Student and Family Handbook
2026-2027

WEST CAMPUS	IVY TECH EAST CHICAGO	21st CENTURY ACADEMY
4030 WEST 5TH AVENUE GARY, INDIANA 46406 219.888.7120, X. 3400	410 EAST COLUMBUS DRIVE EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA 46312	1440 EAST 35TH AVENUE GARY, INDIANA 46409 219.888.7K120, X.3400

www.GaryMiddleCollege.org

Revised: 07/2026

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Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to Gary Middle College, a proud member of the GEO Foundation family of schools. If you are a returning student, welcome back! If you are new to our family, we are glad to have you!

Our schools are dedicated to providing the highest quality education to all students. While many schools say that, to us it means finding extraordinary teachers, equipping them with the latest technology and training them well on the techniques and curriculum that provide you with the best chances of success. We want to see you excel!

Thank you again for choosing our school to help you with your educational journey. We pledge to give you our best every day, and in return, we expect you to give us your best, too.

Have a wonderful school year!



Kevin D. Teasley, Founder and President
GEO Foundation and Gary Middle College

Hello Parents and Students,

As principal, I am proud to welcome you to your journey of academic success. We, at Gary Middle College (GMC), strive to offer you state-of-the-art facilities with a solid core of dedicated and professional staff members eager to assist you in this most important journey.

At GMC we believe in a team and family type environment and encourage our students to communicate with us on a regular basis. Doing so will allow all of us to work proactively in attempting to help assure your success with earning your Core-40 High School Diploma and Ivy Tech College credits.

Thank you for choosing GMC to further your educational endeavors. We are looking forward to an exciting, rewarding and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Terrence McCollough, Principal

Gary Middle College
tmccollough@geoacademies.org

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

No school owned or operated by GEO Academies shall discriminate against any student, teacher, or employee on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, or political affiliation.

Furthermore, our schools admit students of any race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, or political affiliation to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

Our schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, family situation, or political affiliation in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletic or other school administered programs.

CIVILITY POLICY

The staff, faculty and administrators of this school operate under the umbrella of a civility policy at Gary Middle College (GMC). There is an expectation of common civility in all interactions with members of the community. If that civility is breached, the employee is authorized to inform the violator that the interaction must be terminated for the time being. This includes, but is not limited to, phone calls, appointments (in-person/virtual), drop-ins, chance meetings, etc. The interaction may be initiated again once the violator has calmed down. The CAO, or other district/building administrator has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to the school or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would be detrimental to the good order of the school. If the individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the administrator is authorized to request removal by the local law enforcement agency.

HUMAN DIGNITY POLICY

Statements or behavior by any member of the school community which insults, degrades, harasses or stereotypes any person on the basis of race, gender, handicap, physical condition, socioeconomic background, ethnic or national origin, or religion is unacceptable.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 deals with the legal aspects of pupil records such as grades, race, discipline issues, etc., by making sure that no such information is provided to any outside institution, employer, etc., unless a written release is given by the legal guardian (or by the student if 18 years of age or older). Only “Directory Information”, defined below, may be disclosed by the school without prior written consent unless notified in writing to the contrary within 15 days of receipt of this handbook.

Gary Middle Colleges designates the following items as Directory Information: student name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, student photo, videotape (not used in a disciplinary matter)* and student work displayed at the discretion of the teacher.

GEO ACADEMIES MISSION STATEMENT

GEO Academies believes that all children should have access to a quality education that includes college and career readiness. We embrace all quality educational options that enable parents to help their children learn and schools to succeed. Through extensive community outreach, educational awareness programs, promotion of options that empower families and the creation of new options, GEO Academies strives to make educational choice a reality for all families, regardless of ethnicity or income.

GARY MIDDLE COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Gary Middle College will make "no excuses" for its student population and will dedicate itself to ensuring that all students show growth in character, academics, life skills, the arts, and wellness using teaching skills tailored to meet the needs of each student

.

VALUES

- High Expectations and Accountability
- Collaborative Growth Mindset
- Equity and Servant Leadership
- Academic Performance
- Professionalism
- Integrity

FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS

1. College and Career Readiness supported by a rigorous, highly aligned curriculum.
2. Blended learning that supports intentional intervention leveraging the resources of i Ready, IXL, Edmentum, in addition to the adopted curriculum
3. Implementation of RISE structures and systems to promote a culture of coaching and development.
4. Staff and Student performance data tracking with consistent progress monitoring
5. College immersion

OUR PROMISE

- Upon receiving a passing score on the Knowledge Assessment, college readiness exam, scholars are eligible to enroll in identified college courses and receive instruction on a university campus.
- Students can earn up to 60 Ivy Tech college credits or more while in high school (contingent upon successful performance mastery on the Knowledge Assessment)
- College tuition, books and transportation are free of charge.
- All college credits earned will support a degree and/or career certification.
- Once accepted into the university, scholars receive guidance on an appropriate sequence of study that aligns to their desired career path (Liberal Arts or STEM).

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Enrollment Policy for GEO Academies' Gary Middle College

Each item listed below must be received BEFORE your scholar will be permitted to start class:

1. Complete Gary Middle College's Application Packet
2. Student's Immunization History
3. Student's Birth Certificate
4. Student's Social Security Card
5. Student's Official Transcripts from all high schools attended.
6. Student's 504/IEP (if applicable)
7. Student and Parent/Guardian Valid Driver's License or State Identification Card
8. Student or Parent/Guardian residential address verification (1 piece of mail)

Enrollment in Dual Credit Program

In addition to the items that secure enrollment, all students participating in the dual credit program must have the following items on file:

1. Official Transcript from previous high school(s)
2. Participate in an interview with Principal and/or Guidance/College Counselor.

School Colors: Red, Grey, and White

Administrative Team

Executive Director, GEO NW Indiana Dr. Peter Morikis

Deputy Director of NW Indiana Region Mrs. Delincia Smith
Director of Curriculum Mr. Eric Steiner
Principal Mr. Terrence McCollough

School Contact Information

West Campus Front Office 219-888-7120, ext. 3200
Attendance 219-888-7120, ext. 3400

School Nurse, 219-888-7130, ext.3212

School Hours

Morning Session (West Campus)	8:00 AM - 11:00AM
Afternoon Session (West Campus)	12:00PM - 3:00 PM
Evening Session (Ivy Tech East Chicago)	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Evening Session (21st Century Academy)	4:00 PM- 7:00 PM

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

- Students may arrive at school 15 minutes before the start of the school day. Students should enter through the main doors of the school. All students must report directly to their assigned area for breakfast and remain there until dismissed to their respective classes.
- Students are expected to comply with security procedures upon entry to each campus. All unauthorized items will be confiscated immediately. **Students must utilize a clear book bag**. No other type of book bag or tote will be allowed at

any campus.

- Students will be dismissed 5 minutes before classes begin. All classes begin promptly at the designated start time.

Dismissal

- Students must leave the school building immediately following dismissal unless under the direct supervision of a teacher for an after-school activity.
- If students are staying for after-school activities, they must report immediately to their designated area.
- Once students leave the school, they are not allowed to re-enter the school building.

After School Pick Up

- Students are expected to be picked up (if not under direct supervision of a teacher) at 11:00 AM (morning session), 3:00 PM (afternoon session) and 8:00 PM (evening session). **Parents should contact the office immediately if an issue arises and they will be late.**

- IF PICKING UP AND/OR DROPPING OFF AT ANY OTHER TIME: When a student comes to school at a non-standard pick up and/or drop off time, the student must be brought/picked up at the front office by an authorized adult and signed in/out. **A photo ID is required**.

