

Student Parent Handbook

2026-2027

Gray Collegiate Academy

Student Parent Handbook

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Gray Collegiate Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, or immigrant status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For questions pertaining to Section 504 and Title IX, contact the Coordinator of Special Services and the Director of Accountability and Compliance.

Table of Contents

Page	Section
4	Transfer Students/Enrollment Date
4	Advertising on School Grounds
4	Celebrations / Special Activities Communication
4	Deliveries
4	Dress-Code
5	Drop-off and Pick-Up
5	Field Trips
6	Health & Safety
6	Hall Pass
6	Immunizations
6	Lunch
6	Parking on Campus
6	Progress/Mid-Term Reports and Report Cards
6	Smoking
6	Students with Severe Allergies or Other Conditions
7	Teacher Conferences
7	Textbooks/Laptops
7	Volunteers/Volunteer Statement
7	Administration of Medicine Policy
8	Attendance Policy
11	Class Drop/Add
11	Course Withdrawal
12	Behavior Policy
15	Cell Phone Use
15	Communication Policy
15	Electronic Use Policy
16	Cell Phone Policy
20	Academic Integrity
21	Homework and Grading Policy
23	Graduation Regalia
23	Emergency Policy
24	FERPA
24-25	Early Graduation, Re-enrollment, Waiting List, Supervision Times, & Seat Time Requirements
26	Parent and Student Signature of Understanding & Acknowledgement

Transfer Students/Enrollment Date

Students transferring from other high schools will receive appropriate credit for previously earned coursework. When students transfer during the middle of a semester, they will be placed in comparable classes whenever possible. Students in need of certain courses that are not being offered at the time of their transfer, will be placed in online Edmentum classes to complete the needed classes when possible. The student's date of enrollment is the date that the student completes all necessary paperwork for enrollment after acceptance and pays all required fees.

Seniors wishing to transfer to GCA must do so before the end of the first semester. They must also have a minimum of 20 credits earned along with the following graduation requirements:

3 English courses
3 Math courses
Biology
One additional Science credit
One additional Social Studies credit
U.S. History
PE/ROTC
Computer Science credit
One World Language credit or CTE course
The 9GR class of 2024 will also be required to have a half-credit of Personal Finance.

General Information

Advertising on School Grounds
All materials posted or distributed on school grounds must be submitted to the office for formal approval before posting or distributing. All items approved must be noted via a method approved by the principal. Any unapproved materials will be removed or confiscated.

Celebrations/Special Activities
Celebrating student birthdays, Valentine's Day, etc.: Flowers, balloons, and gifts of any type are not permitted.

Deliveries
No deliveries of any kind addressed to students will be accepted at school. Please do not send balloons, flowers, or any other type of deliveries to the school for a student.

Dress Code
- No jeans with holes, rips, or tears of any kind will be tolerated.
- No bike shorts, pajama bottoms or tops allowed.
- All dresses, skirts, skorts, and shorts must be no shorter than 4 inches from the midline of the knee and should not be excessively tight.
- Clothing and/or hair should not be so extreme or inappropriate to the school setting as to disrupt the educational process. Therefore, clothing deemed distracting, revealing, overly suggestive or otherwise disruptive shall not be permitted. This includes bare midriffs, low cut blouses, halter/tank tops, see-through shirts/tops/blouses, or tops that bare shoulders.

- No vulgar, obscene or otherwise inappropriate symbols, language or wording will be permitted on clothing or accessories.
- Clothing or accessories, i.e., bookbags, jewelry, hats, etc., that display sexual suggestions, alcohol, tobacco, or other drug symbols are not permitted.
- Gang attire, gang colors, or gang symbols are also not permitted to be worn or displayed on clothing or accessories.
- Hats, head stockings, or kerchiefs may only be worn during the school day for special occasions that must be approved by the principal. No hoods or sunglasses may be worn in the school buildings at any time.
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times. No bedroom shoes or slippers are allowed.
- Special dress or costume may be worn during the school day for special occasions when approved by the principal.
- Wearing accessories or clothing that could pose a safety threat to one's self or others is not allowed. This includes heavy chains, not made as jewelry, fish hooks, multiple-finger rings, studded bracelets or collars, nose/lip to ear chains, etc. Unusual body piercing that is disruptive to the order of the school or is a distraction to the learning environment will not be allowed.
- Pants and shorts must be worn at the natural waistline. No undergarments may be visible at any time.
- Face Coverings: Appropriate face coverings (i.e. medical style mask, buff, etc.) may be worn to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Halloween masks, ski masks and kerchiefs are not approved items.
- During the month of May all dress code violations will result in an immediate Saturday Detention.

Drop Off and Pick-Up

Parents dropping and picking-up students must adhere to the signs displayed upon entering the parking lot.

Field Trips

Gray Collegiate Academy recognizes the importance of out-of-classroom experiences for students. Each of our classes may take field trips during the year. In this discussion, field trip means a journey or excursion away from school grounds, involving two or more persons that is organized and/or sponsored by the school or by an authorized employee of the school, for curricular relevance.

Guidelines for Field Trips

- All field trips must be approved by the principal or designee.
- All field trips must have curricular relevance and are considered part of the school day.
- The school faculty or staff member (i.e. the trip director) designated to be in charge of a field trip has the responsibility to enforce compliance with school policy by all persons participating in the field trip.
- The trip director is responsible for ensuring that all students are accounted for on departure, arrival at destination(s), and on return.
- The parent or guardian of each student participant must sign a Field Trip Permission Slip.
- No student is allowed to leave before the termination of the field trip without notifying the director first.
- When a bus is required, all students must ride on the school bus.

