



GOAL Student Handbook

2024-2025

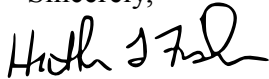
Dear Students and Parents,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Germantown Online Academy of Learning. We will have an outstanding year of learning, growing, and serving our community. This handbook will be your primary source for information about our expectations for students, our program and services and the roles and responsibilities of students and parents in the online educational process.

This edition contains information on topics that impact our students on a daily basis as it relates to GOAL. Students and parents are also responsible for adhering to the GMSD policies, guidelines, and procedures. This information is provided in the [GMSD Student Handbook](#). The GOAL Student/Parent handbook includes information specific to GOAL and the online learning format.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather L. Fisher'.

Heather L. Fisher, Ed.D

Principal

Germantown Online Academy of Learning

Germantown, TN 38138

Heather.Fisher@gmsdk12.org

GOAL's Mission

Growth: Maximizing student growth through data-driven decision making.

Opportunities/Ownership: Providing students with unique and supportive learning opportunities while cultivating student ownership of learning.

Academics: Offering rigorous academic curriculum.

Leadership: Developing individualized leadership skills in order to be competitive in job/career markets.

GOAL's Purpose:

Preparing our students for “their” tomorrow

GOAL is a public virtual school. We serve students in grades K-12. A public virtual school is a school that uses technology to deliver a significant portion of instruction to its students via the internet in a virtual or a remote setting.

School Overview

GOAL combines rigorous, technology-delivered instructional experience. Instruction by a highly qualified, Tennessee-certified, professional teacher with high expectations, delivers an experience that will enable students to cross the divide to a future empowered by a successful education.

GOAL offers a semester course schedule. Students will be enrolled in a minimum of 6 courses and a maximum of 8 courses per semester. We encourage students to keep up daily with course instruction and assignments. All courses must be 100% completed by the end of a semester.

Each student will benefit from the direction provided through a professional learning community composed of TN certified course instructors, GMSD Learning Coaches, GOAL Administration and enriched by the daily support and encouragement of a parent/guardian.

Students will be enrolled in 100% online learning. Synchronous classes will be provided weekly in core courses and bi-weekly in course electives. Asynchronous learning will be available 24/7. Each course will have assignment deadlines outlined. Unless otherwise noted, late assignments will post an automatic zero. Once students submit the assignments and it is graded the revised score will be posted in Pearson.

.Course instructors are available during office hours and webmail.. GMSD Learning Coaches in grades 9-12 are available during designated office hours, before or after school.

The program depends upon the commitment of the student and parent to meet their responsibilities, communicate as needed with course instructors, GMSD Learning Coaches, and/or GOAL Administration. Parents/Guardians must monitor student progress a minimum of once a week, by logging into Connexus learning management system, and reviewing student grades and pacing of assignment completion.

GOAL Commitments:

- Students will receive individualized instruction from a highly qualified teacher.
- The school will operate with the best interests of the student in mind.
- Students, parents/guardians will be contacted on a regular basis.
- Community events will be organized to foster social interaction.
- Individual Education Plans and Free and Appropriate Public Education requirements will be followed to meet the special needs of each student.
- The school will make every attempt to incorporate all stakeholders' feedback to make improvements
- The school will provide students with highly qualified teachers, a structured instructional format.

The following responsibilities and expectations are in addition to the GMSD Student Handbook. GOAL students must adhere to GMSD Student Handbook Guidelines and guidelines that are specific to the virtual setting.

Expectations of GOAL Students:

It is the expectation of GOAL students that course deadlines will be met. Students will keep on pace with all coursework. In the event that students have questions about their coursework, they need to set up times to meet with their teacher to go over questions.

In the event that a student is struggling, the student or parent needs to reach out to their teachers, 9-12, their Eagle Hour Learning Coach, and/or Dr. Fisher. We are here to support you.