Early Release

- IF PICKING UP AND/OR DROPPING OFF AT ANY OTHER TIME: When a student comes to school at a non-standard pick up and/or drop off time, the student must be brought/picked up in the front office by an authorized adult and signed in/out. **A photo ID is required.**

DAILY SCHEDULE	Morning Session	Afternoon Session
Student Arrival Time	7:45 AM - 8:00 AM	11:45 AM – 12:00 PM
Breakfast/Lunch	7:45 AM - 8:30 AM	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Dismissed to Class	7:55 AM	11:55 AM
Classes Begin	8:00 AM	12:00 PM

Student Dismissal	11:00 PM	3:00 PM
Ivy Tech East Chicago (Evening Session)	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Monday-Thursday
21st Century Academy (Evening Session)	4:00 PM- 7:00 PM	Monday-Thursday

2026-2027 GEO INDIANA ACADEMIC CALENDAR

GEO ACADEMIES INDIANA

2026-27 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

First Teacher Day	July 23, 2026
Teacher PD	July 23 - July 29, 2026
First Student Day	July 30, 2026
Last Student Day	June 4, 2027
Quarter 1	July 30, 2026 - October 9, 2026
Quarter 2	October 26, 2026 - January 8, 2027
Quarter 3	January 11, 2027 - March 12, 2027
Quarter 4	March 29, 2027 - June 4, 2027
Semester 1 (89 Days)	July 30, 2026 - January 8, 2027
Semester 2 (91 Days)	January 11, 2027 - June 4, 2027
Last Teacher Day	June 4, 2027
SNOW MAKEUP DAYS	**JUNE 7,8,9, 2027**

School Not In Session for Students

Labor Day	September 7, 2026
Fall Recess	October 12, 2026 - October 23, 2026
Thanksgiving Recess	November 23 - 27, 2026
Winter Recess	December 21, 2026 -January 4, 2027
Spring Recess	March 15, 2027 - March 26, 2027
MLK Day	January 18, 2027
Presidents' Day	February 15, 2027
Memorial Day	May 31, 2027

TEACHER PD DAYS

Teacher PD	September 23, 2026
Teacher PD	January 4, 2027
Teacher PD	May 10, 2027

Students Do Not Attend on Teacher PD Days

SUMMER SCHOOL

Summer School	June 14 - July 8, 2027

ENRICHMENT WEEKS

Enrichment	October 12 - 16, 2026
Enrichment	March 15 - 19, 2027

July '26

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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August '26

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September '26

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October '26

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November '26

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December '26

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January '27

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February '27

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March '27

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April '27

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May '27

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June '27

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July '27

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August '27

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COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL

We believe students and parents should be actively involved in the school. It is our intention to provide timely information in the areas of programs, curriculum, special events, procedures, policies, etc. You are encouraged to contact us by:

PARENTSQUARE: UNIFYING SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Gary Middle College uses ParentSquare for school communication, through email, text, and app notifications. Every Gary Middle College student and/or parent has a ParentSquare account, which is associated with the email address and phone number provided to the school. We encourage all students and/or parents to access their accounts by downloading the mobile app to stay connected! By downloading the ParentSquare app, students and parents can:

- Receive messages, including emergency alerts and school closures, from the school via email, text, or app notification
- Choose to receive information as it comes or all at once at 6pm daily
- Comment on school postings to engage in your school community
- Communicate directly with school staff



Download the app today, for free, for iOS or Android.
Parents can also access ParentSquare directly on the web at
www.parentsquare.com.

POWERSCHOOL

Our school has an online database for managing student data. PowerSchool offers a number of features for parents, students, teachers, and staff, including:

- Access to academic calendar and athletic schedules
- Attendance management, tracking, and notification
- Reporting tools for teachers and staff to get in touch with parents and students ● Postings of activities and events at the school
- Access for parents to see their child's grades at any time, as they are uploaded by teachers
- Student Gradebooks

Each teacher and parent (of students under the age of 18) is to be registered with a username to access PowerSchool's online database. It is the expectation that all parents register in PowerSchool to have immediate access to the child's gradebook and report cards. *If you are not yet registered, please contact the Registrar.*

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

It may be necessary for the school to close or delay opening because of severe

weather conditions or other emergency situations. If a closing seems possible, we request that you watch one of the following television stations for this information or check the websites of the below named news outlets.
www.emergencyclosingcenter.com

CBS NBC WGN ABC FOX WGCI POWER92 Channel 2 Channel 5 Channel 9 Channel 7 Fox 32 107.5 106.3

School closures will also be communicated using ParentSquare. Be sure to download the ParentSquare application on your mobile device to receive alerts instantaneously.

SCHOOL BOARD

School Board meetings will be announced and parents/guardians are encouraged to attend whenever possible. You may contact our school board at any time by sending a letter directly to "Board President" at the school's address.

STAFF RIGHTS

Staff members have the right to:

- Work in a safe, secure, and orderly environment.
- Be treated courteously, fairly, cooperatively and respectfully by students, parents or guardians and other school staff.
- Receive supportive professional development and training.
- Receive the necessary resources to deliver quality instruction.
- Training to support the understanding of the Code of Conduct, implementation of positive behavior supports, and other interventions to maintain a positive school climate.
- Carry out disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Conduct and established administrative rules and expectations when student behavior is disruptive.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff members have the responsibility to:

- Maintain safe and orderly schools by using proactive and culturally

responsive prevention and intervention strategies.

- Explicitly teach, re-teach, and model clear behavioral expectations to all students.
- Be respectful and courteous to students, parents and guardians, other district employees, and visitors.
- Be knowledgeable about District policies, administrative expectations, and school rules, and enforce them fairly and consistently.
- Communicate policies, expectations to families in an education jargon-free manner.
- Respond in a timely manner to parent/guardian and student concerns in an educational jargon-free manner.
- Identify and respond to students' social, emotional, and/or behavioral health needs, including referring students for additional support.
- Provide makeup work for students when absent, including those students who are absent for disciplinary reasons.
- Participate in required professional development opportunities.

SUSPICION OF ABUSE REPORTING POLICY

Indiana Law requires a person to immediately report suspected and reported child abuse to the authorities and in organizations such as Gary Middle College to the appropriate individual in charge. A person who fails to do so can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor or, in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for money damages. All employees and volunteers at Gary Middle College must adhere to the following procedures:

In the event of suspected, reported or discovered child abuse or violation of the Child Protection Guidelines of Gary Middle College, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Principal. In the absence of the Principal, notify Dana Teasley, Attorney for GEO Academies, at 317-713-4207. In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or neglect, the principal will also immediately make a report to the local child protection service or law enforcement agency.

Primary Contact: Mr. McCollough, Principal 219-888-7120
Secondary Contact: Dana Teasley, School Attorney 317-713-4207
Gary Police Department 219-881-1214
Child Protection Services 219-886-6000
At the beginning of each school administrative year, all employees and volunteers working with minor children will receive training regarding the signs of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and will receive instruction regarding reporting procedures for any and all suspected child abuse.

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

1. All adult employees and volunteers must pass a national criminal background check, including all applicable sex-offender registries, prior to beginning

work.

2. Adults who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of children/youth and/or those who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children will not be employed and shall not volunteer service in any activity and/or program involving minors at Gary Middle College.

3. Employees and volunteers who work with children and youth shall observe the "two-person rule" or the "open door policy" at ALL times. Any situation where one person is alone with a child or youth **must** be avoided. This applies to electronic communication.

4. Reporting Incidents: Reports shall be documented in writing with the date of the report, the time of the report, the telephone number and name of the recipient to whom the report was made, name of person making the report, and a brief synopsis of the report. If at all possible, oral reporting will be recorded in the presence of a witness.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent/Guardians (of students under age 18) have the responsibility to:

- Make sure their children attend school regularly and on time and report any absences to the school.
- Tell school officials about any concerns or complaints in a respectful and timely manner.
- Be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians and students while on school premises.
- Work with school staff to address any academic or behavioral problems their children may experience.
- Support their children's education by talking with their children about school, expected behavior, and the importance of following/ meeting those expectations.
- Read and become familiar with the policies of the Board, administrative regulations and this Code of Conduct.
- Keep all student and family information updated in PowerSchool, including contact information, addresses, emergency contacts, and students' medical information and communicate updates to their children's individual school.
- Respect other students' and families' privacy rights.
- Regularly check PowerSchool for their children's grades and updates from teachers as well as read all documents sent from school.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS

Parents/guardians have the right to see all records that pertain to their individual

student (under age 18). If you desire to view your child's records, contact the Principal. Student records may not leave the office area. Parents will be given a private area to view the records, and we are happy to make copies for you. By law, student records must be kept confidential and viewed only by school personnel dealing with the child directly. No information can be shared publicly in any way without expressed written permission of the parent or guardian.

