



# GARRISON FOREST SCHOOL

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK  
2025-2026

This Handbook is provided as a guide to the policies of Garrison Forest School (“GFS”, “the School” or “Garrison Forest School”). It is not intended to create a contract or to limit the School’s right to direct its activities. All employment at Garrison Forest School is at-will. The policies contained in the Handbook are subject to change at any time without prior notice. This Handbook and the policies contained herein supersede any prior policies.

### **Nondiscrimination Clause**

Garrison Forest School is an equal opportunity employer. Employees are recruited, hired, and promoted without regard to age, race (including certain hairstyles associated with race), color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, gender identity or expression or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. It is the School’s policy to prohibit and prevent any form of discrimination or harassment, including, but not limited to, sexual and racial harassment, and the School will not tolerate any such incidents or conduct. Violation of this policy will result in corrective action up to and including discharge. Please see the Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment in this Handbook for additional related information.

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# Introduction

## Welcome

Welcome to Garrison Forest School! Since 1910, Garrison Forest School has provided an indelible education experience designed to help students achieve their fullest potential and live lives of purpose. It is through the dedication of the faculty, staff, and administration that a high standard of educational excellence has been upheld over the years.

## Mission Statement and Philosophy

At Garrison Forest School, we prepare our students in and out of the classroom to thrive in a complex, changing world by:

- Challenging them to strive for academic excellence and to grow into informed, independent, and creative thinkers.
- Cultivating an authentic and resilient sense of self, grounded in respect and integrity.
- Creating a diverse and inclusive community built on a spirit of caring.
- Inspiring young women to lead and to serve with passion, purpose, and joy.

Our motto informs our mission: *Esse Quam Videri*, To Be Rather Than To Seem.

## Core Values

Our Motto matters. *Esse Quam Videri*, “To Be Rather Than To Seem,” has inspired our community since Garrison Forest School’s founding in 1910. These five Core Values, created and adopted by the GFS community in 2015, guide how we teach and learn, connect and collaborate, serve and succeed. Underscoring our Mission and Statement of Respect, these five values are a road map for every member of our community, adult and child, to be our best selves. The division-wide faculty and staff Core Values Committee develops age-appropriate curricular and co-curricular programming around the Core Values.

Be Authentic.

- Take pride in your unique personality, spirit and character.
- Take responsibility for your words and actions.
- Be honest and fair with yourself and others.

Be Brave.

- Have the courage to think and act independently.
- Take risks and persevere when facing challenges.
- Advocate for yourself and others.

Be Compassionate.

- Understand others’ circumstances and viewpoints.
- Accept others’ differences and celebrate their contributions.
- Promote a peaceful, caring and safe community.

Be Curious.

- Get excited about new ideas, places and people.

- Create and innovate.
- Ask questions and participate fully in your education.

Be Spirited.

- Show passion and joy in school, play and all endeavors.
- Connect and collaborate.
- Congratulate and celebrate others' successes.

### **Statement of Respect**

The Garrison Forest School community is deeply committed to equity, honesty, kindness, and respect as part of the educational experience. To this end, we

- Celebrate diversity both within our community and our curriculum.
- Are concerned for the well-being of all people.
- Seek to build the self-esteem of all people.
- Aspire to promote the understanding of all people.

We recognize the dignity and worth of all individuals. To protect their rights we confront bias, prejudice, and discrimination. Garrison Forest School does not condone any behavior which is inconsistent with these tenets. We believe that it is unacceptable for our spoken and written language and behavior to demean anyone's physical characteristics, as well as anyone's ethnic, gender, personal, racial, religious, or sexual identities. We, as individuals, must take responsibility for our words and deeds and respect all people.

### **The History of Garrison Forest School**

In 1910, Mary Moncrieffe Livingston, a teacher from New York, moved to Maryland with a mission and a vision: to found a much-needed primary through twelfth grade school for the local community. The educational model she espoused remains a nationally distinctive program nearly a century later.

Garrison Forest then was an all-girls' day school, Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade, with a residential program for older girls and a coed primary program. Today, the model remains nearly identical with the addition of a vibrant international boarding program and two-year-olds as the youngest Garrison Forest students. The motto Miss Livingston chose for her burgeoning school, *Esse Quam Videri*—To Be Rather Than To Seem, perfectly captured her vision for a school steeped in academic rigor while infused with exceptional character building.

Since its founding, Garrison Forest School has redefined itself in response to the challenges of the day. Miss Livingston grew her school in size and reputation, and in 1929, she passed the mantle to Co-headmistresses Jean G. Marshall and Nancy J. Offutt. Under their spirited and firmly grounded leadership, the School not only survived the Great Depression, it thrived, adding new students and attracting a top-caliber faculty. For 30 years, Miss Marshall and Miss Offutt guided Garrison Forest, building a national boarding reputation, excellent academic programs, and a highly competitive riding program.

In 1960, the School hired its first male headmaster, Archibald "Tad" Montgomery III, who expanded the residential program, campus, and enduring tradition of community outreach. Garrison Forest School's Service League was founded by students in 1942 as a response to helping

on the home front. Decades earlier, students helped in the local fields while farmers were fighting in World War I. Today, Service League assists dozens of regional, national, and international agencies and causes through student volunteerism.

Lawrence “Larry” L. Hlavacek served as Headmaster from 1968-1978, shepherding the School through a difficult financial time, played out against the challenging cultural backdrop of the 1970s. As boarding school enrollments dipped nationwide and many girls’ schools shut their doors or merged with other institutions, Garrison Forest held steady by returning to its founding model of educating boys and girls at the preschool level. In 1950, to accommodate a growing Upper School program, the School closed its primary department, but in 1975, the Valley School, a local, coed independent preschool and elementary school merged with Garrison Forest. Today the Pre School serves girls and boys, Two-Year-Olds through Pre-K, and the Lower School serves girls, Kindergarten through Fifth Grades.

With the dawn of the 1980s, Garrison Forest appointed Agnes “Aggie” C. Underwood as headmistress, and for nine years, she led the School to a new level of academic excellence. Garrison Forest’s reputation and enrollment grew through achievements, such as the increased number of Advanced Placement courses and faculty members with advanced degrees, enhanced student diversity, a depth of arts programming, and Mrs. Underwood’s leadership among national independent school organizations.

In 1989-90, Alexander A. Uhle served as Interim Head of School until Elsa “Midge” M. Bowman began her four-year tenure. She continued the School’s commitment to intellectual achievement and ushered Garrison Forest onto the global stage with the advent of a formal international boarding program in the early 1990s. Today, 20 percent of the students hail from countries beyond the United States, creating a true global community.

G. Peter O’Neill, Jr., served the GFS community from 1994-2014 and was originally hired for a one-year appointment as Interim Head. Instead, he became the third-longest tenured head in Garrison Forest’s nearly 100-year history. A strong national advocate for single-sex education for girls, he led the School’s largest campus expansion and the establishment of one of the nation’s leading experiential learning programs for girls: the Women In Science and Engineering (WISE) program, a one-of-a-kind academic partnership with The Johns Hopkins University Whiting School of Engineering, the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. In 2008, the School founded The James Center: Programs and Partnerships with a Public Purpose, adding new opportunities for civic and financial literacy and social entrepreneurship to its existing programs for service and leadership.

Kimberley J. Roberts, Ph.D. began her tenure at GFS in July 2014. Dr. Roberts came to GFS from her alma mater Castilleja School, an all-girls' school (grades 6-12) in Palo Alto, California, where she served as assistant head of school and director of advancement. In 2017, Dr. Roberts returned to California to become a program manager in Google's Education and University Relations group.

In July 2017, Lila Boyce Lohr, Garrison Forest Class of 1963, returned to GFS to serve as Interim Head of School during the search for the school's 12th Head.

In Fall 2017, Christopher “Chris” A. Hughes was named 12th Head of School and began July 2018. He comes to GFS from St. Paul Academy and Summit School (SPA) in St. Paul, Minnesota, a coed K-12 day school, where he served as Upper School Principal for 10 years. In 2024, Mr Hughes announced his departure from Garrison Forest School and joined Rye Country Day in 2025.

In July 2025, Ann Teaff, who served Garrison for 18 years, first as a teacher and chair of the history department and then for a decade as Head of the Upper School and later on became Head of School at The Harpeth Hall School for 16 years before retiring, returned to GFS to serve as Interim Head of School during the search for the school's 13th Head.

### **Heads of Garrison Forest School**

- 1910-1929 Mary Moncrieffe Livingston, founder
- 1929-1960 Jean G. Marshall
- 1929-1960 Nancy J. Offutt
- 1960-1968 Archibald R. Montgomery III
- 1968-1978 Lawrence L. Hlavacek
- 1978-1989 Agnes C. Underwood
- 1989-1990 Alexander A. Uhle
- 1990-1994 Elsa M. Bowman
- 1994-2014 G. Peter O’Neill, Jr.
- 2014-2017 Kimberley Roberts
- 2017-2018 Lila Boyce Lohr ’63
- 2018- 2025 Christopher A. Hughes
- 2025- Ann Teaff

### **Board of Trustees**

Garrison Forest School is governed by a Board of Trustees, which usually meets four times per year and consists of alumnae, current and past parents and grandparents, and friends of the School. The Board sets policy, makes financial decisions, employs the Head of School, elects new Trustees, and keeps informed about all aspects of school life. A list of current Trustees is available from the Office of the Head of School.

### **Parent Association**

The Garrison Forest School Parent Association (PA) exists to enhance the sense of community shared among the parents/families, students, administration, faculty, alumnae and trustees; to enrich both the environment and the programs of the School; to facilitate and enhance communication among all constituencies; and to assist all constituencies in their efforts to advance and support the mission of the School. It is committed to supporting the Advancement Program (annual, capital, and planned giving) created by the Board of Trustees.

Garrison Forest School relies on the financial support of its parents, alumnae, grandparents, faculty, staff and friends through annual, capital and planned giving. Each year, Garrison Forest School parents/families play a major role in helping to meet the goals of The Fund for Garrison Forest School, which directly supports the current operating budget.

Any fundraising projects or promotions initiated by the Parent Association or any of its members must first receive approval from the Advancement Office of Garrison Forest. This process ensures transparency and alignment with the school's mission and goals.

The Garrison Forest School PA sponsors and presents a variety of educational programs, socials and events for parents/families throughout the year. These include informative workshops, fun social gatherings, and engaging events that cater to the diverse interests of our parent community.

The Parent Association comprises officers, committees, and representatives from all four divisions. It holds two general meetings per year, and they are open to all Garrison Forest School parents.

Each overarching committee and division will have two positions to oversee all aspects of their committee/division responsibilities. The positions will partner with the Alumnae and Parent Relations Manager, the Division Head, or, if applicable, the appropriate additional faculty and administrators to align the committee/division's efforts with school-wide initiatives.

For more detailed information, please contact Alexandra DeJohn, Alumnae and Parent Relations Manager in the Advancement Office.

# **Employee Conduct and Disciplinary Action**

## **Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS) Principles of Good Practice**

Garrison Forest School is a member of AIMS, and has therefore agreed to abide by the AIMS Principles of Good Practice as a condition of membership. All employees of Garrison Forest School are expected to conduct themselves in conformity with the Principle of Good Practice and Garrison Forest School policies.

### **Admissions**

1. A school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission policies. \*
2. A school recognizes the right of its students or families to visit and consider other schools without notifying the present school. It also recognizes and respects the right of another school to hold preliminary discussions about the possibility of admission.
3. Upon request and as promptly as possible, a school will send an official copy of a transcript (or its equivalent) and other pertinent information to another school to which a student has applied.\* However, if a transcript or other information is being withheld, the present school will notify the requesting school immediately.
4. A school will take all reasonable and lawful measures to maintain the confidentiality of reports and information exchanged among schools concerning students and parents.\*
5. The school recognizes that general advertising, direct-mail campaigns, social media and internet outreach, and communication between competitor schools and currently enrolled independent school families should not be seen as a violation of the spirit of collaboration, collegiality, and professionalism reflected in these principles, but rather as guaranteeing the free market rights of families and the general public to consider all educational options.\*
6. The school recognizes the right of currently enrolled students and families to consider other educational options, and if a transfer is initiated by the family, the current school provides appropriate documentation and support in a timely manner, including reminding the family of any policies related to contractual obligations to the current school.\*
7. The school operates under a clear and consistent set of practices for gathering, disseminating and maintaining sufficient information on prospective students and respects the confidentiality of students, families and documents in the admission process.

### **Financial Aid Administration**

Need-based financial aid is the primary means to support access to independent schools by students of diverse socio-economic levels. For this reason, AIMS strongly endorses need-based financial aid and recommends that assistance be granted on the basis of demonstrated financial need.

1. A school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its financial aid policies.\*

2. A school will use a uniform methodology to assess annually, in a consistent and equitable manner, each family's ability to pay for education.\*
3. A school will require adequate documentation of family resources when determining need.\*
4. A school will provide students and families with factual information about its aid opportunities, financing opportunities, policies, and procedures.
5. A school will not set different standards of behavior and academic performance for its financial aid recipients.\*
6. A school will refrain from and discourage others within the school community from disclosing the names of financial aid recipients and award amounts.\*
7. A school will safeguard the confidentiality of all financial information supplied by a family.\*

### **Hiring of Faculty and Staff**

AIMS expects that school communities will espouse a spirit of respect, professionalism and due diligence between employers and employees. While many individuals in an AIMS school may participate in the employment process, the Head of School is responsible for ensuring that the following standards are met:

1. A school will recognize the right of an employee to visit and consider employment in another school without notifying the employee's present school. A school will also recognize and respect the right of another school to hold discussions about the possibilities of employment without notifying the present school.
2. A school head will not stand in the way of an employee who wishes to move to another school after the employee has fulfilled all employment obligations.
3. The candidate will notify the current employer as soon as reasonably possible of any plans to work for another employer.\*
4. The candidate will not accept more than one job at any time and will seek a release from any obligation with a current employer before entering into employment with a new employer.\*
5. The school ensures that it is aware of any employment-related obligation of the candidate.
6. Prior to offering employment to a candidate, the hiring school performs an appropriate background check, contacts references and complies with pertinent laws in the hiring process.

### **Public Integrity**

1. A school should honor all promises made to its various constituencies and to the general public.

2. A school will carefully avoid misleading statements about its programs, situation, or status.

*\* From Principles of Good Practice, by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)*

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

Garrison Forest School maintains a drug-free environment. Except as specifically set forth in this policy, Garrison Forest School strictly prohibits employees from manufacturing, possessing, distributing, transferring, purchasing, selling, using or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on School property, while attending school-related activities, while on duty, including meal and break periods, or while operating a vehicle or machine leased or owned by the School. Employees are prohibited from reporting for duty or remaining on duty being under the influence of or having any alcohol, illegal, or unauthorized substances in their systems. Off-campus conduct may also be the subject of concern if it reflects on the character and reputation of Garrison Forest School.

This policy does not prohibit employees from taking prescribed medication under the direction of a physician. However, if the prescribed medication will impair job performance or threaten the safety of the employee or others or risk damage to School property, the employee must discuss the matter with Human Resources. Any such discussion will be kept confidential to the extent reasonably practicable. The use of prescribed medication in a manner that is not consistent with the direction of a physician is not exempt from the School's general prohibition on substance abuse. While marijuana has been de-criminalized for medicinal and recreational use in Maryland, it remains an illegal drug under federal law. Marijuana may not be smoked on campus or in any campus building or residence hall, or in School-owned vehicles, even for medical purposes.

The School recognizes that abuse of alcohol or other drugs may be a medical problem. In its sole discretion, the School may refer an employee to applicable counseling or rehabilitation programs, provided that the employee notifies the School of the need for treatment before any serious disciplinary issues develop. The School reserves the right to require drug or alcohol testing under certain circumstances, as a condition of either initial or continued employment. The School also reserves the right to inspect School issued lockers, desks or other suspected areas of concealment, as well as an employee's personal property brought onto School premises. These inquiries, tests, and examinations will be completed in accordance with applicable laws, including, without limitation, provisions governing the confidentiality of results. Alcohol and drug screening reports will be used only for the purpose of administering this policy and for making employment decisions, except to the extent disclosure is required or permitted by law. The failure of any employee to comply with a request for a drug or alcohol test or a search of property shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If an employee is convicted of a criminal drug violation or alcohol violation, they must notify the Head of School within five days of the conviction. Garrison Forest School will take appropriate action after considering all relevant factors, including the nature and gravity of the employee's offense, the nature of responsibilities of the employee's job, and the fact that the conviction recently occurred.

No student at Garrison Forest School shall be served alcohol on campus or at any School function off campus. Alcoholic beverages may not be served in any areas of the School without the permission of the Head of School. Residential staff members may use alcohol in their apartments, consistent with applicable laws, but are urged to be discreet in its consumption and to refrain from drinking in the presence of students. Employees may reasonably consume alcohol at school-sponsored events where alcohol is served. The School relies upon the discretion and good judgment of its employees as models for students and the entire GFS constituency. Violation of the policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Confidentiality**

The nature of our institution is such that employees may handle or become aware of sensitive information while carrying out their duties that must be held in confidence to protect the welfare and interests of students, other employees, and Garrison Forest School. Confidential information, includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- \* financial data
- \* business practices and job costing
- \* contract negotiations
- \* marketing data
- \* computer processes
- \* student information
- \* personnel policies, procedures, and information
- \* budget and pricing information

All information regarding students and families must remain strictly confidential. Sensitive information is frequently discussed in meetings in order to meet individual needs more effectively. This information may not be shared with anyone not present unless necessary to meet the needs of the family or student. Staff should use e-mail and the School's intranet only as strictly necessary to communicate sensitive or confidential information about students. It is important not to discuss students in public places such as the dining room and halls.