Health and Safety
Parents/guardians should ensure that information on file is correct and complete (please include cell phone numbers) to enable the school to reach you in case your child is hurt or ill. Prescribed medication may be distributed by authorized school staff as outlined below and in the policy section.

Hall Pass
Students who are not present in their designated classes during class time must have in their possession a valid hall pass. Students who choose to violate this guideline will be considered skipping and subject to disciplinary action.

Immunizations
A record of current immunizations are required by law for all students within 30 days of enrollment at GCA. Failure to present this record will result in the student's suspension until the record is presented to the school. A schedule of required immunizations can be obtained at the S.C. DHEC website as well as the Health Department or your healthcare provider.

Lunch
GCA will provide a cafe area with snacks and food items for purchase. Students are not to bring outside food into the classrooms, athletic building, or the GCA café. Food from home is permissible.

Parking on Campus
Students are allowed to park on campus in the designated parking spaces. In order to drive a vehicle to school, the student must complete the Vehicle Parking Registration and pay the $25.00 fee. The student will then be issued a parking hanger to hang from the rear-view mirror. If a student did not purchase a parking hanger at registration, it may be purchased from the front desk. Vehicles without a parking hanger will have a warning, and then the vehicle may be towed at the owner's expense. Also, parking can be revoked at the discretion of the school's administration.

Progress/Mid-Term Reports and Report Cards
GCA students will receive weekly updates via the portal system. Report cards will be sent home electronically.

Tobacco
Smoking, along with all tobacco products of any kind, are strictly prohibited on school property and all school events, including any event sponsored by the school and all off-campus activities. This includes while on school property for drop-off and pick-up.

Students with Severe Allergies or Other Conditions
Severe allergies or other health conditions can be life threatening. These guidelines minimize the risks and provide a safe educational environment for students with food allergies and other health conditions. It is impossible to create a peanut-free or allergen-free environment. To create the illusion that the school environment is free of allergens would be misleading and potentially harmful. Most importantly, our school is an allergy aware school: A place where students and parents with food allergies, or other dietary restrictions, can feel safe. These guidelines have been designed to increase awareness and communication, to prevent possible exposure to known allergens, and to create an emergency procedure for allergic reactions.

Teacher Conferences
Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Spring. Arrangements for additional conferences may be made with your student's teacher before or after school hours.

Textbooks/Electronic Devices
Electronic devices will be issued as long as the required $50.00 technology insurance is paid at the beginning of the year. Each student issued an electronic device or textbook has the responsibility to return it in the same condition as when it was issued, less normal wear. Students are encouraged to place a protective cover on each textbook issued. Some academic courses will require calculators. Students need to purchase their own calculators (please refer to each course's required supply/materials list) and book bags. Reimbursement for lost or damaged textbooks, computer software, classroom novels, or other school property is charged to the student using current replacement costs. The year-end report card/diploma will be withheld until the school's business office receives reimbursement monies. Fines will be charged for lost and/or damaged books, up to the purchase price.

Volunteers/Volunteer Statement
GCA welcomes parent and community volunteers. Parents may volunteer for committees and numerous other activities. Interested parents should contact the school's office or teacher in order to be put in contact with the appropriate person. All volunteers must sign-in each time they come on campus to volunteer. A driver's license is required. Volunteers must also sign a volunteer agreement, including Code of Conduct, prior to volunteering. Younger siblings or non-GCA students may not accompany volunteers in the classroom during instructional time.

Administration of Medicine Policy

Medication
Medicine should be given at home if at all possible. If medication must be administered at school, a signed Parent Request and Physician's Order Form must be completed in order for any medications, prescription or over the counter, to be administered at school. Medications must be sent to school in a sealed, original container labeled with the following information.

- student's name and grade
- name of the medication
- the amount of the medication to be taken will be administered by authorized school staff only. Students are responsible for going to the health room at the appropriate time to receive his/her medication.

Prescription Medication
All prescription medications must be in the original prescription bottle and labeled with the student's name, date, name of medicine, dose, and time it is to be given. A medication form must be completed and signed by a doctor. A parent/guardian must bring the medicine to school and sign the medication

form as well. If a student is found with prescription medicine on their person, the medication will be confiscated and held in the health room until a parent or guardian can pick up the medication or sign a permission form for the medicine to be dispensed at school. The student may not carry controlled substances such as prescription pain medicine, Ritalin, Adderall, Vyvanse, and others to school. Parents must bring these to the health room along with the appropriate paperwork. There are serious

legal consequences for students who are carrying these kinds of medications at school. A doctor's written authorization may be required for the following:

- Prescription medication that is to be given daily on a long term basis
- Emergency medication such as bee sting kits or epi-pens
- Self-administration of certain medications (such as an inhaler for asthma)
- Diabetic medications and supplies

Over-the-Counter Medications

The parent/guardian must bring the medication to the health room and sign a form authorizing a staff member to administer the medicine.

- All medication must be in the original package with the full label intact
- Only the dose listed on the package, as appropriate, will be given
- A doctor's authorization may be required

Students found to be in possession of medication at school will be subject to the discipline code. Parents should complete and return the health update sheet as soon as possible. A new update should be filled out each year. Please call the school nurse if your child's health changes during the school year.