1. **Non-Custodial Parent Rights -** Unless a court order is on file preventing a parent from visiting or receiving information concerning a child, non-custodial parents have the right to visit children, view records, and take part in communications regarding the child.

The primary guardian noted upon enrollment will be contacted immediately in the event that a non-custodial parent makes such requests.

In the event that there are any potential safety concerns that could present harm/danger to any student/staff within the building, by the actions or threats from a custodial/non-custodial parent, the administrator reserves the right to deny access however must proceed with contacting the appropriate authorities.

Parents of students identified with disabilities have certain legal rights. Rights and Procedural safeguards are provided at all case conferences and made readily accessible upon request. Please contact the office for a copy of those rights and educational safeguards.

Please contact the Principal concerning any problems with custodial and non-custodial parents that would affect our school.

FIELD TRIPS

Students may go on field trips within and outside the city limits of Gary, Indiana as a general part of their education. Details concerning field trips will be shared with parents/guardians as the trips are planned. Permission slips will be issued for field trips away from the school when bus transportation is used.

Any parent wishing to chaperone and accompany their child's class on a field trip must have an approved background check on file at least one week prior to the field trip. Background check forms are available in the main office and are free of charge. They may be completed at any point during the year.

HEALTH, INJURY, AND ILLNESS REPORTING PROCEDURES

- When a student becomes ill or injured at school he/she is to report to the teacher. The teacher will initiate a “Nurse Visitation Pass”.
- It is school policy to send a student home with a temperature of 100° degrees or higher. The student should remain at home until his/her temperature has been below 100° for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for transporting the student (under age 18) home or for making arrangements for transportation. If the student is to be released to someone other than the parent/guardian, the school must be notified by the parent/guardian. Another student may not transport a student who is ill or injured. The school nurse may not transport ill or injured students.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, persons who are listed on the enrollment/emergency card as “will assume care for my child if I cannot be reached” will be contacted in the order given (#1 first and #2 if necessary). Parent/guardian permission to release the student to anyone other than the parent/guardian must be on file or verbally obtained.
- In the event that the student’s parent, guardian, or designated temporary caretaker cannot be contacted, the school nurse or designee will use his/her best judgment to determine the seriousness of the student’s condition. If the student’s condition is not deemed too serious, he/she will be transported home by the usual means.
- If the school nurse or designee determines that the student’s condition appears to require immediate medical attention, Emergency Medical Services will be requested, and their recommendations will be followed.
- Gary Middle College does not assume financial responsibility for Emergency Medical Services, emergency transportation, or medical services rendered.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Indiana Code requires that the school corporation maintain a file of immunization history for each student. When a student enrolls for the first time or any subsequent time and at any level at Gary Middle College student and/or his/her parent/guardian must show that he/she has been immunized, or that a current religious or medical objection is on file. The law further states that no student may remain in school beyond the date of his/her enrollment without minimum required immunizations.

MEDICATION POLICY

When it is necessary for a student to take medication during the school day, Indiana

State Code must be followed. Both prescription and non-prescription medication must be brought to the school clinic and kept there for the school nurse or designee to dispense. Medication may be given or dispensed only by a school administrator, school nurse, teacher, or other school employee designated by the school administrator.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to administer all morning and late afternoon prescription medications for their student (under age 18). The school will only administer medications that are medically necessary that a parent is unable to give during school hours and will only do so with written permission from both the student's doctor and parent/guardian.

1. The consent of the parent shall be valid only for the period specified on the consent form, and in no case longer than the current school year. The parent note should include the time schedule for administration of medication. If the medication is to be terminated prior to the date on the prescription, the written consent of the parent is required. The written consent of the parent and the written order of the physician shall be kept on file.
2. Medication must be in the original pharmacy container with the pharmacy label bearing: **date, student's name, name of medication and strength, directions for administering (frequency and amount).**
3. In no instance may the physician's-ordered medication dosage or frequency of administration for prescription medication be altered.
4. In no instance may the student carry inhaler(s) on him/herself without a **Student Asthma Action Card** filed in the clinic and signed by parent and physician, giving permission for the student to carry an inhaler on his or her person.

Non-Prescription Medication

1. The school must have written permission from parent and doctor including: **date, student's name, name of medication, amount to be given, frequency of administration and time schedule and date to discontinue.**
2. The school must be in original container bearing: **name of medication, directions for use, recommended dosage and manufacturer's expiration date (if appropriate).** 3. Medication container must be labeled with the student's name in permanent marker. 4. In NO INSTANCE may the manufacturer's recommended dosage or frequency of administration for non-prescription medications be exceeded, unless a written note from the physician, stating that the medication may be given, is presented with the medication

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TOBACCO, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Tobacco, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages are not permitted anywhere on school property, including around or inside all buildings, school grounds or vehicles on school property. Smoking will also not be permitted while on field trips or any athletic

events while playing away or at the school. In the event there is suspicion/evidence of such, an administrator will be notified and appropriate steps to investigate/confiscate will be taken

MONEY

It is strongly suggested that students not be allowed to carry significant amounts of money to school unless there is a specific purpose for which it is to be used. In cases where money is lost or stolen, school personnel will not investigate.

STUDENT DELIVERIES

Balloons, flowers, lunch, anything associated with birthdays, etc. cannot be delivered during the school day. Money, projects, etc. may be left with the receptionist for students to retrieve.

PHOTO RELEASE RIGHTS

A form indicating your decision on photo release rights for the student was included in the application packet for Gary Middle College. If you have questions regarding the photo release policy, or if you wish to change your decision regarding your child's photo release rights, please contact Terrance McCollough at tmccollough@geoacademies.org.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION

We believe that parents should be actively involved in the school. It is our intention to provide timely information in the areas of programs, curriculum, special events, procedures, policies, etc. You are encouraged to contact us by:

- Emailing a teacher
- Messaging the teacher through the ParentSquare app
- Writing a note for your child to hand to their teacher.
- Calling the school to leave a message for the teacher. All calls will be returned within a 24 hour period. (Please communicate with your child's teacher before or after school; you are asked not to call the classroom during instructional time).
- You can also find pertinent school information on our website www.GaryMiddleCollege.org.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Gary Middle College recognizes that parents are their children's first teachers and that parents' function as educators throughout their children's lives. More than thirty years of research shows that student academic success and high self-esteem is closely related to parent involvement in education from kindergarten through high school. Children whose families are involved in their education have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college. In fact, the best predictor of a student's success in school is not income or social status but how much a student's family participates in his or her education.

PARENT/GUARDIAN VISITATION & PARTICIPATION

We welcome parents/guardians in our school. In order to prevent the disruption of classroom learning please schedule visits to your child's classroom by calling the office and scheduling the visit well ahead of time. Please check in at the front office to be issued a visitor badge and to sign in. Visitors/Parents will be issued a visitors badge upon presentation of a valid picture ID. Visitors/Parents must sign out upon leaving the building. Parents who would like to conference with their child's teacher should make a scheduled appointment. Families, community organizations, businesses, and other groups are encouraged to apply to volunteer at Gary Middle College. Background checks must be completed for any volunteer to work with students in our school at any time. The Indiana Code requires that a limited criminal history check be on file in the school office for each volunteer, each year.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Achieving maximum progress for your child necessitates a close line of communication and understanding between teacher and parent. Parent-teacher conferences are the best means of accomplishing this goal. The teacher or the parent can initiate such a conference by calling for an appointment, in addition to the dates for regularly scheduled conferences. Our goal is 100% participation between parents and teachers for all conferences.