In addition, the confidentiality of employee health, employment and evaluation records is protected. Staff and Faculty are forbidden to disclose the contents of any other person's file to an unauthorized employee or any outside party without permission of the Head of School.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Garrison Forest School respects the rights of its employees to engage in personal activities and business outside of their employment with the School, provided such activities do not conflict with the interests of the School.

The School requires that employees do not engage in activities that create an actual or perceived ethical or financial conflict of interest. Employees cannot maintain, directly or indirectly, any outside business or financial interest, or engage in any activity that may adversely affect their job performance. Employees should consult with their supervisor to avoid misunderstanding in this area. Employees must keep their supervisor informed of any secondary employment.

### **Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment**

Garrison Forest School is committed to providing an academic environment that is free of discrimination and harassment both in and out of the classroom. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's age, race (including certain hairstyles associated with race), color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, gender identity or expression or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law, can constitute discrimination or harassment

and will not be tolerated. Consequently, discrimination or harassment by any member of the GFS community, or by a parent or anyone doing business with the School, is prohibited. Discrimination or harassment by an employee of a person over whom they have authority is particularly serious.

Discrimination or harassment can result from a broad range of actions which might include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal conduct, such as insulting comments, slurs, or other statements which are based on gender, race, age, religion, national origin, disability, or any legally protected classification. This includes unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments;
- Visual conduct, such as derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, leering or gestures; and
- Physical conduct, such as hitting, pushing, touching or other unwanted physical conduct or threat to take such action.

As with other forms of discrimination and harassment, GFS has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment. It is against the School's policy for any employee or student, male or female, to be subjected to harassment such as:

- Being subject to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of an employee's employment or participation in any educational program; or
- Being subject to unwelcome conduct where submission to or rejection of such conduct is the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee or participation in an educational program; or
- Being subject to an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment by such unwelcome conduct.

The following are a few examples of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. Even behavior less severe than these examples, however, may constitute sexual harassment in violation of this policy.

- Unwanted sexual advances, such as making a 'pass' at another person, or any actual, attempted, or threatened sexual act or sexual contact with another person without that person's consent;
- Offering employment or education benefits, or implying that things will go smoothly in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Non-verbal conduct, such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, e-mails, cartoons or posters;
- Verbal conduct, such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes or comments about an employee's body or dress;
- Remarks of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexual or degrading words to describe an individual or aggressive or obscene letters, notes, messages or invitations; or
- Physical conduct, such as touching, assaulting or impeding or blocking movement.

Any employee who has reason to believe that they are the victim of discrimination or harassment should promptly report the facts of the incident(s) to their Supervisor/Division Head, the Associate

Head of School for Finance and Operations, or the Head of School. Employees who become aware of discrimination or harassment of others have an obligation to report the conduct as well.

A prompt investigation will be conducted, followed by immediate and appropriate corrective action where warranted, including possible discharge. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent reasonably practicable under the circumstances.

If for any reason an employee is not satisfied with the response to a complaint of discrimination or harassment, a written statement of the problem should be sent to the Office of Head of School, Return Receipt Requested, for investigating and handling. If the Head of School is involved to a degree where the employee does not feel comfortable reporting the issue to the Head of School, the complaint should be directed to the President of the Board of Trustees.

No retaliation will be tolerated against any employee for reporting in good faith a violation of this policy or for filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any investigation. Any attempt at retaliation will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

Our discipline policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues. It has been designed to be consistent with our School values and employment laws. Garrison Forest School hopes that the policies in this Handbook and employees' common sense will guide them as to the proper thing to do in most cases. If employees have any questions about the School's Standards of Conduct, any policy in this Handbook, or about what to do or not to do in a situation, they should contact their Supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Outlined below are the steps of our Disciplinary Procedures Policy. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending upon the facts of each situation and the severity and nature of the offense. Certain employee conduct may be so serious that it justifies immediate dismissal. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some of the factors that will be considered include: whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling, and/or training, the employee's work record and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our School. In order of severity, discipline can take any one or more of the following forms:

- Verbal counseling (documentation of verbal warning to go in employee's file)
- A written warning or reprimand
- Disciplinary probation
- Suspension from work without pay
- Suspension, subject to discharge/demotion
- Termination

Garrison Forest School has the right to discharge for any or no reason at all, at any time, with or without notice. If employees do receive the benefit of any of these methods or constructive counseling, however, they should be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to learn from the mistakes and improve.

If Garrison Forest School believes you have engaged in an unacceptable activity, the School is under no obligation to provide you with any warning prior to imposing discipline, up to and including termination. Your employment with Garrison Forest School is at-will and can be terminated at any time.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Garrison Forest School is an equal opportunity employer. We conduct all business without regard to age, race (including certain hairstyles associated with race), color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, gender identity or expression or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. This policy applies to all of the terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, training, compensation, transfer, promotion, leave of absence, termination, layoff, and recall. It is also the policy of the School to prohibit any kind of harassment or discrimination with respect to any employees, including, but not limited to, co-employees, subordinate employees, supervisors, and others doing business with the School. If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, please consult the reporting harassment section in Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment in this Handbook.

Division Heads and Supervisors will inform all employees of this policy and will take positive steps to seek adherence to the policy by all employees for whom they are accountable. The failure of any employee to comply fully with this policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

Under no circumstances will an employee's job status, security, working conditions, or relationship with the School be adversely affected because a good faith complaint is made or appealed to a higher level of management by that employee.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the School's Equal Employment Policy, please contact the Human Resources Department.

### **Employee and Student Relations**

It is school policy that no employee shall have an amorous relationship (consensual or otherwise) with a student enrolled at Garrison Forest School. Such relationships are not only unwise and ill-advised from a professional standpoint, but can also be problematic in terms of potential claims of sexual harassment or abuse, and can lead to criminal charges. Faculty in particular are in a delicate relationship of trust and power because they guide students, judge their work, give grades, and recommend students for college or other academic programs. That relationship should not be jeopardized by possible questions about the fairness of a person's judgment, or the appearance of favoritism.

Employees should be mindful that certain situations may lead to speculation or allegations of favoritism, sexual harassment or abuse or "grooming" behavior and should endeavor to avoid both impropriety and the appearance of impropriety. For example, employees should avoid situations where they are placed in compromising positions with students. Employees must at all times conduct themselves as role models for the students with whom they come into contact. All employees must ensure that interactions with students are safe, healthy, positive and respectful. Employees must recognize that there is an inherent imbalance of power in their relationships with

students that requires the adults to set limits and maintain healthy, professional boundaries at all times.

The following are examples of inappropriate behavior regarding interactions with students:

- Engaging in sexual, romantic or overly familiar communications with students directly or through the use of email, telephone, text message, instant messaging, social networking or other media;
- Sharing overly personal or financial information concerning themselves with students;
- Gossiping or making derogatory comments about the School, its administration, faculty and employees to students;
- Touching students in an overly familiar or personal way, such as back rubs or shoulder massages;
- Commenting on students' bodies or appearance in a sexual manner or sexually suggestive manner;
- Showing obscene or suggestive photos to students; or
- Videotaping or photographing a student in revealing or suggestive poses.

No employee should have students visit them in their staff housing unless it is a supervised group function. Employees who reside off campus should likewise be sensitive to these issues when having students visit their homes. Violation of this policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

It is the policy of Garrison Forest School that any employee who suspects a violation of this policy by another must report it immediately to one of their Supervisors or Head of School. This information will remain confidential to the extent reasonably practicable.

Although the School has a formal Social Media Policy (see Section V), it is particularly appropriate to remind employees as to the dangers of social media as it relates to relationships with students. The use of social media (blogs, wikis, social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly known as Twitter), Tik Tok, virtual worlds, user-generated audio and video such as YouTube, *etc.*) in education has exciting possibilities but also carries dangers, some of which may not be fully recognized by those who use such sites. The School urges employees to exercise care in connection with the use of social media. Employees may only interact with students over social media in connection with educational activities. Employees should not share personal information with students through social networking sites, and should always strive to maintain their professional role with students at all time. Employees should be aware that postings on such sites are in the public domain, and may be accessible by students, parents and others in the School community. Employees who choose to have profiles on such sites should use the privacy settings provided by the host to limit access to personal information, and should be aware that on-line postings can reflect adversely on the particular employee and the School. Employees may not post pictures or information which contain information concerning the identification of students, and should use discretion in posting information about the School or fellow employees. Employees may not require students to be “friends” with them on social media. The rules on confidentiality of business, personnel and student information that are described elsewhere in this Handbook apply to the use of social media. In addition, information an employee learns about students through these networking sites may trigger the duty under applicable law to report suspected abuse or neglect. Inappropriate communications with students through social networking sites, e-mail,

text messaging or any other form of communication are prohibited and can lead to discipline up to and including termination of employment. Generally, with the exception of group texts to all students on a team or club regarding scheduling or other administrative matters, communications with students should occur only on Garrison Forest email or messenger channels.

### **Fingerprinting/ Background Check**

The School is required under state law to conduct a fingerprint and criminal background check on new employees. Employment is subject to the successful completion of the criminal history check. In addition, Garrison Forest School will perform a background check of all applicants, which may include, among other things, checking employment references and confirming prior employment history and educational qualifications. Applicants are also required under Section 6-113.2 of the Education Section of the Annotated Code of the State of Maryland to submit the contact information for various current and previous employers and information regarding whether the applicant has been the subject of a child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct investigation. Every offer of employment is contingent upon successful completion of appropriate verification of an individual's suitability for employment.

Employees are responsible for notifying the Head of School if events occur which change the criminal background status within thirty (30) days. Not all events disqualify employees from employment; however, the situation should be reviewed with the Head of School. Please contact the Human Resources Department for an explanation of the proper procedure.

### **Nepotism/Fraternization**

A familial or intimate relationship among employees can create an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in the employment setting, especially where one person supervises the other or has influence over the terms and conditions of their employment. To avoid this problem, the School may refuse to hire or place a relative in a position where the potential for favoritism or conflict exists. The School prohibits any employee from entering into a romantic/sexual relationship with another employee if one of the employees directly or indirectly supervises the other, participates in employment decisions concerning the other, or is in any position in which an actual or perceived conflict of interest may exist.

### **Introductory Period (Staff and Essential Personnel Only)**

An employee's first ninety (90) days of employment are on a trial basis and are considered a continuation of the employment selection process. The ninety (90) day introductory period provides the School an opportunity to observe and evaluate the capacity of the employee, which includes the employee's ability to satisfactorily perform the essential functions of their job; and to observe and evaluate the employee's work habits and conduct, including attendance and the employee's relationship with coworkers and management. If the School determines that the designated probationary period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the probationary period may be extended for a specified period.

During this introductory period, the School may terminate employment immediately, with or without cause and with or without notice. Likewise, the employees may also terminate their employment with the School at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause.

This ninety (90) day introductory period is not a term of employment and is not intended to, nor does it, impact the at will nature of the relationship between the School and the employee.

### **Resignation (Staff and Essential Personnel Only)**

Although we hope your employment with Garrison Forest School will be a mutually rewarding experience, we understand that varying circumstances do cause employees to voluntarily resign employment. Employees are free to resign their employment at any time, although Garrison Forest School requests at least two weeks' notice (No use of PTO time permitted within this notice period). For Administrative roles, we request at least four weeks' notice. The individual resigning will be compensated through the last day worked. In addition, employees will be compensated for any earned and unused vacation leave they have accrued provided that they provide the requested notice. If the resigning employee fails to provide the requested notice, compensation for any unused vacation leave will not be paid.

All resignations must be confirmed in writing or via email and resignation letters and emails should be forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Even where an employee provides some amount of notice, Garrison Forest School may, in its sole discretion, require an employee to leave immediately or at any point during the notice period rather than work throughout the notice period. Such a decision should not be perceived as reflecting negatively on the employee since it may be due to a variety of reasons not known to the individual or other employees.

No matter what the reason for leaving Garrison Forest School, including retirement, the employee's employment status in the benefit programs will change. The employee should contact the Human Resources Department to inquire about which benefits, if any, may be continued. The Human Resources Department will schedule an exit interview with all employees who voluntarily resign from Garrison Forest School.

### **Return of Property**

Employees are responsible for all property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all Garrison Forest School property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment, in good working condition subject only to reasonable wear and tear. Any computer or electronic storage device shall be returned with all Garrison Forest School documents and programs intact; employees should not attempt to "wipe" any device or restore it to factory settings prior to return. Employees who separate from employment with outstanding debts for equipment loss or unauthorized charges will be considered to have left employment on unsatisfactory terms and may be subject to legal action for recovery of the loss. Garrison Forest School reserves the right, to the full extent permitted by law, to deduct the entire balance of debts for equipment loss or unauthorized charges from the employee's final paycheck. Garrison Forest School may also take all actions deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

### **Standards of Conduct**

To provide and ensure the best possible work environment, Garrison Forest School expects its employees to conduct themselves in a manner that will protect the interests and safety of all employees, students, and the School. We expect every employee to act in a mature and responsible way at all times.

The following is a list of unacceptable conduct for which an employee may receive disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Because it is impossible to list every offense that may occur in the workplace, this list is not all-inclusive. Other conduct may be subject to discipline.

- Violating any Garrison Forest School policy or procedure or engaging in unlawful behavior;
- Engaging in any type of abusive treatment of a child, including sexual, verbal, mental, or physical abuse;
- Failing to report child abuse or child neglect pursuant to Maryland law and the School's policy on Child Abuse and Neglect;
- Failing to behave in an appropriate manner in front of any student(s) of Garrison Forest School, including engaging in inappropriate conversations or behavior with any student(s) or within view or earshot of any student(s);
- Failing to cooperate in any internal or external investigations, medical, or physical tests or examinations, or inspections or search of your personal belongings, personal or authorized vehicle, when requested or conducted by Garrison Forest School;
- Unauthorized or inappropriate use of, removal of, theft of, or damage to the property of Garrison Forest School, an employee, or a student, including Garrison Forest School-owned equipment or services;
- Falsifying employment records, time records or other documents, including but not limited to, employment application forms, education transcripts, expense reports, workers' compensation forms, and leave-related documents;
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or while engaged in Garrison Forest School business;
- Tape recording or other electronic recording of communications by a Garrison Forest School employee, student, or parent without the clear and unambiguous consent of all parties to the communication;
- Possession or use of a firearm on Garrison Forest School premises;
- Insubordination, or dishonest conduct;
- Conduct in violation of the School's Equal Employment Opportunity and Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment;
- Fighting, threats of physical or aggressive contact or harm, or the use of abusive or threatening language;
- Excessive, unauthorized tardiness or absence from work, any absence or late arrival without notice, or any unauthorized absence from our designated place of work during the workday;
- Violation of safety, health, driving, fire prevention or security rules, policies, or practices;
- False, fraudulent, or misleading statement, action or omission involving Garrison Forest School, an employee, student, or family member of a student;
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information;
- Disclosure of confidential information, even if otherwise authorized, without taking appropriate steps to prevent unintended or unnecessary disclosure of the information;
- Accepting or engaging in any activity that creates an ethical or financial conflict of interest; or
- Unsatisfactory performance.

## **Work Conditions, Hours and Salary Administration**

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each employee at Garrison Forest School. Any tardiness or absence causes problems for fellow employees and management. When an employee is absent, others must perform the work, which diminishes the smooth functioning of the School. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their Division Head or Supervisor no later than one hour before the start of the employee's scheduled work time. If an employee's Division Head or Supervisor is not available, they should leave a message for that person and then attempt to reach a co-worker to ensure that the message is delivered and the employee's workload will be handled properly. Employees who are absent from work without contacting their Division Head or Supervisor for three consecutive days will be considered to have resigned their employment and will normally be terminated from employment.

Garrison Forest School retains the right to require employees to provide written verification from a physician as to the reason for any absences related to health issues, the right to deny authorization for any requested absence, and the right to investigate the reason for any absence. Employees who have three (3) consecutive days of excused absences because of illness or injury must provide Garrison Forest School proof of physician's care. If a prolonged absence is anticipated, you should contact your Division Head or Supervisor about a possible leave of absence.

Excessive tardiness and/or poor attendance may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Employees should understand that absences can be excessive even if an employee has leave available, depending on the circumstances.

Employees who are classified as "Staff" typically work between the hours of 7:30AM - 4:30PM. Employees should consult with the Division or Office Head to determine the exact working hours.

A summer schedule is set and distributed by the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations.

### **Bulletin Boards**

Bulletin boards for employees are located in faculty rooms, division offices, or break rooms. Only notices of general school related interests are to be posted. There is an on-line Garrison Forest School Announcements boards for school business. The School maintains the discretion to decide which notices are posted.

### **Consultants/Contractors**

From time to time, the School retains consultants or contractors to perform services on campus. Neither consultants nor contractors are eligible for any employee benefits. Consultants and contractors are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the School's policies. If you witness any improper behavior by a consultant or a contractor, please advise the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations.