Attendance Policy

Attendance

Daily attendance and active participation in each class are critical parts of the learning process. Policies and procedures established at Gray Collegiate Academy are designed to help students learn responsibility and to increase their potential for success. A significant role in today's school is to help students learn to understand and to appreciate the importance of punctuality and regular attendance. Evidence shows that regular school attendance has a positive carry-over to the world of work. Attendance is primarily the responsibility of the students and parents/guardians.

S.C. School Attendance Policy

Under the guidance of the federal Office of Civil Rights, the South Carolina Department of Education requires all districts to report students who are "chronically absent." Chronically absent students are defined as having missed 10% of their enrollment. Research shows that students with a history of chronic absenteeism face a serious risk of falling behind in school, thus making it more difficult for them to succeed in the classroom.

As part of these new requirements, South Carolina students will be considered "absent" if they miss 50% of their instructional day for any reason, regardless of the classification of the absence as excused or unexcused.

This means Gray Collegiate Academy students must be present for at least half of the instructional day to be considered "present" for that school day.

Gray Collegiate Academy Academic Day: Elementary School

Start Time	End Time	Total Time Required in School
7:30 a.m.	2:30 p.m.	3 hours, 30 minutes

Gray Collegiate Academy Academic Day: Middle School

Start Time	End Time	Total Time Required in School
7:50 a.m.	2:30 p.m.	3 hours, 40 minutes

Gray Collegiate Academy Academic Day: High School

Start Time	End Time	Total Time Required in School
7:40 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	3 hours, 20 minutes

These changes only apply to state "chronically absent" mandates. The High School credit regulations remain the same:
Students in grades 9-12 are allowed the following number of absences before losing course credit:

- 90-day classes 5 unlawful absences
- 180-day classes 10 unlawful absences

If absent, a student must present a written excuse signed by a parent, guardian, physician or other appropriate person within three days after returning to school. The excuse must include the date the excuse is written, date(s) of student's absence, reason for student's absence, telephone number where the parent/guardian may be reached and the required signature. Excuses that have been tampered or forged will count as unlawful absences and the student will be assigned three days of OSS. **Excuses that are turned in three days after the student's return won't be accepted. These days will remain coded as unexcused absences. Only 5 excused parent notes will be accepted throughout the school year.**

Parent/Legal guardian excuses (Excused Parent Notes) for excused absences may be accepted for students to make-up missed assignments; however, to assure course credit for students who have accumulated more than the allowable absences specified for the course duration, a doctor's excuse will be required for all absences beyond the allowable absences. **The principal will require a student who has accumulated more than five absences in a semester or 10 absences in a year to provide a doctor's excuse for all further absences in order to receive course credit.** Administrators have the authority to review absences in excess of five days in a semester course and to use their own discretion for follow-up.

Excused/Lawful Absences
These absences do not count against the days students are allowed to miss by state law:

- Ill students whose attendance in school endangers their health or the health of others, as determined by a physician.
- Students who are chronically ill. A doctor's statement explaining that the student does not need to see a doctor every time the illness occurs must be turned into the attendance office.
- Once the statement is on file with the school, the parent/guardian can inform the doctor of the occurrence of the illness and the doctor can fax the attendance office the excuse or the original may be picked up from the doctor and given to the attendance office when the student returns to school. Schools do not accept faxes from parents.
- Students who must keep medical or dental appointments. The student must see the doctor for the absence to be excused except in cases where the student has been determined to be chronically ill as explained above.
- Students attending a funeral of an immediate family member. A parent note must be turned into the attendance office. A copy of the obituary or program from the service should also be turned in.
- Students participating in a recognized religious holiday of their faith.
- Students who have prior permission to participate in school-sponsored or school-approved activities.
- Students who have unusual or mitigating circumstances as determined by the school principal.
- Students suspended from school.
- Students classified as Juniors and Seniors are allowed two college visits during the year. A letter from a college/university representative on official college/university letterhead must be submitted to the attendance office within three days of the absence.

Verified/Unlawful Absences

The following absences count against the days students are allowed to miss by state law, but allow students to make up missed assignments in a timely manner:

- A written note or e-mail from a parent/guardian.
- Illness of the student to the degree that his/her attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others as documented in writing by parent/legal guardian within three school days after the student has returned to school; provided the number of classes or days missed does not exceed the allowable absences specified for the course duration.

Unverified/Unlawful Absences

The following absences count against the days students are allowed to miss by state law and the district gives unexcused absences for:

- Students willfully absent from school/truant.
- Students absent without the knowledge of their parents/guardians/cutting school.

After three consecutive unexcused absences or after a total of five unexcused absences, the principal or designee will identify the reason(s) for the student's continued absence and will, with the student and parent/guardian, develop an Attendance Intervention Plan to improve the student's attendance.

Tardies

All students must attend at least 60% of a class period to be counted as present. In high school courses, a student who arrives more than 33 minutes late will be marked absent. The same 60% attendance threshold applies to elementary and middle school courses.

Tardy Consequences

Tardy consequences will be assigned based on the total number of tardies accumulated during each semester:

- 5–9 tardies: Students will be assigned 1.5 hours of Saturday Detention for each tardy beginning with the 5th tardy.
- 10–14 tardies: Students will be assigned 3 hours of Saturday Detention for each tardy beginning with the 10th tardy and will be placed on an Attendance Contract. The student's family will also be required to meet with school administration to discuss the student's attendance and tardies.
- 15 or more tardies: Students will be assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) for each tardy beginning with the 15th tardy.

Failure to attend an assigned Saturday Detention or ISS without notifying the Discipline Administrator and school administration will result in an additional Saturday Detention.