If, as a parent, you have a concern about something that has happened at school, or if you feel there is some kind of situation that is causing your child to perform below par, please contact the proper person at school. Please contact the child's teacher first. If the problem is not resolved, then contact the Principal. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about any of your concerns.

PARENT ORGANIZATION

All parents, foster parents, guardians, and teachers are encouraged to take an active

part in school activities. One way to do so is to contact the school and speak with administration and/or our parent liaison. Meetings will be scheduled regularly throughout the year, and programs are planned to offer entertainment, enlightenment, fundraising experiences and a chance for parents to get to know the school personnel and other parents and to provide volunteer service to the school.

CHANGE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please inform the school immediately in the event that any changes are made to your contact information. The law requires any changes in student or parent names, telephone number, or address be updated immediately. The parent must report the new information promptly. Please contact your child's school to update personal information. We ask that you never block the school's number as we may have an emergency and need to contact you.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A student's attendance is essential to learning. Every student and parent has the responsibility to ensure that the student is attending class regularly in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by Gary Middle College.

To support academic growth, the school has put in place the following attendance policies and procedures:

Types of Absences

a. Excused - Any absence, lateness, or early release that occurs as a result of the following and is documented by parent note, doctor note or other documentation:

- Death in the immediate family
- Medical, dental, court, and/or other required appointments. Statement from the doctor, dentist, etc. required upon return to school
- Personal illness or injury
- Major religious holiday

b. Unexcused - Any absence, lateness, or early release that does not meet the above conditions shall be considered unexcused.

Students may be excused by the principal or designee for the whole or a part of a day absence for two or fewer consecutive school days for the following reasons:

a. Personal illness;

b. Serious illness in the student's immediate family;
c. Death in the student's immediate family not to exceed one week;
d. Natural catastrophe and/or disasters; or
e. Extenuating circumstances.

All written verifications must be turned into Gary Middle College Attendance Office within 5 school days of the student's return.

Students granted excused absences for the above reasons shall be allowed to make up any schoolwork which was missed. Students shall request makeup work for days missed due to excused absences. The student will have the same number of days to make up the work equal to the number of days missed. Example: if a student misses 2 instructional days, they will have 2 instructional days to return the completed work before any deductions/ zeros are assigned.

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE EXCUSED FOR VACATIONS OR OTHER FAMILY TRIPS. IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH AN ABSENCE IS UNAVOIDABLE, THE PARENT MUST SUBMIT WRITTEN REQUEST TO BE APPROVED BY PRINCIPAL.

When a student has exceeded the allowable days of absence and no extenuating circumstances are present, the principal or his designee and two teachers (when possible) should review the student's absences before credit is denied. If the committee confirms no extenuating circumstances, the student and parents receive written notification of the decision to deny credit and are informed of the appeal process.

A student who is absent from school on a given day may not participate in any extracurricular activity on that day.

Early Dismissals: Require a parent/authorized pickup person to come to the front office and sign the student out on the day of the release. A valid, state issued ID is required for all parents/authorized individuals picking up a student.

<u>Consequences</u>

a. After three (3) days of cumulative absence due to an illness, a doctor's statement or other verification will be required upon the student's return to school.
b. After five (5) days of unexcused, cumulative absences, a conference between the student, the parent, and the principal/ assistant principal will be required to assess the reasons for absences and the impact the absences are having on the student's academic work.
c. After seven (7) days of unexcused, cumulative absences, a certified letter will be sent to the parent/guardian indicating that additional absences could jeopardize the student's enrollment at Gary Middle College.

Excessive absenteeism may result in the scholar's grade reclassification/ removal from dual credit courses, if applicable. The school reserves the right to report chronic absenteeism to an outside agency.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE and GROOMING

***IMPORTANT: THIS DRESS CODE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED BEGINNING THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

The purpose of a dress code is to help maintain a positive school environment where scholars can reach their potential and remove unnecessary distractions. Students are expected to dress in business casual / workplace attire. All tops and shorts must be at an appropriate length (not showing midsection, cleavage, chest area, stomach, or above mid-thigh) and pants must be worn at the WAIST. All headgear must be removed upon entering the building (including females.)

The administration, or designee of Gary Middle College reserves the right to judge the dress of any scholar as appropriate or inappropriate. At any point during the school year, the administration of Gary Middle College reserves the right to update the uniform and grooming policies to address any issues that may arise and are not specifically addressed in this written policy. Administrative directives provided over the intercom or in person to a scholar are considered addendums to the written dress code policy and will be enforced.

Scholars violating the dress code and grooming policies will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

1st Offense	Violation Letter w/ dress code correction; verbal warning
2nd Offense	Violation Letter w/ dress code correction; parental contact or sent home
3rd Offense	Violation Letter w/dress code correction; or OSS issued

*** Scholars who are unable to comply with dress code requirements will be subject to the issued violation and will be required to call home to correct the dress code violation. Inappropriate dress items will be collected and held in the main office until the end of the day. Scholars unwilling to comply with this collection will be directed to leave campus unless the scholar is willing to comply.

GARY MIDDLE COLLEGE GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Value	Percent
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	73-76
C-	1.67	70-72
D	1.65	60-69
F	0	0-59

D's are only allowed if it is noted within a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

Gary Middle College follows a strict honor code. A student is guilty of Academic Dishonesty when he/she engages in any illegal or improper activity for the purpose of improving a grade or test score, either for him/ herself or others.

Level One – Level One violations will be handled by the teacher, and students will receive a zero on the assignment. Examples include:

- Looking on another student's test or quiz, or allowing another student to look at your test or quiz;
- Using electronic devices or other secretive methods to give answers on a test or quiz;
- Taking substantial information from another source, but not crediting the source (plagiarism).

Level Two – Level Two violations will be handled by the Principal and students will receive no credit for the class. Examples include:

- A second Level One violation;
- Taking papers or writing from the Internet, other publications, other individuals; (plagiarism)
- Removing and/or using a prior test/exam or any part of a test/exam to use or give to others.

HOMEWORK HOTLINE

Gary Middle College students seeking assistance in their math and science studies can receive assistance from the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology Hotline. This service is available to students Sunday-Thursday from 7pm-10pm (EST). The number to call for the service is 1-877- ASK-ROSE (275-7673), or online, log on to www.AskRose.org

HOMEWORK POLICY

Gary Middle College has created a schedule that will allow students to complete the majority of assignments and projects in school. It is our goal to assist our scholars to find balance between their academic development and personal growth by having ample time for enjoyable activities with family.

EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAM

Our Early College Program begins with students able to take the college entrance exam, Knowledge Assessment. Students who pass may begin taking college credit courses at no cost to them! Students who remain in good academic and behavioral standing may earn up to 60 college credits – and a full, accredited college Associates Degree, with the potential of a Bachelor's degree…**at no cost to the family or student**! These courses will fulfill both high school and college credit requirements.

At a very minimum, Gary Middle College is committed to excellence in education. As part of that commitment, and in order to meet the State of Indiana's requirement that students demonstrate College and Career Readiness during their high school years, effective for the graduating class of 2027, as part of the Core 40 (or higher) diploma requirements, all students must earn twenty-four (24) college credits from an accredited Indiana college or university, in accordance with established Gary Middle College policy for earning college credits.

This requirement may be waived only under the following reasons:

- Approved in a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Student joined Gary Middle College after their freshman year
- Recommended in writing by School Principal and approved by School Superintendent.