## **Dress Code**

Dress, grooming, and personal hygiene standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image Garrison Forest School presents to parents, students, and visitors of the school. Visitors are often on campus, and each employee's appearance does make a lasting impression on them. During business hours, employees are expected to present a professional, clean, and neat appearance that is appropriate given their position at the School.

Below are examples of attire that are **not** acceptable:

- Ripped or torn jeans and denim are not deemed as work attire and should not be worn to work.
- Offensive or revealing clothes. This includes, but is not limited to, dresses, sundresses, or tops that are low-cut or reveal the back or midriffs. Halter-style, tube-style, or strapless dresses or shirts are prohibited. Skirts must be of appropriate length.
- Shorts, unless it is required for the position and job duties.
- Flip-flop shoes (see below for definition)
- Beachwear, tank tops, or t-shirts with inappropriate writing or pictures.
- Spandex or other form fitting-pants.
- Athletic shoes, unless it is required for the position and job duties.

Casual flip-flops that are flat sandals made of plastic, rubber, or straw are not permitted. Flip-flop sandals that have a dressier look and are made of leather, fabric, or suede will be permitted.

Body-piercing jewelry is allowed but should be appropriate and keeping with a professional image. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to ask an employee to remove body-piercing jewelry of any kind regardless of where it is worn.

Tattoos must be appropriate in content and in keeping with a professional image. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to ask an employee to cover a tattoo at any time.

Garrison Forest School reserves the right to determine what professional attire is and may ask employees to refrain from wearing certain clothing items or shoes that are not found to be consistent with the Dress Code policy. Employees who seek an exception to the Dress Code from a medical or religious accommodation should contact Human Resources.

### Faculty

Employees must wear business casual attire on days when school is in session and more formal attire on all special occasions. Questions about appropriate dress should be addressed to employees' immediate supervisors.

During the faculty workshops and on professional development days faculty members are permitted to dress in more casual attire. Employees are reminded that even during casual attire days visitors may be on campus.

### Staff and Administration

Staff and Administration should wear business casual attire throughout the year. During the summer months when school is not in session a more relaxed dress policy is observed. On special

occasions such as assemblies and graduation, employees should wear more formal attire befitting of the event.

### Essential Personnel

Essential personnel are required to wear uniforms to work, which are provided by Garrison Forest School. Uniforms must be worn on all workdays. If any of the uniforms are lost through no fault of Garrison Forest School, the employee may be responsible for the cost of the replacement. If employment with Garrison Forest School terminates for any reason, the employee may be required to return the uniforms to Garrison Forest School immediately. Any replacement cost for uniforms not returned to Garrison Forest School may be deducted from the employee's final paycheck to the extent permitted by law.

If an employee appears to work without their uniform, a request to leave and return to work in uniform may be made. Under such circumstances, the employee may not be compensated for the time away from work unless otherwise required by law.

### **Employee Classification**

Regular Full-Time Employees Classified as Faculty:

***\*\*Employees serving as faculty who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week during the school year.***

**Pre-School and Lower School** – Teaching 5 days per week, working between the hours of 7:45am – 3:45pm.

**Middle School** – Teaching at least 5 sections (approximately 20 -25 students), serving as Advisor or some equivalent, working 5 days per week between the hours of 7:45am and 3:30pm.

**Upper School** - Teaching at least 5 sections (approximately 20 -25 students), working 5 days per week between the hours of 7:45am and 3:45pm.

Regular Part-Time Employees Classified as Faculty

Employees serving as faculty who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week during the school year.

Regular Full-Time Employees Classified as Staff, Administration, or Essential Personnel

Employees serving in staff or administrative positions who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week.

Regular Part-Time Employees Classified as Staff, Administration, or Essential Personnel

Employees serving in staff or administrative positions who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week.

Temporary Employees

Temporary Employees work for a specified period of time or project. A temporary employee may be full-time or part-time.

### Exempt/ Non-Exempt Employees

In addition, all employees are classified as either exempt or non-exempt. Exempt employees are generally faculty, managers, professionals, administrative, or technical staff who are exempt from minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and state law. Exempt employees are paid on a salaried basis regardless of the number of hours worked in a given week, with certain specific exceptions permitted by law. Teachers may be subject to different rules regarding pay.

A non-exempt employee is eligible for overtime pay in accordance with Garrison Forest School's Overtime Policy.

If you are uncertain as to any aspects of your employment classification, please contact the Human Resources Department.

### **Employment Agreements**

#### Faculty and Administration

The Head of School issues the Employment Agreements for faculty which are renewed annually. Faculty agreements become effective September 1 of each year. Administration agreements become effective July 1 of each year. It would be appreciated if teachers and administration not planning to return for the next academic year would inform the Head of School in writing by January 31, in order to expedite the recruiting process. These agreements do not change the at-will nature of your employment.

#### Staff and Essential Personnel

The Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations issues employment letters to staff and essential personnel annually. The letters become effective July 1 of each year. It would be appreciated if staff or essential personnel not planning to return for the next fiscal year would inform the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations in writing by March 1, in order to expedite the recruiting process. These letters do not change the at-will nature of your employment.

### **Employment Agreements - Non Renewal**

The fact that an employee has a contract or letter of employment is not an assurance that the contract or letter will be renewed in subsequent years. Those employees whose agreements will not be renewed for the following year will be notified by the Head of School or Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations usually no later than the time agreements are issued, except in unusual circumstances.

In the event of unforeseen economic or enrollment problems, the School might need to change teaching assignments and/or student loads. In such an event, the School would do everything possible to honor all existing contracts for that year.

### **Faculty Meetings (Faculty Only)**

Faculty members are required to attend faculty meetings that are scheduled throughout the year. Faculty members who are unable to attend a faculty meeting must inform their Division Head in advance of the meeting, if possible. Faculty members will be required to use personal or sick leave, as appropriate, to cover missed faculty meetings. Please refer to the Personal or Sick Leave Policies in the Handbook for more information.

## **Force Majeure**

Although the School expects to operate all of its facilities during the academic year, it is possible that certain catastrophic events (e.g., fire, war, government action, act of terrorism, pandemic or natural disaster) may necessitate that the School cease all or part of its operations. Employees may be relieved of duties or required to undertake additional or different duties, as the School requires. Changes in pay could occur as a result.

## **Fundraising**

Garrison Forest School does not endorse fundraising efforts undertaken by students or other individuals, which do not directly benefit the School or its programs. All fundraising events/projects meant to benefit one club, class, or division must be approved by the Division Head and the Head of School, who maintain the discretion to decide which fundraising activities can be conducted on campus.

## **Health Center**

During the academic day, 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., students who become ill or are injured should inform the teacher present and then report to the Health Center. No student who becomes ill is to go to a resident hall or home without notifying the Health Center. The Health Center extension is 3200, or it can be reached directly at 410-559-3200.

## **Inclement Weather**

### Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Garrison Forest School uses an automated notification system. The notification system will give employees information regarding the opening of school and when to report to work. Messages are sent via email, text, and/or phone depending upon the situation.

Information is shared with WBAL Radio, television stations (WBAL, WJZ, WMAR, WB54, and Fox 45), the GFS website ([www.gfs.org](http://www.gfs.org)), the school voicemail (410-363-1500), Facebook, and X (formerly known as Twitter). Weather-related announcements are made as early as possible (typically by 6:00 AM).

In the case of inclement weather during the day, Garrison Forest School will evaluate the need for early dismissal. Parents may pick up their children at any time they feel advisable to do so.

If the School opens, all faculty and staff are expected to come in if they are able. Employees who do not come in when the School is open will be charged leave time to get paid for the day(s) missed. All employees who are unable to report to work should call their Supervisor and report their absence ninety (90) minutes prior to the start of their work day. If the School is closed, employees (except essential personnel as stated below) will be paid for the day and not charged leave. If an employee has been pre-approved to take vacation or sick leave and the School is closed due to inclement weather, the employee will not be charged with the leave time.

### Essential Personnel

Essential employees of the school are required to report for their scheduled shift even if the School is delayed or closed due to inclement weather, except as specified in this policy.

If employees are unable to arrive for their shift they will be charged one day of leave. If no leave time is available, employees will not be paid for the day. All employees who are unable to report

to work should call their Supervisor and report their absence ninety (90) minutes prior to the start of their work day.

On days when weather conditions worsen as the day progresses, the School may decide to close early. In such cases, a decision and an announcement will be made. Employees will be expected to remain at work until the end of their shifts, unless they receive permission from their Supervisor to leave early. Employees will be paid for at least four (4) hours if they are dismissed early. Employees can make up the additional four (4) hours with leave time or working extra hours during the same pay period.

If the weather is so severe and it is not safe for essential personnel to travel, a Supervisor will notify them not to come in for their scheduled shift. Employees will be paid four (4) hours of pay for each day the School is closed due to severe inclement weather. Employees can make up the additional four (4) hours with leave time or working extra hours during the same pay period. All essential employees who work when the School is closed due to inclement weather will be paid at time and a half for their hours worked. If the school is closed but offices are open and staff are expected to come in, the day will not be considered a school closing day.

### **Job Postings**

Garrison Forest School provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and advance within the School according to their skills and experience.

In general, notices of job openings are posted, although Garrison Forest School reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening. Job openings will be posted on the Garrison Forest School website. Job postings will include the job titles, wage range, job summary and required qualifications.

To be eligible to apply for a posted job, employees must have performed competently for at least 180 calendar days in their current position. Eligible employees can only apply for those posted jobs for which they possess the required skills, competencies, and qualifications. All employees will be subject to the same requirements as external applicants. An applicant's Supervisor may be contacted to verify performance, skills, and attendance. Any staffing limitations or other circumstances that might affect a prospective transfer also may be discussed.

Job posting is a way to inform employees of openings. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to use other recruiting sources to fill open positions.

### **Lunch**

#### Exempt

Full-time, exempt employees are provided with one lunch period each workday. The lunch period should be coordinated with the department to provide appropriate coverage.

#### Non-Exempt Employees

Full-time, non-exempt employees are provided with one lunch period each workday. Supervisors will schedule lunch periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all responsibilities during lunch periods and will be compensated for that time. Lunch periods

are subject to change depending upon business needs. Although compensated for this break, the lunch hour is not considered time worked for purposes of calculating overtime.

Personal business (running errands off-campus, exercising, *etc.*) is permitted during lunch breaks.

### **Overtime**

All non-exempt employees are paid overtime for hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a regular work week and paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are paid overtime at a rate of one and one-half their regular hourly rate.

Overtime is calculated on actual minutes worked to the nearest quarter (1/4) hour. A work week is defined as seven consecutive 24-hour periods starting on the same calendar day each week. The work week at Garrison Forest School is defined as Monday at 12:01 am to Sunday at Midnight.

Only hours actually worked are included in the calculation of overtime. If there is a paid holiday during the regular forty (40) hour work week, additional hours worked may be paid at the regular rate, and only hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours will be paid at time-and-a-half. All overtime must be approved in advance by the Supervisor. All employees who are required to work on a legal holiday observed by a School closing (e.g., Labor Day) will be paid for the holiday at two times their hourly rate for the hours worked on the holiday.

Employees are prohibited from performing any “off-the-clock” work. “Off-the-clock” work means work you may perform but fail to report on your time sheet or designated timeclock. Any request to an employee to work “off-the-clock” is a violation of Garrison Forest policy and should be reported to Human Resources immediately. Employees must record all hours worked, whether authorized or unauthorized. However, be aware that working unauthorized overtime may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Payroll**

Employees are paid semi-monthly, on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, over twelve months. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a bank holiday, employees will be paid on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a weekend, employees will be paid on the Friday before the scheduled payday. Please refer to pages 79-80 for payroll schedules. Earnings statements will be available for view each pay date by logging into Paycom. This is also the location to download pay statements and pay history.

Certain payroll reductions and deductions (*e.g.*, Annual Fund, Flexible Benefit expenses, *etc.*) can be established through the appropriate authorization forms available in the Human Resources Office. Employees are encouraged to accept payment by direct deposit. Employees may allocate their earnings by direct deposit to separate bank accounts. Specific information regarding direct deposit is available on the GFS website.

Garrison Forest School is committed to following the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act and state law as they relate to the payment of wages to exempt and non-exempt employees. The School makes every effort to properly classify employees as either “exempt” or “non-exempt” under the Fair Labor Standards Act and state law. If you are unsure of your classification, contact the Human Resources Office. If you feel that you have been improperly classified, you should

make a written inquiry to the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations stating the reasons why you believe you have been improperly classified. Employees who are entitled to overtime pay have an obligation to accurately report all hours worked so that overtime can be properly computed.

### **Payroll Deductions**

The School follows federal, state and local laws regarding required and permissible payroll deductions and prohibits improper deductions from employees' pay. If you believe that the School has improperly deducted wages from your pay, you should make a written inquiry to the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations, stating the date(s) of the improper deduction(s), the amount that was improperly deducted, the reason(s) for the deduction and a statement of why the deduction was improper.

Garrison Forest School may be required to withhold a portion of an employee's compensation to pay a court ordered claim. If a garnishment occurs, the Consumer Credit Protection Act protects the employee from disciplinary action. However, the Act gives Garrison Forest School the right to take appropriate disciplinary action if an employee should become involved in an unreasonable number of garnishments (defined by the Act as more than one in a year).

Upon receipt of an inquiry as described above, the School will conduct a prompt investigation. If the School determines that improper deductions were made from your pay, or that you were not properly paid, the School will take appropriate remedial action and will reimburse you for all amounts improperly deducted or unpaid.

No retaliation will be tolerated against any employee for making an inquiry under this policy or for assisting or participating in any investigation. Any attempt at retaliation will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

### **Payroll Accuracy**

It is GFS policy and practice to accurately compensate employees for all time worked and to do so in compliance with all applicable local, state and federal laws. To ensure that employees are paid properly for all time worked and that no improper deductions are made, employees must correctly record all work time and review pay statements promptly to identify and report all errors. No one who is eligible for overtime should perform any work that is not authorized and recorded on their timesheet.

### Review Your Pay Statement.

GFS makes every effort to ensure its employees are paid correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent mistakes can happen. When mistakes do happen and are called to the School's attention, the School promptly will make any corrections necessary. Employees are required to review their pay statement, on payday to make sure it is correct. If an employee believes a mistake has occurred (including any improper deductions, under-reported hours of work or other error) or any other questions, please use the reporting procedure outlined below.

### Non-exempt Employees.

If at any time a non-exempt employee's time card is not accurate, notify the supervisor immediately.

## **Exempt Employees**

Exempt salaried employee's salaries are subject to certain deductions. For example, absent contrary state law requirements, their salaries can be reduced for the following reasons:

- Full day absences for personal reasons.
- Full day absences for sickness or disability.
- Full day disciplinary suspensions for major safety violations or significant infractions of important written workplace conduct rules.
- Family and Medical Leave absences (either full or partial day absences).
- To offset amounts received as payment for jury and witness fees or military pay.
- The first or last week of employment in the event you work less than a full week.
- Any full workweek in which you do not perform any work.

In any workweek in which exempt employees performed work, their salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- Partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness, vacation or disability, unless FMLA-protected.
- Absences because the School has decided to close a facility on a scheduled work day.
- Absences for jury duty, attendance as a witness, or military leave.
- Any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law.

Please note: it is not an improper deduction to reduce an employee's accrued vacation, sick, or other forms of paid time off for full or partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability.

If an employee believes they have been subject to any improper deductions or the pay does not accurately reflect hours worked, immediately report the matter to the supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, immediately contact the Director of Human Resources. If an employee has not received a satisfactory response within five business days after reporting the incident, please immediately contact the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations.

Every report will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate, up to and including termination for any employee who violates this policy. In addition, the School will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in the School's investigation of such reports. Retaliation is unacceptable, and any form of retaliation in violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Timekeeping**

All non-exempt employees are required to track their working hours via time clocks or time sheets and submit them to the Human Resources Department on a semi-monthly basis on the dates indicated on the Payroll Schedule. The time sheet must accurately reflect all regular and overtime hours worked, any absences, late arrivals, early departures, and any other authorized unpaid breaks. Time records must also show hours paid such as vacation time, sick time or holidays. It is imperative that actual hours worked be recorded on the correct day, as well as actual hours worked in the pay period. The Payroll Schedule is updated annually and can be obtained on GFS Announcements under the Human Resources section. When such employees work overtime it

must be authorized, in advance, and documented through the timekeeping system. For more information about overtime, see the Overtime Policy in this Handbook.

Any employee who is required to track their working hours and fails to do so, or who is required to submit time sheets and fails to do so, or who inaccurately reports hours worked, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Any employees who are uncertain about whether they are full-time or part-time, exempt or non-exempt, or required to submit time sheets should contact their supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department immediately for clarification.

### **Animals in the Workplace**

The presence of animals in academic buildings or offices can be an access issue, a health issue, and a safety issue. We do not want anyone to avoid areas of our campus due to the presence of an animal, and animals can have an adverse impact upon our facilities and buildings.