Students who miss two Saturday Detentions will be assigned one day of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and placed on an Attendance Contract.

A student who accumulates an excessive number of tardies in a short period of time may receive additional consequences at the discretion of the Principal.

Truancy

In accordance with state law, all children between the ages of 5 and 17 are required to attend school. Parents or guardians who do not wish to enroll their five-year-old child in kindergarten can sign a waiver. A child 5 to 17 years meets the definition of a truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.

Early Dismissals

A parent or guardian may submit a list of individuals authorized to obtain the release of his/her student from school at the time of enrollment. This list may be amended in writing at any time by the parent or guardian. Certified copies of any court orders of divorce decrees provided by the custodial guardian, which restrict another parent's access to the student, shall also be maintained by the administrative office.

Procedures for Signing Students In and Out of School

No student will be permitted to leave school during the school day unless a parent/guardian or other approved person on the student's emergency contact list comes to the school for the student or unless prior arrangements have been made. Parents may submit an e-mail to the attendance office prior to the absence, a minimum of a day in advance to sign a student out of school. We will not accept e-mails or phone calls for early dismissals the day of. A parent/guardian would have to sign the student out in-person the day of the early dismissal.

Students must sign back in upon their return to campus during the regular school day.
Ill or injured students must be signed out by an adult (parent/guardian or adult listed as emergency contact) in order to leave campus. The parent/guardian will sign the student out through the nurse's

office. In case of an emergency or extenuating circumstances, the principal will use his or her judgment in excusing a student.

Doctor/Dentist Appointment
The parent/guardian must sign students out. Students will not be allowed to sign themselves out of school, regardless of age or grade, to go to appointments. Parents may sign out students in the main office up to one week in advance of the appointment. We will not accept e-mails or phone calls for early dismissals the day of. A parent/guardian would have to sign the student out in-person the day of the early dismissal.

Withdrawal from School
Students must follow withdrawal procedures through the Registrar's Office.

Class Drop/Add Period
The drop/add period is the first 5 days of each semester. Any changes after the 5th day must be principal approved.

Withdrawing from a Course
With the first day of enrollment in the course as the baseline, students who withdraw from a course within three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or ten days in a 180-day course will do so without penalty.

Students who withdraw from a course after the specified time of three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or ten days in a 180-day course shall be assigned a WF, and the F (as a 50) will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average. This follows the S.C. Uniform Grading Policy.

The three-, five-, and ten-day limitations for withdrawing from a course without penalty do not apply to course or course-level changes approved by the administration of a school.

Students who drop out of school or are expelled after the allowed period for withdrawal but before the end of the grading period will be assigned grades in accordance with the S.C. Uniform Grading Policy:

- The student will receive a WP if he or she is passing the course. No quality points to be factored into the student's GPA.
- The student will receive a WF if he or she is failing the course. The grade of WF will be factored into the student's GPA as a 50.

If a student fails a course due to excessive absences, an FA will be recorded on his or her transcript. The grade of FA will be factored into the student's GPA as a 50.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

GCA will require good manners, respect for self and others, appreciation for property, honesty, punctuality, reliability, and responsibility from all students, staff, parents and community participants.

We believe that teachers have a right to teach, and students have a right to learn. We fully expect the focus on ethics and decision-making to lead to an environment where good character is important to all. GCA's intention is to praise rather than to reprimand whenever possible; however, if redirection is necessary due to disruptions to others' learning experiences, offense guidelines will be enforced.

Students eligible for protections under IDEA and Section 504 are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as their non-disabled peers in accordance with the regulations specified by IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Day to day application of this policy will be the responsibility of Dr. Newsome. The dress code will be enforced using the Board approved guidelines and consequences.

The Discipline Policy Tiers as follows:

Tier I: The following offenses will result in Saturday Detention which will take place each Saturday from 7:00 am until 9:00 am for elementary school students and 9:00 am until 12:00 pm for middle and high school students. If assigned Saturday Detention, a student will be given written notice on the date and time for which to attend. Failure to attend without notification to the Discipline Administrator and the school's administration will result in an additional Saturday Detention.

- Repeated tardiness to class. (Tardies 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 will result in a Saturday Detention. Students' families will be required to meet to discuss their student's tardies after 10 tardies are obtained. Tardies 10 - 13 will result in In-School Suspension (ISS). The student will also be placed on an Attendance Contract.)
- Littering and/or defacing school property to include class sets of textbooks.
- Repeated dress code violations. Students will be given one warning for a dress code violation. Subsequent violations will result in Saturday Detention.
- Not telling the truth to a teacher or staff member and/or deliberately deceiving a teacher or staff member.
- Leaving designated areas without the teacher's or staff member's permission.
- Repeated cell phone violations.
- Leaving school grounds without permission.
- Inappropriate public display of affection.
- Verbal altercation in class and/or on campus/school sponsored events.
- Loitering in halls, bathrooms, athletic buildings, parking lots, etc.
- Being disrespectful to any teacher, coach, or faculty member.
- Repeated unpreparedness for class (Ex. Reporting to school without a fully charged device for class.)

Tier II: OSS-Out of School Suspension. If a student is assigned OSS, it will be documented on the disciplinary slip and an attempt to contact the parent by email and/or phone call to communicate OSS and the date it is to be served.