Students who participate in our Early College Program and are jointly enrolled, will have their post-secondary courses and grades posted on their Gary Middle College transcript based on the postsecondary institution's grading scale. These are dual credit (high school and college) classes; therefore, they are part of both the permanent high school transcript and the student's college transcript. If a student fails a dual credit course, they will be responsible for the full cost of the course/textbook. Additionally, prior to being allowed to enroll in additional dual credit courses, any outstanding costs of the course/textbook must be paid in full. Outstanding balances may cause a student's diploma to be withheld. However, the staff and administration at the school remain fully committed to every student's success and, together with the student's hard work and commitment, will provide every resource possible to support each student's success in the program.

While on Ivy Tech or any of our other university partner's campuses, you are considered college students. Therefore, your behavior should display those of a university scholar. The expectations that are set forth before you at Gary Middle College should be upheld and honored when attending your college level courses.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students who fail any core content subjects will be ***required to attend summer school*****,** per our approved School Board Policy. Students should anticipate no less than 4 weeks of summer school. Attendance in summer school does not guarantee promotion to the next grade.

SCHOLAR PLEDGE:

As I embark upon this next phase of my academic journey, I recognize that I am responsible for upholding the integrity of my family, school and community. I understand and appreciate the opportunity that has been placed in front of me and I embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

REPEATING A HIGH SCHOOL COURSE

A student must repeat a failed course that is required for graduation. Students may repeat courses they have passed to earn a better grade. The following rules will apply: A student may repeat a course in which he or she previously earned a grade of C+ or below. When repeating a course already passed, the better of the two grades will appear on the transcript and count toward the cumulative GPA and class rank. When repeating a failed course, the grade earned will appear on the transcript and count towards the cumulative GPA and the class rank. The previous failing grade will be changed to an “R” (for Retaken at a later date) and will not be included in the cumulative GPA or class rank.

GMC DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

INDIANA
CORE 40

Effective beginning with students who enter high school in 2012-13 school year (class of 2016).

Course and Credit Requirements	
English/ Language Arts	**8 credits** Including a balance of literature, composition and speech.
Mathematics	**6 credits (in grades 9-12)** 2 credits: Algebra I 2 credits: Geometry 2 credits: Algebra II (Or complete integrated Math I, II, and III for 6 credits. Students must take a math course or quantitative reasoning course each year in high school)
Science	**6 credits** 2 credits: Biology I 2 credits: Chemistry I or Physics I or Integrated Chemistry-Physics 2 credits: any Core 40 science course
Social Studies	**6 credits** 2 credits: U.S. History 1 credit: U.S. Government 1 credit: Economics 2 credits: World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World
Directed Electives	**5 credits** World Languages Fine Arts Career and Technical Education
Physical Education	**2 credits**
Health and Wellness	**1 credit**
Electives*	**6 credits** (College and Career Pathway courses recommended)
40 Total State Credits Required	

Schools may have additional local graduation requirements that apply to all students (not required for students with an IEP).

* Specifies the number of electives required by the state. High school schedules provide time for many more electives during the high school years. All students are strongly encouraged to complete a College and Career Pathway (selecting electives in a deliberate manner) to take full advantage of career and college exploration and preparation opportunities.

**SAT scores updated September, 2017

***WorkKeys assessment titles updated, 2018

CORE 40 with Academic Honors *(minimum 47 credits)*

For the **Core 40 with Academic Honors** designation, students must:

- Complete all requirements for Core 40.
- Earn 2 additional Core 40 math credits.
- Earn 6-8 Core 40 world language credits (6 credits in one language or 4 credits each in two languages).
- Earn 2 Core 40 fine arts credits.
- Earn a grade of a "C" or better in courses that will count toward the diploma.
- Have a grade point average of a "B" or better.
- Complete one of the following:
  - A. Earn 4 credits in 2 or more AP courses and take corresponding AP exams
  - B. Earn 6 verifiable transcripted college credits in dual credit courses from the approved dual credit list.
  - C. Earn two of the following:
    1. A minimum of 3 verifiable transcripted college credits from the approved dual credit list,
    2. 2 credits in AP courses and corresponding AP exams,
    3. 2 credits in IB standard level courses and corresponding IB exams.
  - D. Earn a composite score of 1250 or higher on the SAT and a minimum of 560 on math and 590 on the evidence based reading and writing section.**
  - E. Earn an ACT composite score of 26 or higher and complete written section
  - F. Earn 4 credits in IB courses and take corresponding IB exams.

CORE 40 with Technical Honors *(minimum 47 credits)*

For the **Core 40 with Technical Honors** designation, students must:

- Complete all requirements for Core 40.
- Earn 6 credits in the college and career preparation courses in a state-approved College & Career Pathway and one of the following:
  1. Pathway designated industry-based certification or credential, or
  2. Pathway dual credits from the approved dual credit list resulting in 6 transcripted college credits
- Earn a grade of "C" or better in courses that will count toward the diploma.
- Have a grade point average of a "B" or better.
- Complete one of the following.
  - A. Any one of the options (A - F) of the Core 40 with Academic Honors
  - B. Earn the following minimum scores on WorkKeys: Workplace Documents, Level 6; Applied Math, Level 6; and Graphic Literacy, Level 5.***
  - C. Earn the following minimum score(s) on Accuplacer: Writing 80, Reading 90, Math 75.
  - D. Earn the following minimum score(s) on Compass: Algebra 66 Writing 70, Reading 80.

GMC AUDITS & PETITION TO GRADUATE

Every Gary Middle College scholar is required to attend an audit each year where they will review their high school diploma progress, as well as their associate degree progress. Parents/guardians (of students under age 18) are invited and encouraged to attend! Sophomore & Juniors have audits in the spring. Seniors have a fall audit and a spring petition to graduate.

GRADUATION PATHWAYS REQUIREMENTS

All Gary Middle College Scholars graduate under the Indiana Graduation Pathways Requirements which align with our requirements for scholars to earn a Core 40 HS Diploma and complete their Associate Degree. Information on the Indiana graduation pathways can be found below.

Graduation Requirements	Graduation Pathway Options
1) **High School Diploma**	Meet the statutorily defined diploma credit and curricular requirements.
2) **Learn and Demonstrate Employability Skills**[1] (Students must complete *at least one* of the following.)	Learn employability skills standards through locally developed programs. Employability skills are demonstrated by one the following: • **Project-Based Learning Experience**; OR • **Service-Based Learning Experience**; OR • **Work-Based Learning Experience.**[2]
3) **Postsecondary-Ready Competencies**[3] (Students must complete *at least one* of the following.)	• **Honors Diploma**: Fulfill all requirements of either the Academic or Technical Honors diploma; OR • **ACT**: College-ready benchmarks; OR • **SAT**: College-ready benchmarks; OR • **ASVAB**: Earn at least a minimum AFQT score to qualify for placement into one of the branches of the US military; OR • **State- and Industry-recognized Credential or Certification;** OR • **Federally-recognized Apprenticeship**; OR • **Career-Technical Education Concentrator**[4]**:** Must earn a C average in at least two non-duplicative advanced courses (courses beyond an introductory course) within a particular program or program of study; OR • **AP/IB/Dual Credit/Cambridge International courses**[5] **or CLEP Exams:** Must earn a C average or higher in at least three courses; OR • **Locally created pathway** that meets the framework from and earns the approval of the State Board of Education.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Discipline is the demonstration of responsible behavior – academically, socially, physically, and ethically. Our goal is to establish a climate that is safe, secure, and conducive to learning. We believe the establishment of disciplinary parameters at school is central to a strong educational structure, and a safe and secure learning environment. Gary Middle College has created a discipline plan that was developed to

ensure the academic integrity of our buildings. The plan is meant to promote a school atmosphere which is conducive to student learning. Student conduct is one important indicator of school climate and a critical factor in determining a quality school. Students subjected to disciplinary actions by either the school administration or from their respective teachers will be addressed according to this plan. The staff at Gary Middle College reserves the right to deal with each student's case according to individual situations before considering appropriate consequences. This plan is not intended to be the "last word" or "all-inclusive" concerning misbehaviors or penalties, but it is a conscientious attempt to deal fairly and consistently with students.