In the event that you are having technology issues or lacking Internet access, notify Dr. Fisher and/or Caleb Wise immediately, so that you can receive assistance. Lacking Internet service is not considered an excused absence, you'll need to coordinate a plan with Dr. Fisher to resolve this issue.

Academic Support

The following academic support will be provided to students enrolled in GOAL:

Tier 1 instruction: Course instructors will provide individualized instruction, office hours to support student needs, availability to answer student questions/address concerns.

Tier 2/Tier 3 intervention: In the event that a student isn't making appropriate progress, GOAL will have an interventionist to provide support and progress monitoring during the year.

Live Tutor: Students will have access to online tutoring for any course in which they are enrolled.

Eagle Hour: High School Students will have opportunities to meet with a GMSD teacher before or after school to discuss grades, study skills, and plans to remain on track during the school year. Seniors will work with Dr. Fisher throughout the year to review grades, transcripts, and ensure that Seniors remain on course to meet all graduation requirements. Students in grades K-8 will meet regularly with our GOAL interventionist, counselor, and our Dr. Fisher to ensure that students are working both steadily and successfully.

Access to Technology:

All GOAL students will have GMSD administered devices provided for students to complete coursework. These devices will be provided prior to the first day and will be returned on the last day of the instructional calendar to GMSD.

Use of Internet

- The GMSD Acceptable Use Procedures should be followed at all times.
- A student who violates any GMSD acceptable use policy or procedure will be subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- Students have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive, or display when using the district's network, devices, Internet access, email system, or other technological resources owned or issued by the district. This applies whether the resources are used at school or elsewhere, including personal use. Users should not assume that files or communications created, transmitted, or displayed using district technological resources, or stored on servers or on the storage mediums of individual devices, will be private. The district may, without notice, (1) monitor, track, and/or log network access, communications, and use; (2) monitor and allocate file server space; and (3) access, review, copy, store, delete, or disclose the content of all user files, regardless of medium, the content of electronic mailboxes, and system outputs, such as printouts, for any lawful purpose. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, maintaining system integrity, security, or functionality, ensuring compliance with District policy and applicable laws and regulations, protecting the district from liability, and complying with public records requests. District personnel shall monitor online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned device.

See [GMSD Blended Learning Manual/GMSD Student Handbook](#)

Technology Requirements

GMSD will provide devices to all students enrolled in GOAL. Parents/Guardians will need to be able to provide Internet access for students to access instruction. In the event that Internet access is not available, please contact Dr. Heather Fisher.

Bullying/Cyberbullying/Hazing (See GMSD Student Handbook)

Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment - An act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and the act has the effect of:

1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
2. Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;

3. Causing emotional distress to a student or students
4. Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment may also be unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, nationality, origin, color, gender, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.

Cyber-Bullying- A form of bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or other wireless telecommunication devices, text messaging, emails, social networking sites, instant messaging, videos, web sites or fake profiles.

Hazing - An intentional or reckless act by a student or group of students that is directed against any other student(s) that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s) or that induces or coerces a student to endanger his/her mental or physical health or safety. Coaches and other employees of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities. "Hazing" does not include customary athletic events or similar contest or competitions and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any organization.

Attendance:

Students attending GOAL are required to comply with the compulsory attendance requirements set forth in TCA 49.6.3007

- All students attending GOAL must complete 6.5 hours of instruction available each instructional day.
- Students are expected to keep up with their course pacing and course deadlines as part of their attendance.
- Students are required to attend homeroom meetings each morning
- In the event that a student is absent, unable to attend homeroom or complete coursework, the parent will need to provide an excuse letter.
- If an excuse letter is not provided, the absence is considered unexcused.

- After ten (10) days of absences (excused or unexcused) a doctor's note will need to be provided for student absences.

Tier Attendance Intervention- Addressing Truancy

In accordance with GMSD policy 4.213: GOAL implements a three-tier approach to truancy. Students receive warning letters at day three (3), day five (5), day ten (10), and day fifteen (15) when unexcused absences have been accrued.

