and locations at the outset of each season. Most recreational programs meet three times per week after school. Instructors will inform their students of exact meeting times and locations at the outset of each season.

## **Practice Dress**

Beginning in grade 5, each GFA student must purchase a GFA reversible tank top, or "pinnie," that will be used by all teams in each season in the Middle and Upper School Athletic program. These pinnies will be readily available year-round for purchase online as needed.

GFA coaches will articulate requirements for practice dress, which will include an upper-body covering, lower-body covering, sport- and field-appropriate footwear, socks, and any sport-specific protective equipment in line with the respective governing body's best practices and safety standards.

Unless necessitated by practical, safety, or team unity concerns articulated by the coach, students are asked to exercise the same judgment as is required by the Upper School Dress Code with regard to their practice wear and will be subject to the same standards as articulated in the relevant sections above.

## **Prizes**

Certain Upper School players on each team may be recognized for exemplary achievement and contribution with special awards. The following awards are presented at the season-end athletic recognition assemblies, to which all families are welcome:

**Varsity Letter:** A Varsity letter is presented to each athlete who accumulates seven points through participation in athletics.

**Varsity Honor Society Sweater:** The White Sweater, emblematic of membership in the Varsity Honor Society, is presented to each athlete who accumulates 12 points through participation in athletics.

**Varsity Watch:** A Varsity watch is presented to an athlete who accumulates 18 points through participation in athletics.

**Excellence in Athletics Award:** Presented to the athlete who accumulates 20 or more points through participation in athletics.

Points System:

Varsity Team: 2 points

JV Team Participation: 1 point

Manager (full time): 1 point

**Coach's Award:** This is the highest award given by a coach and reflects the School's belief that a "good athlete" possesses both athletic skills and a positive, supportive attitude. It is presented for each team at the season-end Upper School Athletic Recognition nights to athletes who, in the opinion of their coaches, deserve special recognition for their contribution/achievement during that season. The criteria for this award include:

- the athlete's attitude, commitment to improvement and personal excellence, sportsmanship, cooperation, and responsibility
- the athlete's performance in the sport

**Most Valuable Player Award (MVP):** presented to the varsity athlete who has been the most valuable to the team, primarily by virtue of his/her athletic performance and knowledge of the sport

**Most Improved Player Award (MIP):** presented to the athlete who has made the greatest improvement on the team.

**The Gaynor Cup:** presented to the varsity squash player who has demonstrated enthusiasm, leadership, skill, and dedication to the game of squash

**Post-season honors (All-League, All-State, All-New England, etc.):** At the end of each season, the most outstanding varsity players in the league will be selected as All-League players. Selection is made by the varsity coaches in the Fairchester and New England Prep School leagues, who base their decisions primarily on a player's performance over the season, but factor in their sportsmanship and attitude as well. Players on varsity teams competing in NEPSAC may be considered for additional honors such as All-State, All-New England, and All-American. In certain sports, outstanding players are selected as All-Star players and play in an All-Star Game.

## **Transportation**

Greens Farms Academy provides transportation to and from all away contests and off-campus practice facilities in school-owned vans driven by properly licensed drivers. Students must ride the team van to and from all games and practices and must follow all rules governing proper behavior on school vans to ensure a safe trip.

Occasionally, it is necessary to transport some students in private cars driven by parents of team members. Students will not be permitted to ride in such a car unless we have an Omnibus Permission Form (available on the GFA website) on file. Students who plan to ride home with their parents after a game should have their parents either send in a written note to that effect or speak directly with the coach. Under no circumstances will a coach leave a student at a game site without the parent present. Should the parent not arrive, the coach will bring the student back to GFA with the team.

There may be a reasonable situation where the student will want to drive his/her car to a game or off-campus practice site. To do so, the student must have a parent's signed Omnibus Permission Form on file (available on the GFA website). The parent must also speak with the

Director of Athletics. We discourage students from driving to games unless it is absolutely necessary.

### **Uniforms and Equipment**

Game uniforms (normally the jersey) will be supplied by the Athletic Department. Clothing/equipment that must be supplied by the student shall be articulated in advance of the relevant season.

All school uniforms and equipment issued to students will remain the property of the School, and must be returned promptly at the end of the season. It is the students' responsibility to wash their uniforms (generally warm water/cold rinse) and to care for uniforms and equipment properly during the season. It will be the student's financial responsibility to replace any unreturned, lost, or damaged uniform/equipment issued. No uniforms or equipment for the next season can be issued to students until they have returned their previous season's uniform/equipment, or until they have paid the invoice.

### **Other Athletic Information**

**Athletic Trainer:** A certified athletic trainer is on campus daily. The trainer is available for handling injuries when they occur, diagnosing and treating minor injuries, developing and monitoring rehabilitation programs, and educating coaches and athletes in injury prevention and wellness care.

**League Affiliation and Standings:** Greens Farms Academy is a member of the Fairchester Athletic Association (FAA), which is composed of independent day schools in Fairfield and Westchester Counties, and the New England Preparatory School Athletic Conference (NEPSAC), which is composed of independent day and boarding schools in New England. On a sport-by-sport, year-to-year basis, we decide whether to commit a varsity team to a full varsity schedule in one or both of the leagues in which we compete. There is no official league play or standings for sub-varsity or Middle School teams.

**Team Games (attendance, schedule and pick up):** Student athletes are required to attend all of their team's games, including weekend games. Attendance and participation is very important for the integrity of the program and for the quality of each student's experience. A game schedule for each season is available on the School's website. Once a student knows which team he/she is playing on, families should go through the schedule to ensure that no scheduling conflicts exist. If a scheduling conflict cannot be resolved, the parent should contact the coach immediately.

Should weather or some other reason cause us to cancel a game, we attempt to make that decision by 1:00PM on the day of the game in question. At that time, we will also alert students as to whether their team will meet that day and for how long. Students should try to notify their parents of any major change in plans. Schedules on the website will be updated with game changes, make-up game information, etc. Players and their families should check the schedule on the website weekly on Sundays to confirm the following week's game schedule. Always feel free to email or call the athletic offices to confirm games, sites, times, and directions.