Gary Middle College will employ progressive discipline, using incremental interventions to address inappropriate behavior with the ultimate goal of teaching prosocial behavior. The goal of **progressive discipline** is prevention of a recurrence of negative behavior by helping **students** learn from their mistakes. Progressive discipline **may** include, but is not limited to, any of the following consequences: Verbal warning, conferencing, parent meeting, in-school suspension, out-of school suspension, alternative placement, lunch detention, after school detention, denial of privileges (loss of passing period, no internet, etc.), contract and/or drivers license revocation, and possible expulsion.

DISCIPLINE STEPS AND PROCEDURES

VIOLATION	DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
Dress code violation: Not in complete uniform for school/classes	1) Progressive discipline 2) Students who are unable or unwilling to comply may be assigned to OSS.
Insubordination/classroom disruption: Failure to follow directives from staff members	1) Progressive discipline 2) Removal from class parent may also be asked to sit in on child's class 3) Continued failure to comply will result in a mandatory parent meeting that might result in suspension, behavior contract, and/or alternative placement.
Electronic devices during school hours: (Including, but not limited to: cell phones, mp3 players, game systems, etc.)	1) Progressive discipline 2) Electronic device must be turned in and held in the main office until student picks it up at end of day 3) Electronic device must be turned in

	and held in the main office until parent picks it up 4) Continued failure to comply will result in the phone being collected at the start of each day and returned at the end of the day.

Minor technology misuse: Playing games during class or visiting unapproved websites	1) Progressive discipline 2) Additional restrictions placed on scholar regarding technology use
Truancy (within building): Student is considered truant if the scholar is not in the assigned class for 10 or more minutes during class time without permission from school personnel.	1) Progressive discipline 2) Continued offenses – mandatory parent meeting that might result in additional suspension, behavior contract, and/or alternative placement
Truancy (left building): Student left the building during assigned class.	1) Progressive discipline 2) OSS 3)Continued offenses – mandatory parent meeting that might result in additional suspension, behavior contract, and/or alternative placement
Obscenity/Profanity: Using language that is offensive and profane in conversation	1) Progressive discipline 2) Continued offenses will result in mandatory parent meeting and behavior contract. *Profanity directed towards any staff member will result in a suspension
Horseplay: Running, hitting another student, “playing” outside of recess time, or “play-fighting”	1) Progressive discipline 2) OSS. 3) Continued offenses will result in mandatory parent meeting and behavior contract.
SEVERE VIOLATIONS	DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
Technology misuse: Tampering with servers, files,	1) Suspension, possible recommendation for expulsion.

pornography, adult sites	2) Reimbursement or repair of damages.
Theft of school property: Removing school property from a designated location without permission from school personnel	1) Suspension 2) Possible recommendation for expulsion 3) Reimbursement or return of undamaged Property 4) Police will be contacted.
Use of or threat with a weapon, or any item that can be construed as a weapon: An act or action where the use of a weapon is implied or the verbal threat of the use of a weapon, including but not limited to such on	10-day suspension while an investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.

social media	
Using tobacco on school grounds at any time; including school activities/functions	Possible suspension/recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation.
Possession of smoking materials	Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation.
Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and/or inappropriate verbal/nonverbal conduct of a sexual nature, including such on social media	Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation.
Bullying: Repeated acts or gestures including verbal, written, or physical acts committed by a student or group of students with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm another student, including such on social media	Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation.
Firecrackers and other explosives	10-day suspension while an

devices	investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.
Possessing, using, or transmitting alcohol, drugs, look-alike drugs while on school property or attending a school function.	10-day suspension while an investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.
Attending a school function while under the influence of a controlled substance, drugs, or alcohol	10-day suspension while an investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.
Possession of drug paraphernalia	10-day suspension while an investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.

Physical attack of a staff member	10-day suspension while an investigation is conducted. Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after the completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.
Bomb Threats	Possible suspension/ recommendation for expulsion after completion of the investigation. Possible arrest.
Guns on school property	Recommended expulsion/arrest.

In addition (IC 20-33-8-15), a student may be suspended or expelled in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

(1) The unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or

(2) The student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on

school property;
Including unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

** The Principal and/or Dean reserve the right to adjust the consequences on a case by case basis depending on the severity to which actions were committed.*
*** If a student has been suspended from school for at least ten (10) days, the student and parent may participate in an expulsion meeting and could lead to expulsion through due process.*
*** Any student suspended from school is not allowed on school property until their suspension period is over. Any violation could lead to arrest for trespassing on school property. * If a student has been suspended from school for at least ten (10) days, the student and parent will participate in an expulsion meeting and could lead to expulsion through due process. * Any student suspended from school is not allowed on school property until their suspension period is over. Any violation could lead to arrest for trespassing on school property. A mandatory parent meeting is required upon the student's return to school from a suspension.*

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

"Disciplinary action" can occur as a result of a student violating disciplinary offenses outlined in this handbook.

- Scholar warning
- Contact parents/guardian
- Loss of Privileges, including but not limited to participation in extracurricular activities
- Out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion recommendation
- Any combination of these disciplinary actions.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. Suspension Procedures
    - The school principal, or his/her designee, has the right to enforce this disciplinary policy and to apply disciplinary action, including suspension, for the commission of any disciplinary offense. The principal shall investigate all allegations of misconduct.
    - Prior to any suspension, the school principal or his/her designee shall advise the student of the particular misconduct of which the student is accused and the specific reasons/facts for such accusation. The student

shall be given an opportunity at that time to explain the student's version of the incident or facts to the school principal or his/her designee.

- If the principal suspends the student, the principal, or designee, shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parent or guardian by telephone to notify them of the suspension, that the student will be or has been removed from class, and that the student will be kept under supervision until the close of the school day or the arrival of the parent or guardian. This responsibility shall not be delegated to a student. If the parent or principal or designee so requests, the student will be granted an early dismissal from school to return home.
- The principal shall provide a written notice of suspension to the parents or guardian providing notice of the offense and the term of the suspension
- In the event a student disrupts the orderly operation of the school, the student may be immediately removed from the school premises and placed in the custody of parents, next of kin, or law enforcement, provided that the matter is resolved in a timely manner.
- If the parent or guardian of the suspended student wishes to contest the suspension, the parent or guardian shall, within three (3) school days after receipt of written notification of the suspension, submit a written request to review/appeal the matter.
- Upon such request, the Superintendent or designee shall schedule a review hearing at the earliest convenience. The decision of the Superintendent or designee on an appeal of a short-term suspension shall be final, and there shall be no right to appeal such decision to the Board.

2. Expulsion

- The principal shall recommend expulsion in certain cases identified elsewhere in this handbook. NOTE: There are some instances in which the principal has no discretion, where expulsion is mandated by Indiana statute relative to drugs or weapons and other provisions of Indiana law, which are not optional. In such cases, expulsion shall be recommended by the principal.
- Additionally, of a principal, or designee, after reasonable investigation of an offense, has cause to believe that a student has committed a disciplinary offense that warrants severe disciplinary action, then the Principal may recommend that the student be expelled.
- After a principal or designee has made a reasonable effort to investigate all aspects of the alleged discipline offense and is satisfied that the nature and seriousness of the offense might warrant expulsion, the principal shall decide whether to recommend expulsion.
- The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parents or guardian by telephone to notify them of the proposed expulsion, that the student has been removed from class and that the student will either be kept at school under supervision until the close of the school day or the arrival of the parent, guardian or police. This responsibility shall not be delegated to a student.
- The principal or designee shall mail (by certified mail) or hand deliver a copy of the recommendation of expulsion form to the parent or guardian, which form shall include: the specific offense for the

expulsion, the factual basis of the charge(s), the time, the date and the place of the expulsion hearing.