Service animals may be brought into campus buildings in accordance with federal and state law. Otherwise, animals are not permitted in academic buildings or offices during operating hours 12 months out of the year. Employees who require the presence of an animal as an accommodation for a disability must discuss the matter with Human Resources in accordance with the School's policy for the accommodation of disabilities. Faculty/Staff who live on campus are allowed to walk their animals during school hours, as long as they have a free period or the day off.

All animals on campus must be on a leash and under the supervision of the owner at all times and must not pose a hazard or disturbance to people or property. Animal owners are at all times responsible for cleaning up after their animals. All animals must have evidence of current rabies vaccination. Failure to comply with this policy could result in the Garrison Forest School taking appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action, including exclusion of the animal from campus.

### **Personnel Data Changes**

It is the responsibility of the employee to promptly notify Garrison Forest School of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, and other information including information required to maintain any benefits offered by Garrison Forest School should be accurate and current at all times. If an employee has any personnel data changes, they should notify the Human Resources Department.

### **References**

It is the School's policy not to provide references for former employees without a signed authorization from that employee. In the absence of such an authorization, the School will provide only confirmation of dates of employment and position. All requests for references or verification should be directed to the Human Resources Department. Only employees designated by the Head of School are authorized to give references on behalf of the School.

### **Reporting Student and Family Violations**

It is the policy of the School to ensure that all employees have positive experiences interacting with students and families. At the start of each year, students and families agree to abide by GFS's student policy manual. All employees should report any violations of this manual to their Supervisor. This manual includes a requirement that students and families engage with employees

in a professional and civil manner. If an employee is concerned about communications or interactions with students or families becoming uncomfortable or uncivil, the employee should report that to their Supervisor or Human Resources prior to the interaction or as soon as the interaction has occurred.

### **Reporting Complaints**

The School expects employees to maintain high standards of ethical conduct at all times. As representatives of the School, employees must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and complying with all applicable laws and regulations. The School is committed to maintaining a workplace where employees feel free to raise concerns about legal compliance, ethics violations, and other serious matters. It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with the School's policies and procedures, and to report violations or suspected violations.

The School has a number of policies addressing specific types of complaints (i.e., discrimination/harassment, deductions from pay, reporting of child abuse or neglect). If you wish to draw the School's attention to a legal or ethical violation not addressed by any other policy, you are encouraged to speak with your Supervisor or Division Head. If you are not comfortable speaking with your Supervisor or Division Head or are not satisfied with the response, you should speak with the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be investigated to the extent appropriate and will be kept confidential to the extent reasonable practicable. Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed is a legal or ethical violation.

### **Requests for Accommodation**

#### **Accommodation of Disability**

Garrison Forest School will conform to the requirements and regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and all other applicable federal, state and local laws. Qualified individuals with disabilities, including disabilities caused or contributed to by pregnancy, may be entitled to an accommodation in the workplace that allows them to perform the essential functions of their job, including leave. Requests for accommodation of a disability from employees should be made to the Director of Human Resources in writing. The School may request documentation from a physician explaining the disability and/or the need for accommodation. Any such request will be reviewed promptly. The School will engage in the interactive process with the employee, as required by law. Any information regarding a disability will be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible. Employees with questions regarding the application of this policy to their situation may discuss them confidentially with Human Resources.

#### **Religious Accommodations**

The School will provide reasonable accommodations for an employee's sincerely held religious beliefs or practices, so long as they do not cause undue hardship for the School. Employees who believe they need an accommodation for a sincerely held religious belief or practice should make a request to Human Resources. The School encourages employees to make their request in writing and to include relevant information, such as:

- A description of the accommodation you are requesting.
- The reason you need an accommodation.

- How the accommodation will help resolve the conflict between your religious beliefs or practices (or lack thereof) and one or more of your work requirements.

### **Pregnancy, Childbirth and Lactation Accommodation**

The School will provide reasonable accommodations to employees who are affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless such accommodations would result in undue hardship to GFS. GFS will engage in a good faith and timely interactive process to determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided for such employees. Employees may be asked to provide necessary medical certification. Reasonable accommodations may include: more frequent or longer breaks, time off to recover from childbirth, equipment modification, light duty and having the employee refrain from heavy lifting.

### **Lactation Breaks**

The School will provide a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate employees desiring to express breast milk for their infant child. The break time, if possible, must run concurrently with rest and meal periods already provided. If the break time cannot run concurrently with rest and meal periods already provided, the break time will be unpaid, subject to applicable law. During this time, non-exempt employees should not be executing their duties. GFS will make reasonable efforts to provide employees with the use of a room or location other than a toilet stall to express milk in private. This space will be shielded from view, and free from any intrusion. GFS may not be able to provide additional break time if doing so would seriously disrupt the School's operations. Please consult Human Resources with questions regarding this policy.

Employees should advise their supervisor if they need break time and an area for this purpose. Employees will not be discriminated against or retaliated against for exercising their rights under this policy.

### **School Records and Requests for Information**

All information in a student's file is considered confidential data to be used only by School personnel in planning and developing an educational program for the student. Parents and/or legal guardians and eligible students may have access to their own or their child's record after 24 hours of receipt of a written request to the Head of School and the Division Head. Records will be reviewed in the presence of one of the aforementioned School officials, and, if appropriate, the School Counselor. Garrison Forest School will not share records, including disciplinary records, with other students or parents.

Information contained in a student's cumulative school record will not be released to another school or individual without the written permission of the student's parent or guardian, except as required by law. No information pertaining to alumnae records may be released without the consent of the individual, except as required by law. The School maintains the right to withhold all records when fees are owed to the School.

Employees, and in particular faculty members, may receive a request from legal counsel or a government agency to provide information regarding Garrison Forest School students or parents. No employee should provide such information without first consulting with the Head of School. Garrison Forest School maintains a policy of confidentiality and attempts to act solely in the best interests of our students. The School will not take sides in cases involving family disputes. Please

be sure to relay any request for information to the Head of School so the School can respond in a timely manner.

School employees shall not discuss any discipline or other student information.

### **Smoking/Vaping/Tobacco Usage**

Garrison Forest School is a smoke-free and tobacco-free campus. This includes the use of e-cigarettes, vaping, smokeless tobacco or other nicotine delivery devices. It does not include FDA-approved nicotine replacement therapy products used for tobacco cessation.

### **Tutoring (Faculty Only)**

Full-time faculty members of Garrison Forest School may not tutor students during the academic day for financial remuneration. Faculty may not tutor students they are currently teaching for financial remuneration. Non-Garrison Forest School students may be tutored on the Garrison Forest campus in faculty residences only. Before committing to tutoring a GFS student, faculty members must inform the Division Head to ensure that there is not a conflict.

### **Work Schedules**

Work schedules for employees vary throughout the School. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

## Safety and Security

### Blood Borne Pathogens

In the event of a serious injury of an employee, student, or visitor resulting in the release of blood or other body fluids which could contain pathogens (*e.g.*, HIV or HBV), Garrison Forest School wants to ensure everyone's safety and has outlined below ways to clean up these fluids. At the beginning of each school year, all faculty and staff should be re-certified.

The first step is to always treat the injured party, but also make sure the affected area has been secured. Employees should call 911, Security, and/or the School Nurse in the event of an emergency. After the injured party is treated the following procedures should be followed.

- Spilled body fluids should not be cleaned up without the appropriate protective equipment and materials specifically designated for such fluids. In the case where spilled body fluids need to be cleaned, this procedure must be followed by all personnel
- Body fluids should only be cleaned/removed up by the Housekeeping staff.
- Advise the School Nurse or Supervisor. The School Nurse or the Supervisor should be aware of the individuals doing the actual clean-up and the purpose of the cleanup.

To clean up the spilled fluids please do the following:

- Put on protective gloves.
- Spread the absorbent material on the spilled body fluids, (*e.g.*, paper towels).
- Neutralize the potential pathogens with a 10% bleach-with-water solution. Cover the spill for 15 minutes.
- Use paper towels to pick up the material as best possible. Place all potentially contaminated materials in a leak-proof plastic bag.
- Clean sweep or mop materials with hot, soapy water. Lastly, remove gloves from inside-out and place in the bag.
- Secure the bag and discard.
- Wash hands thoroughly in hot, soapy water.
- After all activity is completed and checked by the School Nurse or Supervisor an accident form should be completed. Accident forms for employees and visitors should be sent to the Human Resources Department.

### Child Abuse and Neglect

Some student-faculty communications are subject to state laws regarding confidentiality and parental consent. Concerns about this issue must be reported to the Division Head or the Head of School. If you have questions regarding student communication and a parent's right to know, please consult the appropriate Division Head.

### Reporting Suspected Abuse:

Section 5-704 of the Family Law Section of the Annotated Code of the State of Maryland provides that, any teacher or other professional employee of the School who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect must immediately inform the Head of School. The employee must then report the suspected abuse to Social Services or law enforcement. It is important to note that it is not in the employee's purview to decide if the report is valid. Counselors in each division are available to help. The report must be made to the county in which the child

resides. Within 48 hours of an oral report, a written report must be submitted. In complying with the mandate to report, the person so reporting is given immunity from criminal or civil penalties or liability when that person, in good faith, makes a report. Such reports are confidential. In addition to the legal requirements, it is the policy of Garrison Forest School that any employee who suspects a violation of this policy by another employee must report it immediately to one of the Division Heads or Head of School. This information will remain confidential to the extent reasonably practicable. Failure to follow this procedure could result in criminal penalties.

**Crisis Management Plan**

The principle objectives of the Crisis Management Plan are to provide for the physical and emotional safety of the students and employees of Garrison Forest School and to ensure the School’s long-term viability. A Crisis Management Team (CMT) has been established to evaluate all crises and serve as the decision making body for the School.

<b>CMT Member</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Cell</b>	<b>Home</b>
Jim Shea	410-559-3247	443-744-3707	
Kristin Franzen	410-559-3200	410-948-2489	
Catie Perich	410-559-3137	570-498-3626	
Vanessa Griffin	410-559-3102	443-392-6038	
Ann Teaff	410-559-3102	615-330-5708	
Michelle Placek	410-559-3133	410-690-1682	
Stacy Mohn	410-559-3140	301-221-8861	
Shannon Schmidt	410-559-3286	443-991-9955	

In case of a crisis, all employees should consider themselves part of the emergency response effort. Employees who are not on the Crisis Management Team (CMT) are expected to be available for designated interventions. Any employee witnessing a crisis should take the following steps:

- If the crisis is life threatening, call 911. Calmly give the basic information, the aid needed (fire, ambulance, police, etc.) and the location. Remember to be as specific as possible. (For example, say, “An accident in Meadowood Dormitory on the GFS campus, at 300 Garrison Forest Road, between Greenspring Valley Road and St. Thomas Lane.”)
- Contact a member of the CMT. Any Garrison Forest School employee receiving a call from the news media or general public should be polite, but refer all inquiries to the Director of Communications and Marketing or Head of School. In this way, Garrison Forest School is ensured that all information officially released is consistent and monitored. Requests for personal information or on-camera interviews should be referred to the Director of Communications and Marketing or Head of School. No one should reveal the names of any students alleged to be involved in a crisis.

**SPECULATION AND THE SPREADING OF RUMORS DURING AN EMERGENCY CAN ONLY EXACERBATE THE SITUATION AND HARM THE SCHOOL.**

**Emergency Situations**

In the case of a fire drill or fire emergency everyone should evacuate the building IMMEDIATELY. All other emergency situations, employees should wait for further instruction through the alert system on campus. The foremost objective is the safety and security of all

personnel and students. An Emergency Procedures Booklet is available in each classroom and building and provides information about Early Dismissal, Evacuation, Fire/Smoke, Lockdown and Weather Alerts. Employees should review this booklet at the start of each school year.

Marked exits, fire extinguishers and first aid kits are also located in the buildings. All employees are expected to familiarize themselves with all Emergency Procedures and the location of exits and emergency equipment, but employees are not required to use the fire extinguishers provided.

Employees should address any questions or concerns to their Supervisor or the Director of Safety and Security.

### **Injuries on the Job**

Regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, any employees who are injured on the job must immediately notify their Supervisor and the Human Resources Department. Employees must also complete an Accident Report. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and to initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures. Failure to abide by this policy will result in discipline up to and including termination.

If medical attention is required, employees should contact their Supervisor or Division Head prior to going to a medical care provider, unless it is an emergency.

Employees should provide the Human Resources Department with medical documentation of their initial work status and any subsequent changes to it. An employee's authorized medical care provider must support, in writing, all injury-related time away from work.

### **Personal Belongings**

Purses, bags and other valuables should not be left unattended. Please store valuable items in a secure space. Garrison Forest School will not be responsible for personal items that are lost or stolen.

### **Safety**

To assist in providing a safe and healthy work environment for employees, students, and visitors, Garrison Forest School expects employees to obey safety rules and to exercise caution and common sense in all work activities. Employees should be especially mindful of potential safety hazards and risks that may affect Garrison Forest School students or other children on Garrison Forest School premises. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to their Supervisor.

### **Security**

All faculty and staff are considered an essential part of the overall security program at Garrison Forest School. If there is a serious problem, or if you see anyone you do not recognize feel should not be on campus, use a two-way radio to contact one of the security guards.

1. If you do not have access to a radio, call the 24-hour security cell phone at 443-744-3708.
2. During business hours, you can contact Maintenance at Ext. 3158, the Business Office at Ext. 3141 or Head of School Office at Ext. 3102.
3. If appropriate, call the police on 911. Give them the location (300 Garrison Forest Road), the nature of the problem, and where you will meet the officer. If the police or

fire departments are called, you should contact a member of the Crisis Management Team. Refer to the list of members and phone numbers under **Crisis Management Plan** in this Handbook.

4. If the situation demands and it is not during normal working hours, contact Jim Shea (443-744-3707), Butch Ely (443-744-3701), Stacy Mohn (301-221-8861), or Ann Teaff (615-330-5708) on their cell phones.
5. Emergency Call Boxes are located in the following campus locations and are illuminated at night with a bright blue light.
  - Manor House loop between Manor House and Moncrieffe
  - Lower student parking lot (front end near athletic fields)
  - Entrance to the parking lot between the Middle School and Equestrian Center
  - The sidewalk in front of Robinswood
  - Entrance to Middle School parking lot
  - Roadway behind the Campus Center (near second turf field)
  - Roadway at entrance to Livingston (pit)
  - Walkway by the Eyebrow
  - In front of Marshall-Offutt Building

The Reisterstown Road gates (at the traffic light) will be closed daily. If you need to enter the campus during the school day, please use the assigned access code or enter via Garrison Forest Road. If you are on campus, you may still exit campus using the Reisterstown Road gates. Simply pull up to the white line at the closed gate, and the gate will automatically open to allow you to exit. GFS gate schedule:

- Reisterstown Road Gates: Automatic gates remain closed daily. Please use access code to enter
- Maintenance Gates(near softball field): Open daily for Maintenance and Deliveries with access code
- Garrison Forest Road Gates: Open Monday – Friday, 5:00 AM until 9:00 PM
- Garrison Forest Road Gates: Open Saturday – Sunday, 7:00 AM until 9:00 PM

At the Garrison Forest Road entrance gates there is an access box where you can enter your four digit code, if assigned, or call for assistance. Contact Security to sign up for a hang tag or to get a four digit access code for the Garrison Forest gate.

### **Workplace Violence Prevention**

The safety and security of Garrison Forest School employees, and students are of vital importance to the School. Therefore, in the interest of protecting the safety of all of these persons and the assets of our School, we have developed this policy to deal with anger, harassment, intimidation, threats, and potential and/or actual violence in the workplace.

### Zero Tolerance

The School has a zero tolerance policy for actions, statements, or other behavior by anyone that is, or is intended to be, violent, threatening, intimidating or harassing. This zero tolerance policy is in effect at all times and applies to every person on School property or while on School business. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, Staff, students, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on School property or while on School business will not be

tolerated. Furthermore, School employees are prohibited from engaging in violent behavior, including, but not limited to, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment in any form, or physical attacks.

#### No Weapons

No weapons of any type, including, but not limited to, guns, knives, cross-bows, bow and arrows, air pistols, air rifles, darts, explosives, toxic agents, brass knuckles, or any other weapons or destructive devices designed to inflict injury or cause physical damage are allowed on School premises, property, or vehicles, including, but not limited to, parking areas owned or used by the School. This applies whether the weapon is on the individual's person, carried in a container or openly, or in a vehicle brought onto School premises. Furthermore, School employees are prohibited from having, possessing, or otherwise controlling weapons at any time and at any place while on School business.

#### School Response

Any person who has a weapon, makes or exhibits threats or behavior perceived by the School as threatening, engages in violent acts on School property, or otherwise engages in any behavior prohibited by this policy, shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and shall remain off School premises until the outcome of an investigation. Should the investigation provide a substantive basis for believing that violations of this policy have occurred, the School will initiate a decisive and appropriate response. This response may include, but is not limited to, termination of employment and/or seeking arrest and prosecution of the person or persons involved. It is essential that all personnel understand that no other existing School practice or procedure should be interpreted to prohibit decisions designed to prevent a threat from being carried out, a violent act from occurring, or a life-threatening situation from developing.

#### Employee Support and Participation Are Critical

When threats are made against people or property, they must be taken seriously. The ultimate success of any program aimed at preventing violence in the workplace requires your support and participation. Please do not ignore any employee or other person who is making threats or is disruptive in the workplace.