- Use of inappropriate language and/or obscene gestures.
- Stealing or possessing stolen property.
- Repeated phone violations after a Tier I consequence.
- Physical altercation in class or on campus or at any school sponsored event. Fighting of a high dynamic could result in Tier 3 disciplinary action.
- Verbal altercation (2nd offense) in class and/or on campus/school sponsored events.

- Knowingly possessing and/or using tobacco products in class, on the campus, or at a school event to include vapor cigarettes.
- Repeated tardiness to class. (Tardies 14 and higher will result in Out of School Suspension (OSS))

Tier III: Recommendation of Expulsion to the Board. If a student is recommended for expulsion, the Board Chairperson will immediately be contacted and a decision will be made by the Board within two days. Students will have OSS until the Board decision is made. Upon that decision, the student and parent will be contacted.

- Bullying another student.

  A gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function where the school is responsible for the child or on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop and that: a) a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student, physically or emotionally, or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or b) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
- Physical altercation (2nd offense) in an academic school year.
- Verbal altercation (3rd offense) in an academic school year.
- Touching any student or staff member inappropriately.
- Possessing and/or using any item in a dangerous manner or as a weapon to harm oneself or others.
- Committing any act in violation of local laws and ordinances.
- Possessing and/or using illegal narcotics and related paraphernalia.
- Possessing and/or using prescription or non-prescription drugs. Note: Prescription drugs must be administered by a staff member and kept in the front office with a designated staff member. A prescribed epi-pen will be permitted to keep on your person.
- Possessing and/or using alcoholic beverages.
- Inappropriate use of any social media with any pictures and/or comments related to illegal drugs and/or activities. This includes but is not limited to pictures or comments referring to GCA.
- Failure to comply with the mandated Sexual Harassment Policy.
- Habitual infractions from Tier I and Tier II.

All disciplinary consequences and tiers are applied at the discretion of the school's principal and are subject to change based on prior contact, warnings, consequences, contracts, etc. Additionally, individual teachers or grade-level teams may have set consequences that are outlined in the class syllabus that will be enforced.

It is at the discretion of the administration to change the location of a student to a virtual alternative setting in order to maintain the safety of all students, staff, and/or school visitors. Likewise, the administration has the discretion to change the location of a student to a virtual alternative setting in order to best serve their educational needs.

Please use common sense when driving and parking your vehicle on campus. Any reckless behavior in a vehicle will result in losing your privilege to park on our school campus. Students are to display the school assigned parking permit.

Safe Harbor

Any student who inadvertently possesses or finds a weapon or substance, which may subject the student to a possible expulsion, may or may not be recommended for these sanctions if the student voluntarily surrenders the property to a school staff person prior to discovery by another person. This should be done as soon as the student realizes that he/she is in possession of or has knowledge about the weapon or substance.

Searches
In order to maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as, laptops/Chromebooks, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. This applies to student vehicles parked on school property as well.

IDEA
Students eligible for protections under IDEA and Section 504 are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as their non-disabled peers in accordance with the regulations specified by IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Sexual Harassment and Bullying
GCA prohibits unlawful sexual harassment of any student or other person. Prohibited sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including but not limited to insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct and inappropriate touching. GCA believes bullying is a form of harassment. Bullying is defined as the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse or through attacks on the property of another. It may include, but is not limited to actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, and exclusion from peer groups within school. The above allegations are to be reported to the teacher and/or the guidance counselor. All allegations are then investigated and reported to the proper authorities including but not limited to parents and local law enforcement. Retaliation for the reporting of sexual harassment or bullying will be met with additional disciplinary consequences.

Cell Phone Use
Cell Phone Policy: GCA
Cell phones will not be available for pick-up in the front office until after 2:30 PM for elementary and middle school students and after 3:25 PM for high school students.

Communication Policy

Communication Portfolio
Communication between school staff and parents/students is crucial for overall school success. GCA uses PowerSchool's Parent Portal system and all parents are encouraged to visit their student's site daily.

Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled during the fall and spring semester. Arrangements for additional conferences may be made with your student's teacher before or after school hours. Parents/Guardians are not allowed during instructional time.

Electronic Use Policy/Cell Phone Policy

GCA offers access to our own electronic network. This network includes Internet access, computer services, videoconferencing, computer equipment, and related equipment for educational purposes. The purpose of this network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people throughout the world.

GCA's electronic network has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities, including homework. GCA's electronic network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. GCA has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material that is accessed or posted throughout the network.

Parent/guardian permission is required for all students under the age of 18. Access is a privilege — not a right. It is presumed that students will honor this agreement they and their parent/guardian have signed. GCA is not responsible for the actions of students who violate these beyond the clarification of standards outlined in this policy.

The school reserves the right to monitor all activity on this electronic network. Students will indemnify the school for any damage that is caused by students' inappropriate use of the network. Students are expected to follow the same rules, good manners, and common-sense guidelines that are used with other daily school activities as well as the law in the use of the Gray Collegiate Academy electronic network.

The particular consequences for violations of this policy shall be determined by the school administrators. The school's principal, or designee, and the Board shall determine when school expulsion and/or legal action or actions by the authorities are the appropriate course of action.

Insurance Coverage

Insurance will cover any physical damage to the device. Insurance **does not cover** lost or stolen devices/ chargers. If a device is lost or stolen there will be a $200 replacement fee. If a charger is lost or stolen there will be a $20 replacement fee.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell Phone Policy: GCA

Cell phones will not be available for pick-up in the front office until after 2:30 PM for elementary and middle school students and after 3:25 PM for high school students.