- The expulsion hearing shall be held within 10 days of the recommendation.
- Pending the expulsion hearing, the student shall be denied normal attendance privileges. Until the expulsion proceedings are complete, the student shall be denied and excluded from any and all access to all Gary Middle College campuses and shall be denied and excluded from any Gary Middle College activities including but not limited to: athletics, sports, or extracurricular groups and programs. The student shall not attend any GEO Academies school sponsored event as a participant, spectator, visitor or otherwise.
- Unless all of the evidence has been previously provided with the form notifying of the expulsion, prior to the expulsion hearing, the parents have the right to view and copy any evidence to be presented by the school at the hearing. Notice of this right shall be included on the expulsion form.
- At the expulsion hearing, the specific reason(s) concerning the cause(s) for the proposed expulsion will be presented by the principal or a designee in support of the recommendation. If the basis of the recommendation for expulsion is the accumulation 42 of 4 suspensions, the student shall only be permitted to contest the facts of the 4th suspension. At that point, the 3 prior suspensions are final and the time for appealing the basis of those suspensions has expired. The student's prior performance and attendance may be reviewed and discussed.
- If the parent or student fails to appear at either the expulsion hearing [or at the appeal hearing hereinafter provided], without providing a written advance notice including a valid excuse at least 24 hours prior to the meeting, the right to a hearing shall be considered to have been waived and forfeited, and the student shall be expelled. The superintendent or designee shall provide written notification to the parent of the findings and action taken as soon as is feasible. A student who has waived his right to an expulsion hearing by failing to appear shall have no right to appeal the merits of the expulsion.
- The student or student representative may produce witness(es) or offer evidence on the student's behalf. Due process shall be afforded.
- After the hearing, the superintendent or designee shall determine whether the student is guilty of the charge(s) and whether the student shall be expelled from school or if other corrective or disciplinary action is imposed.
- The superintendent or a designee shall deliver the decision and findings by mail (certified, registered, or regular), email (if requested by the parent), or by hand delivery to the parents (at the address on file with the school that the student attends) and to the school principal. In the event that the superintendent or designee determines that a student is guilty of the offense and shall be expelled, the parent or guardian or the student (if over the age of 18), may request in writing a review of the expulsion decision by the School Board.

3. Additional Rules of Expulsion

- During the expulsion, the student shall be denied and excluded from any and all access to any school campus and shall be denied and excluded from any school activities including but not limited to, athletics, sports, or extracurricular groups and programs. The student shall not be on any school campus for any reason. The student shall not attend any school sponsored event as a participant, spectator, visitor or otherwise.
- Gary Middle College, upon the request of a student or his/her parent or guardian, will provide alternative education services to a student who has been expelled in a manner that is in accordance with state law.

BULLYING

We insist on a professional, safe, and respectful environment at Gary Middle College. Bullying of any kind, towards students, teachers, staff, or any other person, is not tolerated.

What is Bullying?
"Bullying" (per IC 20-33-8-.2) means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors, that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

(1) places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
(2) has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
(3) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
(4) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in, or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

Bullying fosters a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the physical and psychological health of its victims and creates conditions that negatively affect learning. Bullying includes unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. The imbalance of power involves the use of physical strength, or popularity, to access embarrassing information to control or harm others. Bullying can occur anywhere (in-school or outside of school) and at any time – both during and after school hours. Bullying can include physical bullying, verbal bullying, social/relational bullying, and electronic/written communication.

Physical bullying involves hurting a person’s body or possessions. It includes

hitting/kicking/punching, spitting, tripping or pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and making mean or rude hand gestures.

Verbal bullying involves saying mean things. It can include teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threatening to cause harm.

Social/relational bullying involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying involves telling other children not to be friends with someone, leaving someone out on purpose, spreading rumors about someone, or embarrassing someone in public.

Electronic/written communication involves cyber-bullying, collective or group note writing, any bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices (computer, cell phones).

Considerations in determining if the behavior meets the definition of bullying:

- The history between the individuals. Have there been past conflicts? Have these individuals had a dating relationship? (This may not be considered bullying)
- Power differential. Is there an imbalance of power? (Power imbalance is not limited to physical strength.)
- Repetition. Has this or a similar incident happened before? Is the individual worried that it may happen again?
- Are any of the individuals involved with a gang? (This may result in interventions different from bullying.)

Bullying can take many forms, including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or any other oral, written, or physical actions that make our school feel like an unsafe place. Bullying is prohibited within our building, on our buses, and to and from school events or field trips. **Bullying is also prohibited on all student social media sites, including, *but not limited to* Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, or any other social media site. Students who engage in bullying on social media sites outside of school are still subject to all disciplinary policies, up to and including suspension and expulsion.**

CAFETERIA

Gary Middle College will provide quality breakfast and lunch for our students. The menus will be distributed on a monthly basis and posted in the lunch area. Students may bring their lunch to school if they choose to do so. Students may not order food from outside vendors during school time AND parents may not bring lunch to their students before or during their child's lunch time.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Gary Middle College acknowledges that cell phones and electronic devices have become an integral part of the culture of the world. We embrace the cellphone and electronic devices, however, we ask that no student may use a cell phone/electronic device, *unless issued by the school,* on school property during the school day unless allowed by the teacher for an educational purpose.

During school hours, cell phones/electronic devices must be turned off (not on vibrate mode) and stored out of sight. Using a cell phone/electronic device may include, but not be limited to, text messaging, taking pictures, or watching videos, recording videos, playing games, social media, and listening to music. Students using or having cell phones/electronic devices visible during the school day shall have their cell phone/electronic device confiscated. **No cell phones/electronic devices may be used by students at any time, including lunch, recess, in the restrooms, or free periods.** School personnel and/or administration are not responsible for the loss or damage of any cell phone/electronic device brought onto school property. In cases where a cell phone/electronic device is lost or stolen, school personnel will not investigate. Confiscated devices will be returned only to a parent or guardian.

NOTE: Classroom telephones are to be used only with teacher permission and under direct teacher supervision.

BUS SAFETY

Students should recognize that it is a privilege to ride bus shuttles from school and to/from college courses.

<u>Responsibilities</u>

- Students shall follow school bus rules and regulations or lose the privilege of riding the bus.
- Students shall ride their assigned school bus. If a student desires to ride an alternate school bus for a special situation, a written request from the parent must be submitted to the Principal or his/her designee. Final approval of such a request is at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee.
- Students shall get on and off the bus at their assigned bus stop. If a student desires to get on or off the bus at an alternate stop for a temporary circumstance, the parent of the student must submit a written request to the Principal or his/her designee. Final approval of such a request is at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee.
- Students shall sit in the seat assigned to them by the bus driver. Students shall remain seated in their seat until the bus has come to a complete stop at the locations where they are assigned to exit.
- Students shall not throw or discard items out of the windows. Students shall not extend parts of their body out of the windows.

● Students shall not damage, write on, or in any way vandalize the school bus. Students will be responsible for repayment of damages that they cause to the school bus.
● Students shall not litter on the bus. Trash cans located on the school bus shall be used to discard trash upon exit of the bus.

Bus Discipline

- The bus drivers, together with the principal, have full responsibility for discipline of students riding the buses. The driver shall report any disciplinary problems to the principal of the school. It is the duty of the driver, in case of any infraction of rules by any student, to notify the principal. Notification should be made in writing on the appropriate School Bus Behavior Report form. The principal shall determine punishment.
- Any misbehavior on the bus, at the bus stop, or walking to or from the bus stop may result in temporary or permanent loss of bus riding privileges. In this case, transportation to and from school becomes the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Certain offenses may result in more severe punishment such as suspension/expulsion from school.
- Video Cameras: The actions of students on the bus may be recorded by video46 cameras located on the school bus. This video may be used to confirm student behavior or incidents that occur on the bus

DRIVING RULES AND REGULATIONS

Driving and parking at Gary Middle College is a privilege, not a right. When driving and parking on GMC property, students agree to avail access to vehicles upon request of the administration or security. GMC is not responsible for damage to vehicles or theft of the contents of vehicles.