# Communications, Technology, and Travel

## Cellular Phone Usage

Cellular phones have become more widely used for personal and business reasons. This policy outlines the use of personal cellular phones while at work, the personal use of business cellular phones, and the safe use of cellular phones by employees while driving.

### Personal Cellular Phones

While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones as is expected for the use of the School phones. Excessive personal usage of cell phones for calls, texts, or other personal use during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Garrison Forest School encourages employees to limit personal use of cell phones to a reasonable amount during work time. Employees also should ensure that any cellular phone's sound settings are set at a volume that will not disrupt others if activated.

The School will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace. Please see the policy on "Use of Personal Devices" for more information regarding the use of personal devices for work purposes.

### Personal Use of School-Provided Cellular Phones

Where business needs demand immediate access to an employee, the School may issue a business cell phone to the employee for work-related communications. These phones are the property of Garrison Forest School, and the School retains the right to access information stored on them, search them, or consent to a search by a third party. Phone logs may be audited to ensure no unauthorized use has occurred. Employees in possession of School equipment such as cellular phones are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage, or theft. Upon resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request, the employee may be asked to produce the phone for return or inspection. Employees unable to present the phone in good working condition within the time period requested may be expected to bear the cost of replacement.

### Safety Issues for Cellular Phone Use

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving are expected to refrain from using any phone while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Generally, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road safely and lawfully stop the vehicle prior to using their phone. If circumstances require that the cell phone be used while driving, employees are expected to use hands-free options, required by Maryland law, keep the call short, refrain from discussions of complicated or emotional discussions, and keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken into situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area. Under no circumstances may employees send or read text messages or emails while driving, including while stopped at traffic signals.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities, penalties, fines, *etc.* that result from such actions. Violations of this policy may result in discipline, including termination.

## **Copyright Policy**

Employees are continually creating copyrightable works in the course of their employment with the School. As a matter of law, copyrights apply to the creation of any original work of authorship that is reduced to tangible form, including literary works, computer software, data sets, musical works, dramatic works, pantomimes and choreographic works, artistic works (pictorial, graphic, and sculptural), audiovisual works including motion pictures, sound recordings, architectural works and other forms of artistic expression. Ownership of copyright gives the owner a number of exclusive rights, including, among other rights, the exclusive rights to reproduce the material, make derivative works (such as translations), distribute copies to the public, and perform or display the material publicly.

Under U.S. Copyright Law, copyrightable works created by employees in the course of employment are generally considered “Works Made for Hire” and ownership vests automatically in the employer. Despite this right of ownership, the School generally does not claim ownership of copyrighted works except in two circumstances, as defined below.

### Traditional Works of Scholarship

Traditional Works of Scholarship include, but are not limited to: syllabi and other original materials created by an employee for use in a course, books (including textbooks) created by an employee for use in a course, other forms of textual material (whether in printed form or electronic media), software, works of art and other creative works including music, lyrics, photographs, poetry, choreography, architectural works, sculpture, pictorial and graphic works, motion pictures, and sound recordings, which in each case are created as part of the academic and scholarly activities of an employee. The School shall retain ownership of any and all copyright in Traditional Works of Scholarship: (i) if the work was specifically requested, commissioned, contracted for or assigned by the School; and/or (ii) the work was prepared in connection with teaching a course at the School; and/or (iii) if substantial School resources were used in the creation of the work. In cases where the School does not claim copyright ownership of a Traditional Work of Scholarship, the School reserves for itself and any and all successors or assigns the right to use, in perpetuity, any Traditional Work of Scholarship for administrative, promotional (including commercial promotional use), and/or academic purposes.

### Instructional Media

“Instructional Media” may be produced in a variety of tangible forms including electronic and print publications and recordings. Instructional Media is media that embodies/expresses teaching activities and/or interactive components that involve creators/authors and users of the Instructional Media, such as: (i) the content of courses and programs delivered using any form of media including print media, electronic media, in-person delivery (performance), recorded media (such as video and audio recordings, television broadcast, or radio broadcast, as well as forms of media which may arise in the future), and (ii) if applicable, the technology used to structure and deliver such course and program content.

The School reserves and retains ownership of any copyright in Instructional Media created in connection with the employee’s duties for the school or that were created with the School’s information or resources, regardless of whether the work was specifically requested, commissioned, contracted for or assigned by the School.

In any case where the School retains ownership of a copyright, the School may be willing to grant a limited license for the use of the work. Please contact the Business Office to discuss such a limited license.

### **Media Inquiries**

All media inquiries or requests must be directed to the Director of Communications. No employee should respond to an inquiry of the press or outside entity without the express permission of the Head of School.

### **Monitoring of Technology Use**

All of the School's information technology resources, including its telephones, voicemail, computing resources, networks, databases, websites visited by users on the Internet, chat groups, and newsgroups, and downloaded or uploaded software, are the property of the School, including any "personal" or "private" data or information stores on such resources. The School has the right to monitor any and all usage of its information technology resources. All employees must be aware that the institution may use automated software to monitor documents created, stored, sent, or received.

Employees should understand, therefore, that they have no right of privacy with respect to any messages or information created or maintained on Garrison Forest School's technology resources, including personal information or messages. Garrison Forest School may, at its discretion, inspect all files or messages on its information technology resources at any time for any reason. Garrison Forest School may also monitor its information technology resources at any time in order to determine compliance with its policies, for purposes of legal proceedings, to investigate misconduct, to locate information, or for any other business purpose. The School reserves the right to consent to a search of any resource by any third party.

Because Garrison Forest School reserves the right to access any personal communication without prior notice, employees should not use Garrison Forest School information technology resource to transmit any messages or to access any information that they would not want a third party to hear or see. Although incidental and occasional personal use of these systems is permitted, any such personal use will be treated the same as all other communications under this policy.

By accepting employment and/or continuing your employment with Garrison Forest School, you are expressly consenting to the monitoring of your use of any Garrison Forest School equipment, systems, machines, and other furnishings. Such monitoring may include the monitoring of telephone conversations, email, voicemail, and computer use; the search of any desks, drawers, cabinets, *etc.* to which you have access; and in some instances, the videotaping of those areas in which you work or conduct Garrison Forest School.

Because Garrison Forest School's telephones, computers, email, and voicemail systems are Garrison Forest School property, employees do not have the right to the contents of these systems/files once their employment has been terminated.

## **Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) Usage**

This policy establishes guidelines for the appropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the workplace. Although much of the policy describes the use of AI in the educational environment, the policy applies to all employees.

AI is the ability for machines to perform tasks that typically would require human intelligence. Generative AI is a specific type of AI that is trained on large volumes of written information that use algorithms to generate new creative content. Examples of Generative AI include Chat GPT, Bard, and other similar programs, which all have the capability to answer questions, provide explanations and summaries, draft documents, and simulate discussions among other things.

This policy applies when AI tools are used to perform, or assist in the performance of, any work-related activities. This policy applies regardless of the location of AI users at the time they use AI tools, and regardless of whether the AI tools are used on School devices, personal devices, or third-party devices.

The School is committed to the ethical and non-discriminatory use of AI. These technologies must not be used to create content that is inappropriate, discriminatory, deceptive, or otherwise harmful to others or to the School or violative of School policies. All AI-generated content must be carefully reviewed for accuracy, appropriateness, and bias before relying on it for work purposes. AI users are responsible for ensuring that the AI-generated content aligns with the School’s mission and values, and should actively work to identify and mitigate biases in AI systems.

Below are guidelines to be evaluated and followed prior to using any AI products or tools:

- **Maintain confidentiality.** Employees may not input confidential or proprietary business information belonging to the School into a commercially, publicly-available AI tool. Inputs into AI prompts via text, speech, images, or any other means may not include confidential student information, and all inputs must be anonymized to avoid disclosing confidential information..
- **Beware inaccurate and biased information in AI.** Biases are inherent in AI, especially when using Generative AI tools. Information should be carefully reviewed for these biases (both unconscious and conscious), as well as validation of answers. Fact-checking information is necessary before answers may be used in any decision-making capacity.
- **Maintain human interaction** – AI should not replace essential human elements of teaching and mentoring. While AI can augment teaching, it must not substitute for the personalized interaction between teachers and students.
- **Maintain Professional Judgment.** It is inappropriate to use AI for high-stakes decisions, such as determining a student’s academic progression, grading, or disciplinary actions, or the hiring, promotion or discipline of employees, without human oversight. AI should support, not replace, an employee’s professional judgment.

## **Social Media**

Vital to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is the ability to adapt to the changing methods of communication, including social media networks and websites. Garrison Forest School teachers, students, and parents actively engage, collaborate, learn, and share in these digital environments. We support the development of a positive digital footprint by both the students and the School as a whole by continuing to share student accomplishments across these networks with the understanding that student safety is of the utmost concern. Educational use of social media is allowed provided that employees adhere to the website's Terms of Service (TOS) and age restrictions. Use of social media in the Garrison Forest School curriculum should be based on achieving educational objectives. To this aim, the School has developed guidelines to provide direction for teachers, administrators, students, and the GFS community when participating in online social media activities.

- Employees should not share personal information with students through social networking sites, and should always strive to maintain their professional role with students at all time.
- Employees should not be interacting through social media with students unless in connection with a legitimate educational or extracurricular activity.
- Employees should be aware that postings on such sites are in the public domain, and may be accessible by students, parents and others in the School community.
- Employees should abide by the social media site's policies regarding age, content, and usage. Please familiarize yourself with the policies and privacy settings of each of these sites, before you contribute to these channels.
- Employees may not post pictures or information which contain information concerning the identification of students. First and last names should not be used by classes or student groups when posting information to the web through Garrison Forest School social media channels; first names and last initials only should be used. The Garrison Forest Communications Department reserves the right to use first and last names in online and print publications and communications based on the broader significance of the student accomplishment.
- Employees should use discretion in posting information about the School or fellow employees. Employees may not use statements, photographs, video, or audio that disparage co-workers, students, parents, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or School policy.
- Unauthorized commercial use of the Garrison Forest School logo or any other unlawful use is prohibited. Please contact the Communications Department before using the Garrison Forest School logo on any social media or other website.
- Information an employee learns about students through these networking sites may trigger the duty under applicable law to report suspected abuse or neglect.
- Inappropriate communications with students through social networking sites, e-mail, text messaging or any other form of communication are prohibited.
- Supervisors may not use external social media to communicate or discuss Garrison Forest School policies with Garrison Forest School employees or others. Supervisors may not ask subordinates or students to join any personal network or association (such

- as inviting a subordinate to be a Friend on Facebook) via social media, although supervisors are free to accept such invitations from their subordinates.
- Because of governmental rules regarding advertising, any employee who posts information about the School on blogs, chat rooms or other public forums must ensure that the information is factual and accurate, and the employees must identify their affiliation with the School. No employee may post, publish or respond to postings or inquiries online on behalf of the School unless specifically authorized to do so, and employees who are not authorized should clearly state that any postings represent their own views, not the views of the School.

An employee's social computing postings must not violate any other applicable policy of Garrison Forest School, including those set forth in this Handbook and other documents setting forth employment guidelines. This policy is not intended to interfere with, restrain, or prevent concerted activity as protected by the National Labor Relations Act, including communication regarding terms and conditions of employment.

By accepting or continuing employment with Garrison Forest School, employees are agreeing to abide by the terms of this policy during employment with Garrison Forest School and that Garrison Forest School shall not be liable, under any circumstance, for any errors, omissions, loss or damages claimed or incurred due to any social computing postings.

#### Discipline for Violations

Garrison Forest School will investigate and respond to all reports of violations of this policy. Garrison Forest may request that any posting or communication in violation of the policy cease and/or be removed immediately. Violation of Garrison Forest School's Social Media Policy or refusal to comply with a request to cease or remove postings in violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Discipline or termination will be determined based on the nature and factors of any statement or post. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to take legal action where necessary against employees who engage in prohibited or unlawful conduct.

#### **Use of Personal Devices**

The School permits its employees to use their own personal phones, smartphones and tablets for work purposes for their convenience. This policy is intended to protect the security and integrity of the School's data and technology infrastructure. Limited exceptions to the policy may occur due to variations in devices and platforms. For more information regarding using a personal device on the school network, please review the monitoring of technology policy.

#### **Acceptable Use**

- Employees may use personal devices for activities that directly or indirectly support the School. Use must be consistent with and compliant with the School's computer policy.
- Employees may be blocked from accessing certain websites during work hours/while connected to the School network
- No photos or videos should be taken of any students or families with such devices without the consent of the families

- Employees may use their mobile device to access the following School-owned resources: email, calendars, contacts, documents, etc.
- The School has a zero-tolerance policy for texting or emailing while driving and only hands-free talking while driving is permitted.

### **Devices and Support**

- Smartphones including iPhone and Android phones are allowed.
- Tablets including iPad and Android are allowed.
- The School does not have the resources to offer IT support for personal devices; employees should contact the device manufacturer or their carrier for operating system or hardware-related issues.

### **Reimbursement**

- The School will not reimburse employees for any cost associated with the use of a personal device, unless specifically authorized by the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations.

### **Telephone Usage**

The telephone system (including voicemail) at Garrison Forest School is the property of the School and is provided for business purposes. While personal phone calls are not prohibited, their frequency, duration, and volume should not interfere with ongoing work, classroom activities, or distract fellow employees. Garrison Forest School is dependent on its telephone system. Use of business lines for personal reasons impedes the flow of business. Abuse of this privilege may lead to disciplinary action.

Garrison Forest School reserves the right to periodically monitor the usage of the telephone systems to ensure compliance with this policy.

### **Usage of Technology**

The Garrison Forest School computer systems, including computers, telephone and voice mail systems, e-mail systems, networks, databases, intranet, and internet access, have been established for an educational purpose. The term “educational purpose” includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities. The use of these systems is a privilege and not a right. No employee may grant access to GFS’s computer systems without specific authorization from the Director of Information Technology, Head of School or Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations. This includes sharing of passwords or other access codes to GFS systems, which should be appropriately complex, kept secure and changed regularly. GFS reserves the right to grant access to its systems to outside individuals for purposes consistent with its business purposes.

Garrison Forest School is committed to using advanced technology in our operation, and increasingly provides its employees with access to and use of various computer and electronic technology. Such products and services include, but are not limited to, computer hardware, software, data and networks, email, telephones, voice mail, fax machines, computers, video cameras, wireless remotes, recorders, and the Internet. Having access to Garrison Forest School’s computer network is a privilege, not a right. This policy applies to all employees when using

computers or Internet access, whether or not during working hours, and whether or not from the School campus.

Garrison Forest School's computing systems may be used for limited personal purposes during non-working time that do not interfere with the School's business purposes or overly burden the School's computer resources. The business email account should not be a substitute for on-line email access that should be utilized through home-based accounts. No School business should be conducted over personal email or on personal systems. Employees should be aware that electronic systems may not be secure and that any transmission of the School's confidential information over the internet or web-based mail services is prohibited unless such transmissions are encrypted for security. Employees should also recognize that use of personal devices to access School information may subject such devices to search or disclosure under some circumstances, including litigation involving the School.

GFS users are responsible for ensuring the confidentiality and appropriate use of institutional data to which they are given access, ensuring the security of the equipment where such information is held or displayed, ensuring the security of any accounts issued in their name, and abiding by related privacy rights of students, faculty and staff concerning the use and release of personal information. Employees should immediately notify GFS' Information Technology department of any actual or suspected loss or compromise of any equipment or data. GFS strives to provide the highest degree of security when transferring data, but cannot be held responsible if these measures are circumvented and information is intercepted, copied, read, forged, destroyed or misused by others.

Information security is a shared responsibility. One of the most prevalent threats to information security is social engineering. The goal of social engineering is to gain unauthorized access to systems or information to commit fraud, network intrusion, industrial espionage, identity theft, or simply to disrupt the system or network. Attacks can occur in a variety of ways – over the phone, on-line, and in person. Phishing has become one of the most prevalent forms of attacks by cyber criminals. Phishing attacks use email or malicious websites to solicit personal information by posing as a trustworthy organization or individual. When users respond with the requested information, attackers can use it to gain access to the accounts. Phishing attacks may appear to come from anywhere, including charities, banks, mobile service providers, or even colleagues or clients. Attackers often take advantage of current events and certain times of the year, such as natural disasters (*e.g.*, hurricane relief efforts), epidemics and health scares (*e.g.*, flu outbreak), and economic concerns (*e.g.*, IRS scams).

Employees can help prevent phishing attacks, which most often are an email from a trustworthy organization or individual in your contacts, by not opening attachments or clicking on hyperlinks that are in an email that seem suspicious, are unsolicited, have a false sense of urgency, or that you weren't otherwise expecting to receive, without first verifying in person or over the phone to the sender that they intended to send the email to you. Another tip is to hover your cursor or click on the sender's address since phishing incidents will often disguise their address to appear as if it is a trustworthy sender.

If you believe that you may have fallen victim to phishing or another social engineering attack, it is critical to notify IT immediately.