First Tier:

Parents receive warning letters, once a student has missed three (3) unexcused days of school. Following five (5) days of unexcused absences a student begins Tier One attendance. A parent/student/ school designee conference will be held. The student will continue Tier One intervention for the remainder of the school year.

Second Tier:

Following ten (10) days of unexcused absences a student begins Tier Two intervention, a conference will be held with the parent, student, Student Services designee and School designee. The student will continue Tier Two intervention for the remainder of the school year.

- An attendance contract will be developed
- The student will need to meet with GMSD school counselor
- Other supports/services may be implemented

Third Tier:

Following fifteen (15) days of unexcused absences a student begins Tier Three intervention, a conference will be held with the parent, student, Student Services designee and School designee. Student absences will be reported to Juvenile Court, Shelby County. The student will continue Tier Three intervention for the remainder of the school year.

Eligibility Requirements for Returning GOAL Students and Out of District Students:

1. Student participation in a virtual education program shall be at the discretion of GMSD.
2. Student eligibility and participation requirements for the GMSD virtual education program are as follows:
3. Maintaining a 2.3 GPA at the High School Level
4. The student doesn't require credit recovery for the upcoming school year.
5. Students must have a passing grade in core classes/ and/or all credit bearing classes for the year.
6. High school students must be on track to graduate with their cohort.
7. The student must maintain an appropriate attendance record with less than five (5) unexcused absences per school year.
8. A parent/guardian will be available during the instructional day.
9. The student must have access to reliable internet to complete daily assignments. (Not having Internet access is not considered an excused absence)
10. The student must participate in required in-person state testing/district assessments.
11. The student must complete required district benchmarks when assigned during the year.
12. The student must be promoted to the next grade level in order to remain enrolled with GOAL.

Honor Statement:

A virtual learner must accept the responsibility for ensuring the integrity of all school work.

It is expected that the work you complete is completely and solely your own. Violations of the Honor Code will result in the same consequences for virtual students as for traditional students.

Honor Code:

1. Students will not plagiarize any part of published materials, essays, or the work of another.
2. Students will not give or receive aid on quizzes, tests, reports, projects, exams, or any other assignments for which a teacher does not explicitly permit peer collaboration.
3. Students will not copy or allow their work to be copied.
4. GOAL Administration will uphold standards of honesty and integrity.

(See the GMSD Virtual Learning Student Handbook for the complete breakdown of Honor Code expectations)

First Offense-Honor Code Violation

The first time a student is determined to have plagiarized or cheated, the student will receive a grade of zero for the assessment temporarily, and a WebMail message from the teacher outlining the offense and the steps the student can take next to regain credit. Once the student shows understanding of plagiarism, cheating, and the subject matter, the student may regain up to full credit by re-submitting the assessment or equivalent. If a student's first Honor Code violation occurs on a final exam, the student will receive a zero for the questions related to the violation and not be able to revise any of the work that had the violation.

Second Offense-Honor Code Violation

The second time a student is determined to have plagiarized or cheated, he/she will receive a grade of zero for the entire assessment and a WebMail message from the teacher outlining the offense, and steps that the student can take to regain credit. The student must arrange a time to meet with the teacher synchronously to review and show understanding of the Honor Code and subject matter. Once the student demonstrates understanding, the student may regain partial credit, up to 50% of the assignment's total score. If a student's second Honor Code violation occurs on a final exam, the student will receive a 50% reduction of their total test score and not be able to revise any of the work that had the violation. For example, if the student earned 80% on the final, including a zero for the question(s) in concern, the student receives a score of 40% for the final.

Third and Subsequent Offenses-Honor Code Violation

The third time a student is determined to have plagiarized or cheated, he/she will receive a zero and will not have the opportunity to redo the question/assignment. If a student's third or subsequent Honor Code violation occurs on a final exam, the student will receive a zero for the full test and not be able to revise any of the work that had the violation. Such repeated offenses of academic dishonesty by a student may result in a recommendation by Pearson OBL that the student be considered a repeat violator of program or district policy. The program or district will be responsible for addressing this violation.