Children's Internet Protection Act

It is the policy of Gray Collegiate Academy to: (a) prevent users of its computer network, access to or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent

unauthorized online disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identification information of minors and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47USC 254(h)].

Definitions
Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Access to Inappropriate Material
To a practical extent, technology protection measures (or Internet filters) will be used to block or to filter the access to inappropriate information from the Internet or other forms of electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking will be applied to visual depictions of material deemed to be obscene, or to be child pornography, or to any material deemed

to be harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage
To a practical extent, steps will be taken to promote the safety and security of users of GCA's online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of electronic communications. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes (a) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking" and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision, and Monitoring
It shall be the responsibility of all members of Gray Collegiate Academy's staff to educate, supervise, and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Director of Information Technology or designated representatives.

General Unacceptable Behavior
While utilizing any portion of Gray Collegiate Academy's electronic network, unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students will not play games, use IM, email, listen to music or any other activities, applications, or functions during class time, unless expressly approved by a teacher for the educational goals of that particular course and during that particular class.
- Students will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or danger of disruption.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is told by a person to stop sending messages, he or she must stop.
- Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

- Students will not use criminal speech or speech in the course of committing a crime such as threats to the president, instructions on breaking into computer networks, child pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities, threats to an individual, etc.
- Students will not use speech that is inappropriate in an educational setting or violates school rules.
- Students will not abuse network resources such as sending chain letters or "spamming."
- Students will not display, access or send offensive messages or pictures.
- Students will not use GCA's electronic network for commercial purposes. Students will not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through this network.
- Students will not use GCA's electronic network for political lobbying. Students may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express their opinions on political issues.
- Students will not attempt to access non-instructional school systems, such as student information systems or business systems.
- Students will not use any wired or wireless network (including third-party internet service providers) with equipment brought from home. Example: The use of a home computer on the network or accessing the internet from any device not owned by the school.
- Students will not use school equipment, network, or credentials to threaten employees, or cause a disruption to the educational program.
- Students will not use the equipment, network, or credentials to send or post electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.
- Students will not tamper, alter, or delete any of the software that GCA installs on the student's computer until such time as the license expires or the student receives permission to do so.

E-Mail
- Students may be provided with e-mail accounts for specific educational projects or activities.
- Students will not establish or access web-based e-mail accounts on commercial services through the school network unless such accounts have been approved for use by the individual school.
- Students will not repost a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.
- Students will not post private information about another person.

World Wide Web
Access to information for students on the web generally will be provided through prescreened sites and in a manner prescribed by GCA's administration and staff.

Real-time, Interactive Communication Platforms
Students may not use chat or instant messaging unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or in a moderated environment that has been established to support educational activities and has been approved by the principal.

Web Sites
Students may be identified by their full name with parental approval. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted with parental approval. Material placed on student web pages are expected to meet academic standards of proper spelling, grammar, and accuracy of information.

Material (graphics, text, sound, etc.) that is the ownership of someone other than the student may not be used on web sites unless formal permission has been obtained. All student web pages should have a link back to the homepage of the classroom, or school, as appropriate.

Personal Safety While on the Internet

- Students will not share personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, or work address.
- Students will not disclose personal contact information, except to education institutes for educational purposes, companies, or other entities for career development purposes, or without specific building administrative approval.
- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online.
- Students will promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message received that is inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable.

System Security

- Students are responsible for their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use these. Under no conditions should students provide their password to another person.
- Students must immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any portion of Gray Collegiate Academy's electronic network. This includes attempting to log-in through another person's account or access another person's folders, work, or files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
- Students will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.
- Users will not attempt to access web sites blocked by school policy, including the use of proxy services, software, or web sites.
- Users will not use sniffing or remote access technology to monitor the network or other user's activity.

Software and File Storage

Software is available to students to be used as an educational resource. No student may install, upload, or download software without permission from the school's technology department. A student's account may be limited or terminated if a student intentionally misuses software on any school-owned equipment.

Files stored on the network and on individual computers are treated in the same manner as other school storage areas, such as lockers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of GCA's electronic network may lead to discovery that a student has violated this policy or the law. Students should not expect that files stored on school servers are private.

Technology Hardware

Hardware and peripherals are provided as tools for students for educational purposes. Students are not permitted to relocate hardware (except for portable devices), install peripherals, or modify settings to equipment without the consent of the school's technology department.

Vandalism
Any malicious attempt to harm or to destroy data, the network, other network components connected to the network backbone, hardware, or software will result in cancellation of network privileges. Disciplinary measures in compliance with the school's discipline code and policies will be enforced.

Students' Rights
Students' rights to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. GCA's electronic network is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper; therefore, the school may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons. The school will not restrict a student's speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions that are being expressed. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

Due Process
The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the school's network. In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the school's Acceptable Use Policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation. An opportunity will be provided to present an explanation before a neutral administrator (or student will be provided with notice and an opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the disciplinary code). Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. Violations of the Acceptable Use Regulation and Policy may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of other school rules, it will be handled in a manner described in the school rules. Additional restrictions may be placed on a student's use of his/her network account.

Limitation of Liability
The school makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school network will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy
Violations of this policy may result in loss of computer use, loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Students' violations of this policy shall be subject to the consequences as indicated within this policy as well as other appropriate discipline, which includes but is not limited to:

- Use of school network only under direct supervision
- Suspension of network privileges
- Revocation of network privileges
- Suspension of computer privileges
- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from school and/or
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities

The particular consequences for violations of this policy shall be determined by the school's administrators. The principal or designee and the board shall determine when school expulsion and/or legal action or actions by the authorities are the appropriate course of action.