The School purchases and licenses the use of various computer software for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. GFS respects and abides by copyright laws and licensing agreements relating to software and data. Unless authorized by the software developer, GFS does not have the right to reproduce such software or use it on more than one computer. Faculty are not permitted to duplicate copyrighted software, and may not install on a computer owned or supplied by GFS any software not provided by or specifically authorized by GFS. Employees should not install any software on a computer for which we do not have a license. The installation of unauthorized programs may be destructive of data, other software, or the communication capabilities of our computers. Most music (e.g., shared music), games and other media should not be downloaded through the School's systems or stored on computers provided by the School. Employees should be aware of the increasing sophistication of attempts to breach data security, and should not open attachments or click on internet links if they have any concern or suspicion of their legitimacy. Any questions regarding any suspect messages, links or attachments should be addressed to the Information Technology department.

Faculty should be aware that use of materials from the internet may pose copyright infringement issues. Faculty who intend to use electronic materials in their classroom should consult with the Technology Committee prior to any use to ensure that their use of electronic materials complies with applicable law.

Garrison Forest School strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via computers, the Internet, or email must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably be considered to be harassing or discriminatory on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Employees may not use Garrison Forest School's computing systems to solicit other employees for any purpose without the express written authorization of the Head of School.

## **Security**

- In order to prevent unauthorized access, devices must be password protected using the features of the device and a strong password is required to access the School's network.
- The device must lock itself with a password or PIN if it is idle for five minutes.
- Rooted (Android) or jailbroken (iOS) devices are strictly forbidden from accessing the network.
- The employee's device may be remotely wiped of the School information if 1) the device is lost, 2) the employees terminate their employment, 3) IT detects a data or policy breach, a virus or similar threat to the security of the School's data and technology infrastructure. While the School will take reasonable precautions to prevent employee's personal data from being lost or compromised, the School assumes no liability for any damage or loss to personal information arising from such a data wipe. It is the employee's responsibility to take precautions, such as backing up email, contacts, etc. to prevent loss of personal data.

- Lost or stolen devices must be reported to the School within 24 hours. Employees are responsible for notifying their mobile carrier immediately upon loss of a device. The School is not responsible for loss or theft of personal devices.
- The employee assumes full liability for risks including, but not limited to, the partial or complete loss of school and personal data due to an operating system crash, errors, bugs, viruses, malware, and/or other software or hardware failures, or programming errors that render the device unusable.

### **Use of Equipment and Vehicles**

All employees are responsible for the proper use of all physical resources, equipment and property provided by Garrison Forest School, including all vehicles, electronic devices, software, means of electronic communication including, but not limited to, the following: automobiles, personal computers, and workstations; laptop computers; mini and mainframe computers; computer hardware such as disk drives, USB flash drives, and tape drives; peripheral equipment such as printers, modems, fax machines, and copiers; computer software applications and associated files and data, including software that grants access to external services, such as the Internet; electronic mail; telephones; cellular phones; Smartphones; USB devices; and voicemail systems.

Such equipment and vehicles are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using Garrison property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Supervisors should be notified if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The Supervisor can answer any questions about the employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

### **Vehicle Safety Program**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of those individuals who drive school vehicles or drive personal vehicles pursuant to Garrison Forest School business. School vehicles are to be driven by authorized employees only. Garrison Forest School business is defined as driving in the direction, or for the benefits of Garrison Forest School. It does not include normal commuting to and from work.

Vehicle accidents are costly to Garrison Forest School, but more importantly, they may result in injury to the employee or others. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. Garrison Forest School expects all employees driving school vehicles and/or driving vehicles pursuant to Garrison Forest School business to adhere to all applicable state motor vehicle laws and regulations, including that drivers must wear seatbelts and adhere to the speed limit.

### **Driver Guidelines and Reporting Requirements**

Employees must have a valid and current driver's license to drive a school vehicle or to drive for Garrison Forest School on Garrison Forest School business, and a copy of the employee's license may be required by the Human Resources Department or the Administration.

Any employee who has a driver's license revoked or suspended shall immediately notify the Business Office and immediately discontinue operation of the school vehicle. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

All accidents in school vehicles or which occur in a personal vehicle while being used for Garrison Forest School business, regardless of severity, must be reported to the Business Office. Accidents involving employee's personal injury must be reported to the Human Resources Department for Worker's Compensation purposes. Failing to stop after an accident and/or failure to report an accident may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Drivers must immediately report all ticket violations received during the operation of a school vehicle to the Business Office. Motor vehicle records will be obtained on all drivers immediately upon employment and periodically throughout employment. All drivers are required to have their MVA driving record run annually with our insurance carrier. A driving record that fails to meet the criteria defined by Garrison Forest School's insurance carrier will result in a loss of privilege of driving a school vehicle.

#### Driver Safety Rules

- The use of a school vehicle while under the influence of intoxicants or other substances, which could impair driving ability, is forbidden, and is sufficient case for severe discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
- Cellular phone use while driving should be kept to a minimum and must be conducted with a hands-free device and in accordance with all applicable laws
- While driving, attention to the road and safety should always take precedence over conducting business over the phone.
- No drivers shall operate a school vehicle when their ability to do so safely has been impaired for any reason, including intoxicants, illness, fatigue, injury, or prescription medication.
- All drivers and passengers operating or riding in a school vehicle must wear seatbelts, even if air bags are available.
- Drivers are responsible for the security of school vehicles assigned to them. The vehicle engine must be shut off, ignition keys removed, and vehicle doors locked whenever the vehicle is left unattended.

As stated above, employees are expected to and are responsible for adhering to all applicable motor vehicle laws when driving a school vehicle or driving pursuant to Garrison School business. Drivers will be financially responsible for any traffic violations incurred while driving a school vehicle or driving pursuant to Garrison School business (*i.e.*, exceeding the speed limit or running a red light). This policy is not intended to and does not list, outline or summarize these mandatory motor vehicle laws.

#### Personal Automobiles

Employees whose job tasks routinely require the use of their personal vehicle may be subject to a Motor Vehicle Record check.

Any personal vehicle used to conduct Garrison Forest School business must be insured in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland. Garrison Forest School is not responsible for

any damage to an employee's automobile, including physical damage and deductibles. Automobile accidents must be reported to the Business Office within 24 hours of the incident. At the time of the accident, the name, address, phone number, and other pertinent information should be obtained from the other driver and witnesses, if possible. All employees must wear seatbelts and may not exceed the speed limit while in an automobile intended for Garrison Forest School business.

# Leaves of Absence

## Bereavement Leave

If an employee wishes to take time off for the death of an immediate family member, the employees should notify their supervisor immediately. Garrison Forest School defines *immediate family* as the employee's spouse, domestic partner, parents (including step-parents, foster parents, parents-in law and domestic partner's parents), grandparents, siblings, children, children of a domestic partner, and step-children.

Garrison Forest School will grant full-time employees paid leave for a maximum of 3 days to arrange and attend a funeral of an immediate family member. Garrison Forest School reserves the right to request evidence of death, relationship to deceased, or both. If additional leave is needed for bereavement for an immediate family member, employees may use other available accrued paid leave.

## Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)

Under certain circumstance, employees may be eligible to take an unpaid leave of absence according to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Employees will be granted family/medical leave in accordance with all applicable federal and state requirements. The following is a summary of the leave entitlement and the procedures for requesting such leave.

### Eligibility

Regular full-time and part-time employees are eligible to request family/medical leave under this policy if they (1) have been employed by the School for at least one year; (2) have worked for the School at least 1,250 hours in the twelve month period immediately preceding the requested leave; and (3) are employed at a worksite with 50 or more employees within 75 miles of that worksite.

### Qualifying Reasons for Leave

- Birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent, who has a serious health condition;<sup>1</sup>
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his/her job; or
- for any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, child or parent is a military member on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status ("qualified exigency leave").

In addition, an eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness to take up to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a single 12-month period to care for the covered service member ("military caregiver leave").

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<sup>1</sup> A "serious health condition" is defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

## **Military Family Leave Entitlements**

### Qualifying Exigency Leave

Eligible employees whose spouse, child or parent is a member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard and Reserves) and is on covered active duty, call to covered active duty status, or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty, may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. For members of the Regular Armed Forces, “covered active duty” is duty during deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. For members of the National Guard and Reserves, “covered active duty” is duty during deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty in a contingency operation.

Qualifying exigencies may include the following:

- Short-notice deployment (limited to 7 calendar days)
- Military events and related activities
- Childcare and related activities
- Care of the military member’s parent
- Financial and legal arrangements
- Counseling rest and recuperation (limited to 15 calendar days)
- Post-deployment activities (up to 90 days)

### Military Caregiver Leave

A covered service member is either: (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness sustained in or aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty; or (2) a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period before the eligible employee first takes FMLA military caregiver leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness sustained in or aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty.

### Instructional Employees

Where noted below, the FMLA provides special rules for some aspects of family/medical leave when used by “instructional employees.” Instructional employees are employees whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, small group, or an individual setting. Instructional employees include teachers, athletic coaches, driving instructors and special education assistants, but does not include teacher assistant or aides who do not teach or instruct as their principal job, counselors, psychologists, curriculum specialists, cafeteria workers maintenance workers, bus drivers, or other employees who do not principally teach and instruct students.

## **Use of Leave**

For all qualifying reasons other than military caregiver leave, employees may take up to a total of 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month “rolling” period measured backward from the date you first take family and medical leave. Thus, each time you take FMLA eligible leave, your

remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 workweeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. Leave based upon the birth of a child or placement for adoption or foster care must be completed within the twelve month period beginning on the date of birth or placement.

Leave taken to care for a covered service member may be taken for up to twenty-six (26) weeks in a single 12-month period, calculated as the 12-month period that begins on the first date the employee uses leave for this purpose. During the single 12-month period, an eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of 26 weeks of leave for any qualifying reason (of which no more than 12 weeks may be for a qualifying reason other than to care for the covered service member). In cases where both spouses work for the School, there are limits on the combined total of FMLA leave that may be taken by both employees in any applicable 12 month period.

If an instructional employee is on family or medical leave at the end of the school year and ordinarily is not required to report to work during summer vacation, the period during the summer vacation does not count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. The employee will be provided with the same benefits over the summer vacation that they normally would receive had they been working at the end of the school year.

When an instructional employee takes family or medical leave that would extend close to the end of the academic term, Garrison Forest School has the option, in specific circumstances, to request that the employees continue taking leave until the end of the term rather than returning to their position shortly before the end of the term. Any period of time during which an employee is ready to return to work but the School requires him or her to remain on leave, the required leave will not be charged against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. For these purposes, "academic terms" are considered to be semesters that end near the close of the calendar year and the end of the school year respectively. If employees anticipate that their family or medical leave may conclude during the three week period before the close of the academic term, they should consult Human Resources for further information.

#### Intermittent Leave

When medically necessary for the employee's or a family member's serious health condition or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member, leave may be taken intermittently, or on the basis of a "reduced leave schedule" under which an employee's usual working hours each day or each week are reduced. Leave also may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule for qualifying exigencies. When leave must be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule for planned medical treatment, the treatments should be scheduled so as to not unduly disrupt School operations where possible. Leave taken because of the birth or adoption of a child or the placement of a child with the employee for foster care may be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule basis with the prior approval of the School.

The FMLA provides special rules for the use of intermittent leave by instructional employees in specific circumstances. If an eligible instructional employee needs foreseeable intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule based on planned medical treatment, and the employee would be on leave for more than 20 percent of the total number of working days over the period the leave would extend, Garrison Forest School may require the employee to choose either to: (i) take leave for a certain period of time (up to and including full time leave) for the duration of the planned

treatment; or (ii) transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified, which has equivalent pay and benefits and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position.

Additionally, where an instructional employee does not provide the required notice of foreseeable FMLA leave to be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule, Garrison Forest School may require the employee to choose either to (i) take leave for a particular duration; or (ii) transfer temporarily to an available alternative position. Alternatively, the School may require the employee to delay the taking of leave until the notice provision is met.

#### Requesting Leave

If the need for leave is foreseeable, you must give your Supervisor or Division Head at least 30 days' notice. In cases where 30 days' notice is not possible, you must give notice as soon as practicable after you learn of the need for leave. When the need for leave is sudden and unforeseeable, you should follow the School's standard call in procedures for unscheduled absences. If leave is needed due to a planned medical treatment, employees must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment to avoid disruption to the School's operations. The School has Request for Family/Medical Leave forms available in the Human Resources Department. You should use these forms when requesting leave. Failure to provide timely notice may delay the start of your FMLA leave or the denial of leave.

Employees requesting leave for their own or an eligible family member's serious health condition, or to care for a service member with a serious injury or illness, will be required to provide medical certification. Garrison Forest School also may require appropriate documentation to support a request for leave because of a qualifying exigency, including a copy of the family member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the family member has been called to active duty. The School allows up to 15 calendar days to return these forms. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient certification within the required timeframe may result in a delay or denial of the leave.

Garrison Forest School may, at its discretion, require a second medical opinion, periodic recertification and, in cases where the qualifying reason for leave lasts beyond a single leave year, a new medical certification annually.

#### Reporting While on Leave

If you take leave because of your own serious health condition or to care for a covered family member or service member, you must contact the School each month regarding the status of the condition and your intention to return to work. In addition, you must give notice as soon as practicable if the dates of leave change or are extended or initially were unknown.

#### Pay and Benefits While on Leave

FMLA is unpaid leave, except when you substitute accrued paid leave for unpaid leave. Eligible employees are required to substitute the following paid leave: includes all vacation, up to 5 days of accrued sick leave, Parental Leave, and Short Term Disability leave, if applicable. Thereafter, you will be permitted to take any remaining family and medical leave on an unpaid basis. Paid leave will be run concurrently with any FMLA leave. In other words, the combination of paid and unpaid leave will provide for an absence not to exceed twelve (12) weeks in a twelve (12) month

period with the exception of military caregiver leave, which provides for a maximum of 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period. Please note that FMLA provides only for protection of your job while you are on leave; it does not address when or whether you will be paid while on leave. Unless you are taking paid leave or are receiving benefits from some other source such as workers' compensation, FMLA leave will be unpaid.

During an approved family/medical leave, the School will maintain an employee's health benefits, as if the employee continued to be actively employed. If paid leave is substituted for unpaid family/medical leave, the School will deduct the employee's portion of the health plan premium as a regular payroll deduction. Employees who are not being paid will need to make arrangements with the Human Resources Department to pay their portion of benefits while on leave. If the employee elects not to return to work at the end of the leave period, Garrison Forest School may require the employee to reimburse Garrison Forest School for the cost of the premiums paid by Garrison Forest School for providing insurance coverage during the employee's leave, unless the employee cannot return to work because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or a covered service member's serious injury or illness or other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

#### Returning from Leave

If employees take leave because of their own serious health condition, medical certification indicating that the employee is fit to resume work with or without reasonable accommodation is required when returning from leave. Employees may obtain Return to Work Medical Certification Forms from the Human Resources Department. In general, eligible employees granted leave will be returned to the same position held prior to the leave or one that is substantially equivalent in pay, benefits and other terms and conditions. Employees who do not return to work at the end of the leave and who are not eligible for any other kind of leave will normally be separated from employment. An employee who fails to provide the Return to Work Medical Certification Form will not be permitted to resume work until it is provided. If an employee fails to return to work on the agreed upon return date and does not request in advance extension of the approved leave period, Garrison Forest School will assume that the employee has resigned.

When state and local laws offer more protection or benefits than the FMLA, the protection or benefits provided by those laws will apply. For more information regarding FMLA please see the Department of Labor General Notice located on their website at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov).

Garrison Forest School will not interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of any right under FMLA, and will not discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA. Please direct all complaints under this policy to the Director of Human Resources, or if you are not comfortable reporting to the Director of Human Resources, then to the Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations.

## Military Leave

An employee who joins the United States uniformed services is eligible for unpaid leave, except where applicable law dictates, for a period of up to five (5) years. This policy also applies to employees who are active members of military reserve units and who are required to participate in periodic reserve duties. Accrued vacation or discretionary leave may be used for this leave of absence if the employee chooses. If you request this leave, you must notify the Human Resources Office as soon as reasonably possible, and provide a copy of your orders.

Your health benefits will continue for you and your covered dependents for up to thirty-one (31) days of leave. During this time, Garrison Forest School will continue to pay its portion of any premiums for you, but you must continue to pay your portion of premiums for coverage for you and any dependents. Payment must be made in advance. For leave in excess of thirty-one (31) days, continued health benefits will be offered under COBRA provisions.

You are eligible for reinstatement with Garrison Forest School after returning from leave, provided you received an honorable or general discharge. You must apply for reinstatement between one (1) and ninety (90) days following discharge, depending on the length of military service.

Garrison Forest School is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is the policy that no employee of prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion, or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership.

Furthermore, no persons will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such persons have exercised their rights under this policy. If any employees believe that 403 they have been subjected to discrimination in violation of this policy, the employees should immediately contact the Director of Human Resources.

For further information regarding the School's military leave policy, applicable state and federal laws, and continuation of benefits contact the Director of Human Resources.

## **Holidays**

### All Staff and Administration

Holiday leave and holiday schedules may vary by department, based on Garrison Forest's operational and/or business needs. Eligible employees will be granted holiday leave as follows:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Rosh Hashanah (first day only)\*
- Yom Kippur \*
- Day before Thanksgiving

- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Winter break to include the following days:
  - Monday, December 22nd– Friday, January 2nd

For hourly staff:

\* If one or both of these holidays falls on a Saturday or Sunday it will not be observed on an alternate day.