Interventions for Students Struggling to Maintain Eligibility- Policy 4.212

The following intervention strategies will be implemented if a student is struggling to maintain the eligibility requirements:

- Required Weekly Meetings
- Required in-person completion of work, until core courses and/or credit bearing courses are passing.
- Other interventions as determined by GOAL administration.

Removal of Students Who Fail to Maintain Eligibility Requirements:

If a student fails to maintain the eligibility requirements, the following process will be implemented:

- Ongoing communication between school administration, parents, students
- A formal letter will be sent to parent/guardian regarding decision made.

Student Responsibilities

- ☐ Utilize a work-space free from distractions
- ☐ Meet deadlines for submitting assignments
- ☐ Attend Daily Homeroom, unless excused by Dr. Fisher
- ☐ Communicate with teachers/GMSD Learning Coaches when you have questions/concerns.

- ☐ Attend scheduled meetings with GOAL administrators, instructors, academic advisors or interventionist.
- ☐ Check grades daily.
- ☐ Keep up with course pacing
- ☐ Maintain individual daily GOAL schedule
- ☐ Adhering to GMSD student handbook guidelines, policies and procedures/GOAL student handbook guidelines and procedures.
- ☐ Complete Student Orientation Course
- ☐ I understand that all state testing requirements and district benchmarking will need to be completed. Some assessments will require in-person attendance.

Parent Responsibilities

- ☐ Provide a work-space free from distractions for your student.
 - ☐ Maintain Internet/network requirements for system operations or alert Dr. Fisher in the event that you do not have Internet access
 - ☐ Check grades weekly
 - ☐ Provide Parent note/Doctor note in the event that your student is unable to attend a daily GOAL Morning Meeting, unless your child has been excused by Dr. Fisher
 - ☐ Assist your student in developing an individual daily GOAL schedule
 - ☐ Communicate with teachers/GMSD learning coaches when you have questions/need additional information
 - ☐ Oversee student attendance, assignment submission, Morning meeting attendance, Live Lesson attendance, scheduling parent/teacher conferences
 - ☐ I understand that my student must adhere to GMSD student handbook guidelines, policies and procedures/GOAL student handbook guidelines and procedures.
 - ☐ Complete Parent Orientation Course by August 16th
 - ☐ I understand that all state testing requirements and district benchmarking will need to be completed. Some assessments will require in-person attendance.

Inclement Weather

In the event that GMSD is required to close due to inclement weather, Germantown Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) will be closed. Attendance won't be taken when school is closed, but it is strongly recommended that students maintain deadlines. We aren't able to black out days for inclement weather. Morning Meetings will not be required when school is closed.

Special Populations

The individual needs of students with an IEP, 504 or ILP will be addressed.

A meeting will be held with teams (IEP team, teacher/parent/student) to review plans, accommodations and allowable programs/services. Development of IEP's, 504's, and ILP's are team decisions.

Excusal from homeroom:

GOAL students are expected to attend homeroom Monday-Thursday. During homeroom announcements are made and students have the opportunity to interact with each other.

In the event that a student needs to miss homeroom, the parent or guardian will need to email Ms. Jodi Carnathan (Jodi.Carnathan@gmsdk12.org).

Students may be excused for the following reasons from homeroom:

Students may earn the opportunity to miss homeroom through completing service activities.

Incentives that may be earned during the year.

Excused absences.

Students do not have any late assignments or D's/F's for interims/end of quarter grades.

Students will receive an email that they have been excused from homeroom.

Failure to complete course work:

In the event that a student falls behind in coursework, the student will need to attend GOAL *in person* until grades improve and the required work is completed.

Virtual Education Policy

[Please review Policy 4.213](#)