Academic Integrity

GCA's students, united in a spirit of mutual trust and fellowship, mindful of the values of a true education and the challenges posed by the world, agree to accept the responsibilities for honorable behavior in all academic activities, to assist one another in maintaining and promoting personal integrity, and to follow the principles and procedures in this Code of Academic Integrity.

Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity may take several forms: Plagiarism and cheating are two examples of violations of the Code of Academic Integrity. Plagiarism is typically described as duplication of another's work without full acknowledgment of the debt to the original source; however, it also includes any of the following:

- Direct duplication by copying (or allowing to be copied) another's work, whether from a book, article, web site, another student's assignment, etc.. Duplication in any manner of another's work during an exam.
- Paraphrasing of another's work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained.
- Piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole.
- Submitting one's own work which has already been submitted for assessment purposes in another subject; and/or, producing assignments in conjunction with other people (e.g. another student, tutor), which should be your own independent work.
- Submitting another student's work as your own.

Cheating results in a loss of integrity on the part of the individual committing the act and on the educational process that is undermined by the act of cheating. It is a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity for any student to attempt to gain an unfair advantage over another student by unfair or dishonest means. Students that are caught cheating are subject to removal from the school's National Honor Society, Beta Club, etc. and/or any officer position held by the student.

If you are unclear about an assignment, the methodology, or the permissible bounds of assistance for completing your work please speak to your teacher(s) and ask for clarification. This following web page provides some examples of acceptable and unacceptable uses of sources in writing - www.oregon- state.edu/admin/stucon/plag.htm.

In addition, a brief guide from the Paul Robeson Library provides an excellent overview. This may be found at - www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/libs/robeson_lib/flash_presents/text_plag.html. Consequences for not following the academic code of conduct may include receiving a zero on the assignment, failing the course, disciplinary action including the possibility of detention, suspension, and/or expulsion from school.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Students will not plagiarize works found on the Internet (Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were the students). School policies on copyright will govern the use of material accessed and used through the school system. Copyrighted material will not be

placed on any system without the author's permission. Permission may be specified in the document, on the system, or must be obtained directly from the author.

Homework, Make-up Work, and Grading Policy

Homework
Homework's immediate educational purpose is:

- To reinforce skills and concepts learned in class
- To develop study skills and habits
- To practice skills and knowledge in ways not readily accomplished in the classroom
- To inform parents of what is being taught in the classroom

Homework assignments should be expected Monday through Friday of each week and on some weekends. The amount of time required to complete homework assignments will be based on the student's ability and the instructor's curriculum timeline. Teachers will inform students what is expected for their grade level. As cited in *A Nation at Risk*, "the single most important factor for determining whether children will go to college is being properly prepared." Going to college is the destination for GCA's students and becoming a life-long learner to ensure success throughout one's lifetime is the ultimate goal.

GCA is proud to have a challenging, rigorous curriculum. This is one of the many things that makes GCA a great school. With such a rich and rigorous curriculum, the students need time to work at home. We are aware that the student is involved with other interests and activities outside of school.

The staff and administration will attempt to coordinate their schedules and calendars so the students are not inundated with work on the same day. It is understood that homework will be given and will vary depending on the work assigned on a given day, the student's organizational skills and study habits, and the nature of the assignments. Students are expected to learn how to use their free time effectively to complete the required work at each grade level. Parents are expected to support their children in this endeavor. Dual enrollment classes may require additional homework time. All students that are eligible for dual enrollment are required to take college-level courses.

Make-Up Work
Students must be allowed to make-up missing assignments and/or homework due to absences, whether excused or unexcused. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the assignments from his or her teacher. The timeframe for allowing this work to be completed is at the teacher's discretion.

Excused Absences
Students whose absence is deemed "excused" by GCA's administration will have the minimum of total excused days absent to complete/turn in any work missed during that absence. The teacher may give more than the minimum of total absence at his/her discretion.

Unexcused Absences
Students whose absence is deemed "unexcused" by GCA's administration will be expected to turn in/complete any assignments upon returning to school. The student will receive a 10% penalty on each assignment for each day the assignment is not turned in/completed after the return date.

Pre-Arranged Absences
Students who have been approved for pre-arranged absences by GCA's administration will make arrangements with each teacher before the absence.

Progress/Mid-Term Reports and Report Cards
GCA's students will receive report cards at the end of each quarter electronically.

Grades
GCA's students will earn numerical grades. A student's numerical average is determined by considering each unit grade along with semester and/or final exams and projects as a certain percentage of the overall course grade. Following are performance levels of GCA's grading scale:

Kindergarten-2nd Grade
E excellent progress
S average progress
N below average progress
U unsatisfactory progress

3rd Grade-High School
A 90% and above excellent progress
B 80%-89% above average progress
C 70%-79% average progress
D 60%-69% below average progress
F Below 60% unsatisfactory progress

To receive credit for a course, a student must complete instructional requirements in a satisfactory manner and must be in compliance with the attendance policy. A student who fails to comply will not receive credit for the course.

Graduation Regalia

Gold Honor Stole-High Honor Graduate (GPA of 4.0 or Higher)

Gold Cord-Honor Graduate (GPA of 3.5 to 3.99)

Black/Gold Cord-A/B Honor Roll for Dual Enrollment Courses (must have nothing less than a B in all Dual Enrollment courses)

Red/White/Blue Cord-Enlisting in the Military after Graduation

Boys/Girls State Attendees-Nominated by the school to attend

White Cord-Seal of Distinction

Teal Cord-Seal of Biliteracy *(GCA Coursework)*

Silver/Black Cord-CTE Completer

No other awards/cords/stoles can be worn without administrative approval prior to graduation.