1. Vehicle Registration –Vehicles that are not properly registered or that do not display a current permit are subject to being towed at the owner's expense.

2. Driving/Parking Violations – Students who drive to school are expected to exhibit safe driving habits at all times. Speeding or reckless driving on school property will not be tolerated. All posted signs and traffic patterns must be obeyed. Students driving inappropriately, recklessly, or unsafely are subject to suspension, and loss of driving privileges. Students are responsible for the contents of their vehicle at all times.

3. Penalties for Driving Violations – Violation of the driving or parking regulations may result in a range of consequences that spans from a student's loss of driving privileges, to suspension. (Example: a student is truant and leaves school grounds in their vehicle.)

4. Arrival at School – Students who drive to school are to park in the designated area in the school parking lot, and exit their vehicles immediately upon arrival. All car

doors must be locked. Absolutely no cruising or loitering is permitted in the parking lot at any time. No student is permitted in the parking lot at any time during the school day (8:00 AM – 3:00 PM) without permission from administration and/or designee . Students observed in the school parking lot during school hours without permission may be considered truant.

5. Departure from School – Upon dismissal from school, student drivers are to enter their vehicles and are not permitted to loiter in the parking lot.

6. Accidents – Any student who has been involved in an accident, or has sustained damage to his/her vehicle, must report the incident as soon as possible to GMC security and/or administration.

TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY

Use of technology is essential to the curriculum and learning at GEO Academy Schools. What follows are expectations for staff regarding staff and Scholar technology use.

- Staff members shall instruct their Scholars regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security.
- Staff members will monitor the online activities of Scholars. Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions; or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server, and computer logs.
- Scholars are expected to follow the "Acceptable Use Policy" signed by all scholars and parents upon enrollment. Appropriate scholarly use of technology is outlined below.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Each student is expected to be responsible and honest, use common sense, and practice proper etiquette. GEO Academy Schools have invested significantly in hardware and software to prepare Scholars for today and tomorrow's world. Because its Technology Resources are not unlimited, the School also has instituted restrictions to preserve these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers. Scholars must protect this investment. In order to comply, the following rules are in effect:

- Scholars are prohibited from engaging in actions that are **illegal** (such as libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, and the like) or **unkind** (such as personal attacks, invasion of privacy, injurious comment, and the like) when using School issued Technology Resources.
- It is a **federal crime** to unlawfully copy software; any Scholar attempting to

copy the School's software and/or multi-media materials will be referred to the School's administration and law enforcement for disciplinary consequences.

- Scholars shall not use any technology (including social media) to **bully**, **demean**, or **injure** others.
- Scholars have no right or expectation of privacy when using School issued Technology Resources (including but not limited to privacy in the content of their personal files, e mails and records of their online activity when using the School's hardware, software, computer network and/or Internet connection).
- **Tampering** with or **vandalizing** any part of the hardware or software will result in disciplinary consequences. Families will be **financially responsible** for any damages caused to the equipment.
- Using any commands on any computer or other device that could alter the operations of any part of the computer system, including the default settings, will result in disciplinary consequences.
- The downloading of programs from any source is strictly prohibited.
- GEO Academy Schools may issue a 1:1 device to a student to allow learning beyond the traditional school day. As such, some students may be given a school owned device to use. When given the device there will be detailed guidance on the safe and appropriate use of the device as well as possible financial penalties if the device is damaged.

Only students enrolled at GMC will be issued a school-owned device to use while in school and for college classes.

Consequences for Misuse

a. First Offense: Changing computer configuration, deliberately accessing another student's account, deliberately harming any of the equipment, or surfing the web without an educational assignment will result in the parent being called and the student losing all computer privileges for a specified period of time outside of the usage necessary for the basic curriculum.

b. Repeat offenders and/or students who deliberately access pornographic materials from the Internet will lose all computer privileges and progressive discipline will follow which may include, but not limited to, being suspended out of school.

c. Any scholar who causes damage to a device may be charged to repair the device.

WORK PERMITS (MINORS)

The Indiana Department of Labor's new Youth Employment System, or YES, is now live, opening the door for Hoosier employers to begin using the system to comply with a

new youth employment law that goes into effect July 1. The new law requires Indiana employers who hire five or more minor employees (under age 18), per location, to list those employees in the new

YES registry. The change is part of amendments to Indiana Code 22-2-18.1-26 made during the 2020 state legislative session, which also mandated implementation of the YES registry and effective date of employer registration by July 1, 2021.

The new requirement will eliminate the need for work permits in Indiana for minor employees, and shift the responsibility of tracking and reporting youth employment from schools to employers. The new YES requirement will not impact the state's work-hour requirement for minors, and all employers must still comply with the Teen Work Hour Restrictions and Prohibited and Hazardous Occupation restrictions for minors. As of July 1, employers who fail to comply with the new registration requirements may face penalties of up to $400 per infraction.

All GMC STUDENTS: Please detach the following sheets from the handbook and turn directly into the front office for each enrolled student.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Please sign, remove, and return this page indicating receipt of the handbook to your scholar's school to have a record that you have received and reviewed this handbook.

Your partners in education,

Gary Middle College

I, _____, have read and understand the Gary Middle College Student Handbook and agree to adhere to expectations for attendance, behavior, and academic progress. I understand that failure to comply with any expectations dictated in the handbook may result in disciplinary action, including my suspension or expulsion from the school.

I understand that I am expected to give 100% at school, and that I am expected to uphold and exhibit the character traits honored by Gary Middle College: Respect, Integrity, Courage, Empathy, Responsibility, and Honesty.

_____ _____
_____ Print Guardian's Name Guardian's Signature Date

_____ _____
_____ Print Scholar's Name Scholar's Signature Date

If you have any questions, please contact your scholar's school.

PHOTOGRAPH AND MEDIA RELEASE OPT-OUT FORM

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

I, _____, the undersigned, do not grant permission to have photographs or other images taken of my child. I do not authorize the use of these photographs for the general purposes as determined by Gary Middle College and the Greater Educational Opportunities Foundation without tie restriction of such pictures or any portion thereof/ I further waiver any claim for compensation, financial or otherwise, in connection with the aforementioned pictures. I understand that my child's photo may also be used on social media sites, such as – but not limited to – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, SnapChat, or others.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian/Caretaker:

_____ Date: _____

PARENT CONSENT FOR AWARDS, PUBLICITY, ONLINE RESOURCES, TOPS, COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AID PROGRAMS, COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS, AND OTHER USES OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Some of your child's information may be shared with the Indiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (IOSFA), various clubs and organizations that your child may join, local news media (events, and awards), event programs, graduation and award ceremonies, etc., online resources and educational tools (digital library resources, homework help, etc.), any postsecondary education institution(s) to which your child applies, school photography providers, and some others may appear in this handbook.

To allow your child to appear in event programs, be recognized for awards and achievements, take advantage of online resources, and to ensure eligibility for TOPS, you must sign to provide your consent. Gary Middle College will follow all local, state, and federal data security rules and only share the data that is required for the purpose stated or allowed by Directory Information Notice on page 45.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE CONSENT BELOW:

I CONSENT to my child's school collecting my child's personal information and disclosing the personal information collected to:

- IOSFA and postsecondary education institution(s) (Cumulative records required) ● University Transcript Requests for Scholarship and Admissions
- Programs for Performances, Award Programs and Graduations
- Clubs and Organizations
- Online Resources and Educational Tools
- Ivy Tech Community College
- Indiana Department of Education

I understand and acknowledge that the consent provided herein shall be valid for my child's cumulative transcript records as of the date of signature and shall remain valid and in effect for the 2023-2024 school year.

If any parent/guardian does not agree to any specific use as described here for the student, please express any objections, in writing, in a separate letter made to the attention of the Executive Director of Geo NW Indiana.

_____

_____ Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date