If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee’s paid absence (e.g., vacation, sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time-off benefit that would otherwise have applied.

If your regular scheduled work day falls on a designated holiday, essential personnel would receive the holiday at two times their hourly rate for the hours worked on the holiday. Essential personnel are not compensated for holidays that fall on their scheduled days off.

Religious Holidays

Religious holidays not on Garrison Forest School’s holiday schedule may be taken as an accommodation with approval of the employee’s department head or supervisor. If the requested time off is approved, the employee will be excused and will not need to use any vacation, sick, or personal leave time.

Faculty Only

The Holiday leave schedule will be provided to faculty prior at the start of each school year. The Holiday schedule will vary from year to year. Faculty should be aware that misuse of personal leave may result in disciplinary action.

Holidays for faculty, staff, administration, and essential personnel may be eliminated if the school requires make-up days. If the school is open on a previously scheduled holiday and an employee is absent, they will be required to use vacation, sick or personal leave, as appropriate. If the employee does not have any leave available, the time will be taken without pay, subject to applicable federal and state law.

**Jury Duty Leave**

Garrison Forest School encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. We urge all employees to try to postpone jury duty to the summer months. If the employee is required to be absent for jury duty, they will be granted time off with pay for regularly scheduled work days. Unless otherwise required by federal or state wage and hour law, employees may only receive a maximum of 30 days of paid jury duty leave. If employees are required to serve jury duty beyond this period, they may request an unpaid jury duty leave of absence. Garrison Forest School will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the absence for jury duty. Vacation, sick, and personal leave benefits will continue to accrue during jury duty leave and employees will continue to be paid for scheduled holidays. There will be no adjustment in the employee’s salary for receipt of jury duty pay, witness fees, or expenses.

Jury duty leave is provided so that employees do not experience any loss of pay for **up to thirty work days** that they are absent due to mandatory jury service.

To be eligible for jury duty pay, the appropriate Supervisor and the Human Resources Department must be provided with a copy of the jury certificate or court order. Garrison Forest School or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in Garrison Forest School's judgment, the employee's absence would create significant operational difficulties.

The employee is expected to report for work when it does not conflict with court obligations. If the employee is not required to serve as juror on a particular day or is dismissed before the end of the employee's normal workday, the Supervisor must be contacted, and the employee should report to work as soon as possible. It is the employee's responsibility to keep their Supervisor or Department Head periodically informed about the amount of time required for jury duty or court appearances.

### **Parental Leave**

Garrison Forest School provides full time employees (75 percent full-time equivalency or more) with six (6) weeks of paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of the employee's child after 12 months of continuous employment. This leave must be taken at the time of the birth or adoption of the employee's child. If an employee is also eligible for STD, the first six (6) weeks of leave after the birth or adoption of the child will be paid under this policy, and the balance under the provisions of the STD plan. An employee eligible for STD as well as Parental Leave and/or FMLA Leave, will be placed on both types of leave concurrently. Health insurance benefits will continue to be provided during the paid parental leave under this policy.

Employees should refer to the FMLA Policy and the Sick and Vacation Policies for information about leave that may be available after the 6 weeks of paid parental leave is completed.

The employee must provide 30-day notice (or as much notice as practicable if the leave is not foreseeable) to their Supervisor and complete the necessary forms with the Director of Human Resources.

If both parents are employees, only one may access the paid benefits of this policy. Both, however, continue to be entitled to FMLA leave if eligible.

This benefit is only for employees who intend to return to work once their available leave has been exhausted.

### **Personal Leave**

Garrison Forest School provides three (3) paid personal leave days to all regular full-time employees per year. The purpose of this leave is to permit employees to address personal matters that they cannot deal with outside regular business hours.

Personal leave days run on a school year basis for faculty and a fiscal year basis for staff, administration, and essential personnel. Personal leave days are not intended to be used as sick leave days. Unused personal days will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment. In addition, personal leave days do not carry forward from one year to the next year. The School reserves the right to deny personal leave requests.

## Procedures

Employees are advised to plan their personal leave days and submit a Leave Request Form to their Supervisor at least two weeks in advance. Supervisors will approve or deny the requests within five work days when submitted in advance and forward to the Human Resources Department. Employees should not assume the leave will be automatically approved. If the leave is needed due to an emergency, employees should notify their Supervisor as soon as possible. If prior authorization is not received, it could result in loss of pay.

## **Sick Leave**

Garrison Forest School provides paid sick leave benefits to all full-time and part-time employees regularly scheduled to work at least 12 hours per week for periods of temporary absence for the following reasons:

- To care for or treat the employee's mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
- To obtain preventative medical care for the employee or the employee's family member;
- To care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or condition;
- For parental leave; or
- The absence from work is necessary due to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking committed against the employee or the employee's family member and the leave is being used: (1) to obtain medical or mental health attention; (2) to obtain services from a victim services organization; (3) for legal services or proceedings; or (4) because the employee has temporarily relocated as a result of the domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

A family member includes a spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or legal guardian.

Sick leave is paid at the employee's normal base or hourly rate. If the employee is absent due to illness for three (3) consecutive days, they must furnish a doctor's note allowing a return to work

Full-time employees are granted seven (7) days of paid sick leave. Part-time employees regularly scheduled to work at least 12 hours per week will receive sick leave, modified by an appropriate factor, which reflects that fraction of a regular workweek for which the employee is regularly scheduled.

Sick leave is provided on an employee's first day of employment and on the first day of the employee's respective work year, as set forth below. While newly-hired employees receive their allocation of sick leave on their first day of work, they are not eligible to use paid sick leave until after 90 days of employment. Employees who are hired after the beginning of the applicable work year will have their leave pro-rated based upon date of hire, but in no event less than 40 hours for full time employees.

Employees in various categories are hired based upon different "work years." Work years are calculated as follows:

- **Staff, Administration and Essential Personnel (July 1 – June 30)**
- **Faculty (September 1 – August 31)**

Sick leave does not carry over from year to year and must be used within the year for which it is granted. Hours used for paid sick leave are not considered hours “worked” for the purposes of computing overtime. Unused sick leave will not be paid out during employment or upon termination of employment. Employees who abuse this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

When requesting any leave time, a Leave Request Form should be completed and approved by the faculty or staff’s direct report. The form can be found on the [www.GFS.org](http://www.GFS.org) website, under the Human Resources page.

#### Procedures for Faculty Use of Sick Leave

Any time a faculty member intends to use sick leave, it is the responsibility of employees to notify their Division Head as soon as the need for leave is known or by no later than 7:00 a.m. of that day. This is true unless the employee is under a doctor’s care and has been advised not to work for a specific period of time. In such cases, the Division Head should be notified of the date the employee will be returning to work, in which case a daily phone call is not necessary.

If an employee reports out sick the Division Head will make arrangements for a substitute teacher. Division Heads need to be told who has been engaged and for what period of time. Detailed lesson plans must be made available for the substitute teacher and Division Head if it is a foreseeable absence.

#### Procedures for Staff, Administration and Essential Personnel Use of Sick Leave

Any time staff, administration, or essential personnel employees intend to use sick leave, it is the responsibility of employees to notify their Supervisor at least one hour before the start of their shift. If possible, employees are advised to notify their Supervisor in advance if sick leave is needed for scheduled appointments. If the employee is under a doctor’s care and has been advised not to work for a specific period of time, then employees may not have to notify their Supervisor each day of the absence. In such cases, the Supervisor should be notified of the date the employee will be returning to work, in which case a daily phone call is not necessary.

#### **Vacation Leave (Staff, Administration and Essential Personnel Only)**

Paid vacations are granted as recognition of service to the school. The vacation year begins on July 1st of each year and ends June 30th of the following year. Current year *unused* vacation leave will be carried over, but must be used by August 31 of the next fiscal year or it will be forfeited. If an employee voluntarily or involuntarily leaves the School between July 1st and August 31st, any vacation leave carried over from the previous year will be forfeited and not paid out.

All vacation requests must be approved in advance. Employees are advised to plan their vacations and submit written requests to their Supervisor at least two (2) weeks in advance, and earlier if possible. Employees may not be permitted to schedule vacations at critical work times for their department. Should there be a department conflict in scheduling, priority will be given to those employees with the greatest amount of overall service to the School.

All employees must complete the ninety (90) day probationary period prior to taking any vacation. Vacation will not be deemed to have been accrued until the expiration of the ninety (90) day period.

Should an employee terminate before the end of the ninety (90) day period, he/she will not be paid for any earned but unused vacation accumulated during this time. Upon termination of employment after the ninety (90) day orientation period, any accrued but unused vacation will be paid out on a prorated basis provided: (1) the employee has provided two weeks' notice of resignation; and (2) the employee was not terminated for cause.

Part-time employees will receive a pro-rated amount of vacation based upon the fraction for the workweek for which the employee is regularly scheduled.

Full-time employees receive vacation with pay in accordance with provisions set forth below:

Accruing Vacation During Your First Months of Employment:

All accrued vacation is prorated based on month of hire. Taking vacation time is subject to manager approval.

Accruing Vacation Each Vacation Year:

Beginning the July 1 immediately following your employment and every July 1 thereafter, you will earn vacation at a set rate per month for each month that you work. If your anniversary date falls after July 1 of your 6<sup>th</sup> year or 13<sup>th</sup> year of employment your vacation time will be prorated. This rate will be determined according to the following schedule and is based on your years of continuous service with the School:

<b>Years of service:</b>	<b>Eligible For:</b>	<b>Amount Earned Per Month:</b>
1-5 years	2 weeks	1 day per month to maximum of 10 days
6-10 years	3 weeks	1.5 days per month to maximum of 15 days
11 years and up	4 weeks	2 days per month to maximum of 20 days

\*\* Some positions do not follow the vacation schedule, please see the Director of Human Resources for details.

\*\* There are some administrative positions that begin with 4 weeks of vacation from their date of hire. Employees in these positions will be notified during the orientation or initial employment process.

\*\* Senior staff automatically begin with 6 weeks of vacation accrued. Employees in these positions will be notified during the orientation or initial employment process.

# Employee Benefit Programs

## Employee Benefits

Garrison Forest School provides benefits to eligible employees as outlined below. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Any description of employee benefits in this Handbook only summarizes the provisions of a formal benefit Plan Document and does not attempt to cover all of the details contained in the Plan Document. Benefits eligibility is dependent on a variety of factors and governed solely by the official Plan Document. The Human Resources Department can assist you in identifying the programs for which employees are eligible.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan
- Medical Insurance
- Health Savings Accounts (HSAs)
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)
- Life Insurance
- Long-Term Disability Coverage
- Short-Term Disability Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Child Care Benefits
- Tuition Remission
- Professional Development
- Technology Loans
- Lunch
- Faculty and Staff Recognition

The providers, policies, and benefits may change from time to time without prior notice. If there is any conflict between the description of benefits below, any information you receive orally, and the express terms of the benefits Plan Document, the terms of the benefits Plan Document will govern.

### **403(b) Retirement Savings Plan**

Part-time and full-time employees (50 percent or more full time equivalency) can immediately begin contributing a portion of their salary to the retirement savings plan on a pre-tax basis. After one year of employment, the School will match an eligible employee's contribution. If the employee contributes at least 3 percent but less than 5.5 percent, the amount of the match is 3 percent of the employee's compensation. If the employee contributes at least 5.5 percent, the amount of the match is 5.5 percent of the employee's compensation. The 3 percent match is only available for the first 3 years after the employee becomes eligible to participate in the plan. Once an employee has received the 3 percent match for 3 years the employee will need to increase their

contribution to 5.5 percent in order to continue to receive the Garrison Forest School match at 5.5 percent. If the employee was contributing to a retirement savings plan immediately prior to employment at Garrison Forest School, the one year waiting period will be waived and the School's match will start immediately.

### **Medical Insurance**

Garrison Forest School provides four medical plan options for its employees. Employees with 50 percent or more full-time equivalency are eligible for medical and prescription benefits through the school. The school will pay 90 percent of the individual employee's premium, 90 percent of the employee's portion of the employee/children premium, or 50 percent of a family and employee/partner premium for each eligible employee who purchases his/her insurance through the School's plan. Coverage is available to domestic partners. There are tax implications for this coverage.

Garrison Forest School offers four medical plans: A PPO plan, Two HSA High-Deductible Health Plans (HDHP) and a Kaiser HMO plan. Updated information about premium amounts, costs and coverage for each plan is distributed to employees each year during open enrollment.

### **Health Savings Account (HSA)**

Health Savings Accounts (HSA) allows you set aside money on a pre-tax basis to pay for qualified medical expenses. By using untaxed dollars in a Health Savings Account (HSA) to pay for deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and some other expenses, you can lower your overall health care costs. An HSA can be used only if you opt for the HDHP.

### **Dental Insurance**

Three dental insurance plans are available to employees (50 percent full-time equivalency or more). Employees enrolled in dental insurance are responsible for 100 percent of the premium.

### **Vision Insurance**

Garrison Forest School offers employees (50 percent full-time equivalency or more) with vision insurance. Employees enrolled in the vision plan are responsible for paying 100 percent of the premium.

### **Flexible Spending/Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts**

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) allow employees (50 percent full-time equivalency or more) to set aside a portion of their earnings each year to pay for certain out-of-pocket health care and/or dependent care expenses up to the allowable IRS limit. The money set aside is deducted from the employee's paycheck on a pre-tax basis. If employees have out-of-pocket expenses for either daycare or for health care services not fully covered by health or dental plans, enrollment in these FSA plans could save up to 30 percent or more by using money that has not been taxed.

### **Life Insurance**

Basic life insurance coverage is offered to employees (75 percent full-time equivalency or more) and is equal to two times an employee's annual earnings rounded to the nearest \$1,000, or \$175,000 whichever is less. Garrison Forest School pays 100 percent of the premium. The life insurance is a term policy with the term being the period of employment with Garrison Forest School. The policy does not earn interest or pay dividends to policy holders. Life insurance

coverage in excess of \$50,000 is subject to Social Security, or Federal and/or State employment taxes.

### **Long Term Disability Insurance**

Garrison Forest School maintains a long-term disability insurance plan that protects employees (75 percent full-time equivalency or more) against loss of income from non-occupational illness or injury. Employees are eligible for long-term disability after three months of employment. The insurance activates if an employee is out of work for 90 days or longer and generally pays 60 percent of the employee's salary up to \$5,000 a month and is required for all eligible employees. The semi-monthly, employee payroll deduction is \$8.00.

#### Procedures

Employees who need to request Long Term Disability (LTD) leave should notify the Human Resources Department as soon as they know the leave will be needed. A claim must be submitted to the insurance carrier who will determine eligibility for benefits. If a claim is approved by the insurance carrier, benefit checks are issued directly to the employee.

If a claim is approved the LTD has a 90 day elimination period. The elimination period is a period of time that must be exhausted before benefits will be paid. If a claim is approved, the insurance carrier will pay 60 percent of income after the elimination period. Maximums apply and can be found in the plan document. Employees have the option of offsetting the LTD benefit and may use accrued vacation, personal, or sick leave days that they are entitled to in order to cover the remaining 40% of income during all or a portion of the disability leave. If an employee does not have enough accrued leave, or chooses not to use accrued leave to offset the elimination period or the 40% of income, the time off will be granted without pay. To the extent any statement in this Handbook relating to LTD conflicts with the actual plan document, the terms of the actual plan document control.

Employees should also review the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy to determine if the reason they are taking LTD also qualifies for unpaid leave under the FMLA. If the employees' leave qualifies for FMLA leave, then their FMLA leave will run concurrently with the LTD. Please refer to the FMLA section of the Handbook for detailed information regarding the policy.

### **Short Term Disability**

Once a full-time employee (75 percent full-time equivalency or more) completes twelve (12) months of continuous employment with the School, they will be eligible for short-term disability ("STD") coverage. This will apply in the event they cannot work due to their serious illness or injury for absences up to three (3) months in any twelve-month period measured backward from the first day of coverage. Coverage is based upon length of service and is described in detail at the end of this policy. After three (3) months of absence for medical reasons, the employee, if eligible, may apply for long-term disability benefits.

Eligible employees who are medically disabled by illness or injury for a period exceeding five (5) consecutive working days are eligible for this benefit. All requests for STD must be made in writing to the employee's immediate Supervisor and to the Business Office and must include physician certification of the serious illness or injury. The request should state the employee's name, last date worked, date of the request, purpose of the absence, appropriate sufficient medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider that justify the absence, that the employee

is unable to perform their duties, and the expected starting date and duration of the need for coverage. If the absence is foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the School of not less than thirty (30) days. Coverage will be denied for lack of notice unless there is a reasonable excuse for the delay. If coverage is denied for lack of notice, the employee may designate coverage to start thirty (30) days after notice is given. If the absence is not foreseeable, the employer must notify his/her Supervisor as soon as possible and practicable. In emergencies, the employee or a family member should contact the School by phone followed by a written request as soon as possible.

The School may request recertification periodically. The School reserves the right to require a second opinion from another health care provider at its expense.

Employees who do not return to work at the end of STD and who are not eligible for further leave will normally be separated from employment. However, additional unpaid leave may be granted to individuals with a disability as reasonable accommodation to their disability on written request to the Business Office as required by law. Employees who are unable to return to work may be entitled to long-term disability benefits in accordance with that plan, but may be separated from employment at that time.