Emergency Policy

Emergency numbers are kept on file in the administrative office.

Emergency Evacuation
In the event of an emergency or emergency drill, students will evacuate buildings under the direction of their teacher, line-up for roll call, and then be given further instructions. Fire and crisis drills help prevent injuries and deaths in case of an emergency evacuation.

Inclement Weather and Emergency School Closing
If school is closed for inclement weather or any emergency, listen to local radio stations or check the school's website. The school's principal must authorize school closings. The safety of our students and staff is the most important.

EVACUATION
The decision to do a Level III Evacuation is made by the principal or their designee in conjunction with Local Law Enforcement Agencies. The school will be evacuated (Level III) if:
- There is a serious/dangerous incident at the school or the community that justifies the evacuation.
- There is an order from government authorities to evacuate.

In a Level III Evacuation:
An announcement will be made or someone will come to classrooms or to our Level II evacuation location. **STUDENTS AND STAFF ARE NOT TO USE CELL PHONES.** Staff and students will leave the campus by bus and authorized staff vehicles to go to an assigned evacuation site. Teachers will be told what bus to have their class board. There may be a need to have staff use their vehicles to transport students. Teachers will take their staff notebooks, roll books, and student information sheets. They will keep students with them.

Nuclear Power Plant Emergency
Our pick-up location will be distributed when available based on the incident. Teachers will remain with their students and must take a staff notebook with red/green cards, class rosters, and student information sheets. Elective teachers (or teachers on planning), guidance personnel, custodians, cafeteria manager, and all other staff who do not have students to supervise, should report to the main office for instructions and duty assignments. No staff or students should attempt to contact anyone (parents, spouses, etc.) until directed to do so by the administration. Front office secretaries and the school's nurse will bring health cards, medications and emergency kits, and contact transportation, etc. The head secretary will make all other necessary phone calls. Administrators will monitor movement and the secretary will keep logs of which classes are on which buses. Parents will not be allowed to pick-up students at the school.

FERPA
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents

certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

PowerSchool Student/Parent Portal Mobile App: District Access Code
TRXG

Early Graduation
Early graduation is only permitted for 2 reasons: A student will be leaving for military basic training during the Spring semester or a student is required to enroll in college during the Spring semester because of an athletic scholarship requirement.

Re-enrollment
Every spring the families of currently enrolled students receive an email (to the email address we have on file) with instructions on completing the re-enrollment process. To save your student's seat for the next school year, every family needs to complete the re-enrollment process by the deadline posted by the school. Students who do not enroll within the designated period will be withdrawn from the accepted enrollment list and must re-apply if they wish to attend Gray Collegiate Academy for the next school year.

Waiting List
Waiting lists do not carry over from year-to-year, and are only valid for the school year in which the student has applied. If a student is not accepted for the current school year, and remains on the waiting list, they will need to reapply for the following school year in order to be considered for acceptance for the following school year.

Supervision Times
Gray Collegiate Academy provides supervision for elementary school students from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm. Elementary students will report to their grade level hall between 7:00-7:30. We will supervise middle and high school students from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm. Students dropped off or waiting to be picked-up should report to the designated location at each site. Cafe Gray at the West Columbia campus is open for breakfast beginning at 7:00 am. If students arrive between 7:00 and 7:30 they should report to the cafe.

Seat Time Requirements & Fees
In high school courses, students must meet academic and attendance requirements. The State of South Carolina law requires a minimum of 120 hours of seat time for a one-credit class and 60 hours of seat time for half-credit classes. Any student who accumulates more than five (5) absences in a 0.5 credit class, more than ten (10) absences in a 1.0 credit class, or twenty (20) absences in a 2.0 credit class is in jeopardy of not receiving credit and may instead be assigned a "Failure due to Absence - FA."

Students will have an opportunity to "recapture" missed class time by participating in our seat time program. Students are expected to complete school work during this time. **Students will be required to attend for an hour and a half of seat time at a price of $10.00 for every day of the missed course that they wish**

to make-up. No payments can be taken during seat time and students must pay for their time before the date they will be serving.

There is an allotment of 24 total classes any student will be able to recover. Once 24 blocks of seat time have been applied, the student will no longer be eligible to receive credit for classes with accumulating absences.

Make-up days for the school year will be held on designated Saturdays from 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. The first session will be from 9:00-10:30 and the second session will be from 10:30-12:00. Students can recover 2 missed course sessions per Saturday. The cost is $10 per session.

Parent/Student Signature of Understanding and Acknowledgement

Please print this page, sign, and return to the school's front office or sign electronically via PowerSchool Registration.

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will comply with Gray Collegiate Academy's Handbook policies and procedures and will seek clarification from the school's administration should I have any questions or need further explanation.

_____	_____	_____
Parent's Name (Print)	Parent's Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Student's Name (Print)	Student's Signature	Date

Electronic Use Policy

I have read and understand GCA's Electronic Use Policy and will obey it in full.

_____	_____	_____
Student's Name (Print)	Student's Signature	Date

Cell Phone Policy

I have read and understand GCA's Cell Phone Policy and will help my student adhere to it in full.

_____	_____	_____
Parent's Name (Print)	Parent's Signature	Date