An employee eligible for both FMLA leave and Short-Term Disability benefits will be placed on FMLA leave concurrently with the receipt of STD. Employees who have paid leave (such as vacation, sick leave or Parental leave) available at the time of application for STD benefits will have benefits paid first from paid leave (except that only 5 days of sick leave will be required), with the remainder of the absence paid under the schedule below. In no event will the combination of paid leave and STD allow for more than three months' absence.

The length of time on STD is a medical issue that will vary from individual to individual and is ultimately determined by the physician. With proper and continuing medical verification, an employee who is medically disabled will be paid at the contract base rate, or hourly rate, assuming a 40-hour week, as the case may be, according to the following schedule. The benefit begins following the 5 working day elimination period. Employees may apply unused sick days to cover this 5-day period.

years of completed service at commencement of the disability	percent of compensation to be paid from all sources	for a period of
0-4*	90%	1 month
	40%	2 months
5-9	90%	1 month
	60%	2 months
10-14	100%	1 month
	70%	2 months
15-20	100%	2 months
	80%	1 month
over 20	100%	3 months

\* Employees must complete twelve (12) months of continuous employment before they are eligible for this benefit.

If you are eligible to receive any payments from another source while you are receiving this benefit from us, you must notify us. If you fail to provide the required notice, you will be responsible for any payments we make to which you were not entitled as a result of that other payment. Garrison Forest reserves the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether the amount of this benefit will be offset by payments you are eligible to receive from another source.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is offered to all employees and eligible dependents at no cost. The EAP can help if employees or their family members need assistance with problems that may respond to short-term problem solving. EAP services are not tied to the medical plan through Garrison Forest School. The EAP counselors can be accessed 24 hours a day, year-round by calling 1-866-248-4094. The EAP is free to use and is strictly confidential. Information is not released to Garrison Forest School without the written consent of the employee or dependent.

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

All employees of Garrison Forest School are covered by workers' compensation insurance at no cost to the employee. This insurance will compensate for lost time from work, medical expenses and loss of life or dismemberment from a work-related injury or illness. Employees must report any work-related injury or illness immediately to their Supervisor. It is for your benefit to report the incident and complete a "Workers Compensation – First Report of Injury or Illness" form from the Human Resources Department. Failure to report such incidents may result in a loss of benefits. Employees will not be retaliated against solely for reporting incidents and filing a claim with Worker's Compensation Insurance.

It is recommended the employee seek medical attention and provide the School with a note from the attending physician as to the time recommended to be away from work and/or restrictions. There may be a three-day waiting period before worker's compensation benefits for lost time begins. You are eligible to use your accrued sick time or any other accrued paid time off for

compensation during this waiting period. Employees will not be eligible to receive Short Term Disability (STD) pay concurrently with Worker's Compensation benefits. Time off from work while receiving Worker's Compensation benefits will run concurrently with FMLA, if the injury qualifies for FMLA leave.

### **Child Care Benefits**

Employees may enroll their children in on-site daycare if spots are available and established criteria are met. For additional information about the daycare please contact the Director of Early Childhood Education.

In addition, children of faculty who are enrolled in our preschool will receive lunch bunch and little woodlands care free of charge and children of faculty in our lower school will receive a 50% discount on aftercare provided by Harford Heights.

### **Tuition Remission**

Full-time faculty and staff members who have children in grades Kindergarten through twelfth are eligible for an 80% tuition remission benefit. Part-time employees who work 20 hours per week or more are eligible for a prorated amount based on their full-time equivalency (FTE). For example, if an employee is a 50% FTE, they will receive 50% of the 80% remission, or 40%. In addition, part-time employees may also apply for need-based financial aid for any amounts needed over and above the remission benefit.

Remission for employees with preschool-aged students is 60% for full-time faculty and staff members. Part-time employees who work 20 hours per week or more are eligible for a prorated amount based on their full-time equivalency (FTE).

There is no waiting period for this benefit; however, employee children must meet the same standards for admission that apply to all students.

Returning children of faculty/staff-employees need to complete a Tuition Remission Benefit form if they intend to have their child/children re-enrolled for the next school year. This form is due by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the following school year.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development funding opportunities are available to Garrison Forest employees. The amount of each award is determined according to the availability of funds and the number of applicants for a particular grant. Please visit the Garrison Forest website for details.

### **Technology Loans**

The School offers an interest-free technology loan program to all employees (75 percent full-time equivalency or more) after a twelve (12) month continuous employment waiting period for new employees of the School. A laptop or tablet PC is provided to all faculty, but there may be a need for another computer at home, a printer, or additional software. With this interest-free program, you can borrow up to \$2,500 and the repayments can be deducted from your paycheck. The maximum term for this program is two years. Semi-monthly repayments will be the greater of \$35 or 1/48 (48 pay periods) of the original loan amount. Employees must wait one year after the repayment of their technology loan before they can request another loan. Any taxes due as a result

of a technology loan are the sole responsibility of the employee. If the employee voluntarily or involuntarily leaves, they will be responsible for the remaining amount owed to the school.

### **Lunch**

Lunch is available at no charge, Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Alumnae Hall during the school year.

### **Faculty and Staff Recognition**

The following awards are presented at Commencement:

#### Distinguished Teacher Award

A committee to select the recipient of this award is convened by the Head of School and meets during the first week of May.

#### Twenty Year Pin

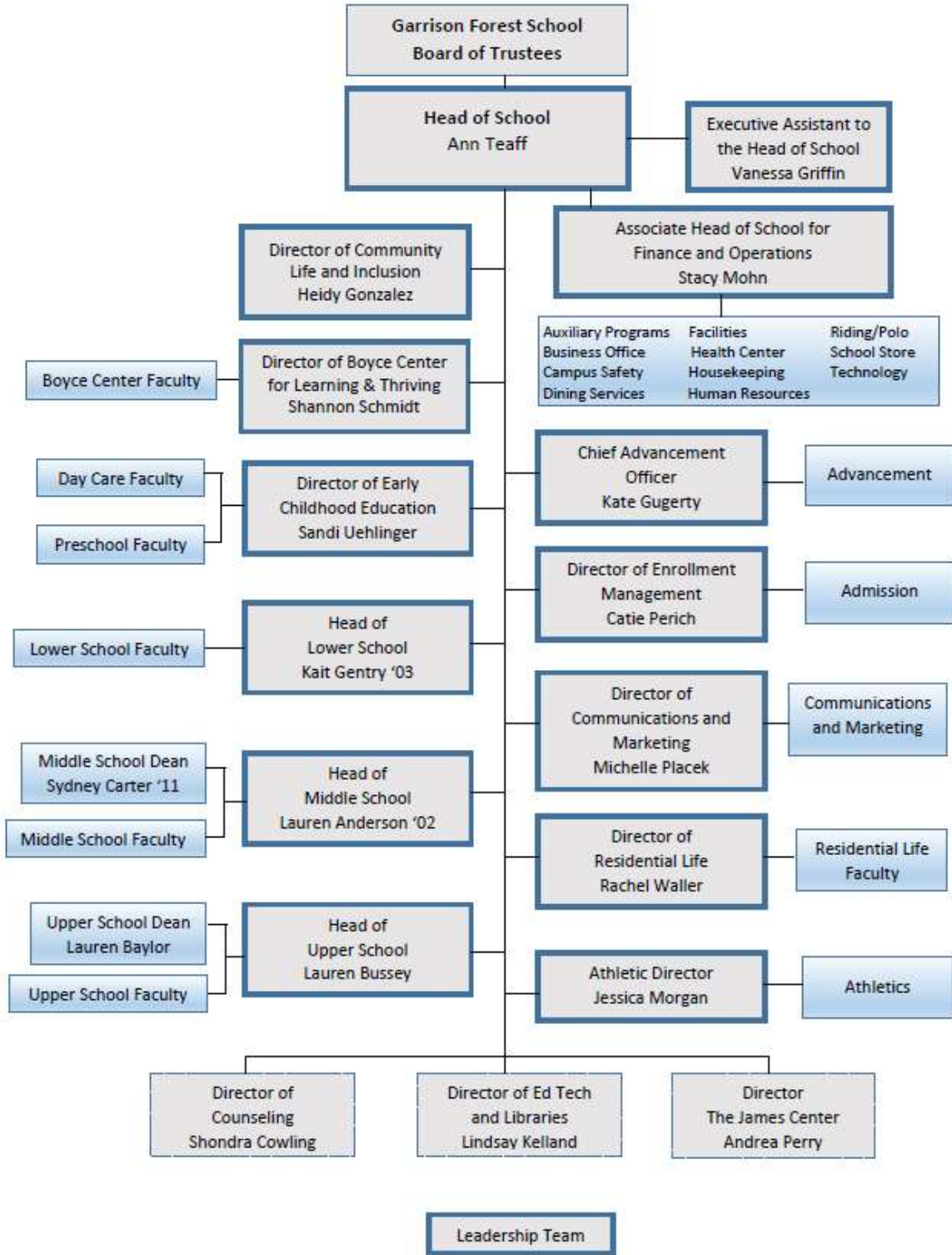
In recognition of twenty years of service employees are presented with a Garrison Forest Pin honoring their tenure.

In addition, faculty and staff will be recognized for their commitment to Garrison Forest School upon completion of five, ten, fifteen, twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, and forty years of service.

#### McGregor Distinguished Service Award

Presented annually to honor a staff member's service. Recognition will take place at the final faculty luncheon in June.

**Garrison Forest School**  
2025-2026



## Holiday Calendar Dates

### 2025

Friday, July 4th	Independence Day
Monday, September 1st	Labor Day
Tuesday, September 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Rosh HaShanah
Thursday, October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Yom Kippur
Wednesday, November 26th	Day before Thanksgiving
Thursday, November 27th	Thanksgiving Day
Friday, November 28 <sup>th</sup>	Day after Thanksgiving
Monday, December 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Friday, January 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Winter Break

### 2026

Monday, January 19th	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Presidents' Day
Monday, March 16 <sup>th</sup> -Friday, March 20 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Break
Friday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Good Friday
Monday, May 25 <sup>th</sup>	Memorial Day
Friday, June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Juneteenth Day

**Pay Dates for 2025-2026**

<b>07/01/2025</b>	<b>07/15/2025</b>
<b>08/01/2025</b>	<b>08/15/2025</b>
<b>08/29/2025</b>	<b>09/15/2025</b>
<b>10/1/2025</b>	<b>10/15/2025</b>
<b>10/31/2025</b>	<b>11/14/2025</b>
<b>12/01/2025</b>	<b>12/15/2025</b>
<b>01/02/2026</b>	<b>01/15/2026</b>
<b>01/30/2026</b>	<b>02/13/2026</b>
<b>02/27/2026</b>	<b>03/13/2026</b>
<b>04/01/2026</b>	<b>04/15/2026</b>
<b>05/01/2026</b>	<b>05/15/2026</b>
<b>06/01/2026</b>	<b>06/15/2026</b>
<b>07/01/2026</b>	<b>07/15/2026</b>

**Payroll Schedule for Salaried Employees**

<b><u>2025-2026 Payroll Schedule for Salaried Faculty and Staff Members</u></b>		
<b><u>Pay Date</u></b>	<b><u>Beginning of Pay Period</u></b>	<b><u>End of Pay Period</u></b>
7/1/2025	7/1/2025	7/14/2025
7/15/2025	7/15/2025	7/31/2025
8/1/2025	8/1/2025	8/14/2025
8/15/2025	8/15/2025	8/31/2025
8/29/2025	9/1/2025	9/14/2025
9/15/2025	9/15/2025	9/30/2025
10/1/2025	10/1/2025	10/14/2025
10/15/2025	10/15/2025	10/31/2025
10/31/2025	11/1/2025	11/14/2025
11/14/2025	11/15/2025	11/30/2025
12/1/2025	12/1/2025	12/14/2025
12/15/2025	12/15/2025	12/31/2025
1/2/2026	1/1/2026	1/14/2026
1/15/2026	1/15/2026	1/31/2026
1/30/2026	2/1/2026	2/14/2026
2/13/2026	2/15/2026	2/28/2026
2/27/2026	3/1/2026	3/14/2026
3/13/2026	3/15/2026	3/31/2026
4/1/2026	4/1/2026	4/14/2026
4/15/2026	4/15/2026	4/30/2026
5/1/2026	5/1/2026	5/14/2026
5/15/2026	5/15/2026	5/31/2026
6/1/2026	6/1/2026	6/14/2026
6/15/2026	6/15/2026	6/30/2026
7/1/2026	7/1/2026	7/14/2026
7/15/2026	7/15/2026	7/31/2026

**Payroll Schedule for Hourly Employees**

<u>2025-2026 Payroll Schedule for Hourly Staff Members</u>		
	-	
<u>Pay Date</u>	<u>Beginning of Pay Period</u>	<u>End of Pay Period</u>
7/1/2025	5/26/2025	6/15/2025
7/15/2025	6/16/2025	6/29/2025
8/1/2025	6/30/2025	7/13/2025
8/15/2025	7/14/2025	7/27/2025
8/29/2025	7/28/2025	8/10/2025
9/15/2025	8/11/2025	8/24/2025
10/1/2025	8/25/2025	9/14/2025
10/15/2025	9/15/2025	9/28/2025
10/31/2025	9/29/2025	10/12/2025
11/14/2025	10/13/2025	10/26/2025
12/1/2025	10/27/2025	11/9/2025
12/15/2025	11/10/2025	11/23/2025
1/2/2026	11/24/2025	12/14/2025
1/15/2026	12/15/2025	12/28/2025
1/30/2026	12/29/2025	1/11/2026
2/13/2026	1/12/2026	1/25/2026
2/27/2026	1/26/2026	2/8/2026
3/13/2026	2/9/2026	2/22/2026
4/1/2026	2/23/2026	3/15/2026
4/15/2026	3/16/2026	3/29/2026
5/1/2026	3/30/2026	4/12/2026
5/15/2026	4/13/2026	4/26/2026
6/1/2026	4/27/2026	5/10/2026
6/15/2026	5/11/2026	5/24/2026
7/1/2026	5/25/2026	6/14/2026
7/15/2026	6/15/2026	6/28/2026

## **Benefits Websites**

Cigna (Medical and Dental)	<a href="http://www.mycigna.com">www.mycigna.com</a>
Dominion Dental	<a href="http://www.dominionnational.com">www.dominionnational.com</a>
VSP Vision	<a href="http://www.vsp.com">www.vsp.com</a>
Wage Works Flexible Spending	<a href="http://healthequity.com/wageworks">healthequity.com/wageworks</a>
Optum Health Savings Account	<a href="http://www.optumbank.com">www.optumbank.com</a>
Reliance (Life Insurance)	<a href="http://www.reliancestandard.com">www.reliancestandard.com</a>
EBS Member Advocate Service	<a href="http://www.ebsonline.net">www.ebsonline.net</a>
First Financial Credit Union	<a href="http://www.firstfinancial.org">www.firstfinancial.org</a>
Legal Resources	<a href="http://www.legalresources.com">www.legalresources.com</a>
TIAA	<a href="http://www.tiaa.org">www.tiaa.org</a>

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Employee Assistance Program

<https://portal.bhsonline.com/>

[Username: EDUCATORS](#)

## 403(b) MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTION

<u>Year</u>	<u>403(b) Contribution Limit</u>	<u>Catch-up Contribution</u>
2025	\$23,500	\$7,500
2026	TBD	TBD

### 403(b) Contribution Limits

The \$23,500 contribution limit is subject to adjustment for the cost-of-living increases. (2025)

The TBD contribution limit is subject to adjustment for the cost-of-living increases. (2026)

### Catch-up Contribution Limits

If you are 50 or older, you may be eligible to make “catch-up contributions” in addition to your regular 403(b) plan limit.

### 15-Year Rule

If you have at least 15 years of service with the School, the limit on elective deferrals to your 403(b) account is increased by the least of:

- \$3,000 per year
- \$15,000, reduced by the sum of:
  - a. The additional pre-tax elective deferrals made in prior years because of this, plus
  - b. The aggregate amount of designated Roth contributions permitted for prior tax years because of this rule, or
- \$5,000 times the number of your years of service for the School, minus the total elective deferrals made by the School on your behalf for earlier years.

Please contact your financial advisor for guidance before making this additional contribution.

### Employer Matching Contributions:

The matching contributions made by Garrison Forest School do NOT affect the above contribution limits. Even if you contribute the maximum amount each year, your employer’s matching contributions are in addition to these limits.

**2025-2026 EMPLOYEE’S RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

I have received a copy of the Garrison Forest General Employee Handbook on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_. I understand it is my responsibility to read and fully understand the policies and procedures contained in this manual, and that I may, at any time during my employment with the School, ask questions about the information in the Handbook of my supervisor or any other representative of the School. I understand these policies govern my employment with the School and I agree to follow and abide by these policies and procedures.

However, I understand that the Handbook constitutes only an overview of some of the guidelines relating to work rules and other policies and practices and I understand that all rules, policies, practices and benefits, regardless of whether they are contained or described in the Handbook, may be unilaterally changed, amended, modified, reduced, or discontinued by the School at any time, in its sole judgment and discretion.

I also understand my employment is not for a defined period of time and nothing in this Handbook creates an expressed or implied contract for employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date