



**Genesee Community Charter Schools**  
**at the Rochester Museum & Science Center**

657 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14607 • (585) 271-4552 x 460 •  
www.GCCSchool.org

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August 1, 2022

Dear GCCS Families,

I hope you are enjoying a relaxing summer. As we prepare for the 2022-2023 school year, we would like to provide you with some updates and insights.

The 2021-2022 school year was met with the triumph of the return to in-person learning after an almost two years interruption due to the pandemic. The year also saw an increased need to focus on socio-emotional learning and the mental needs of students and staff. We know that this challenge is not over, but we are feeling more prepared to build the systems and structures needed to support our students and staff in creating a new norm. We also need your support as we continue to navigate these challenges.

This year, we have a school focus on solidifying our intervention systems to support the academic and emotional needs of our students both inside and outside of the classroom. To assist in this, we have hired a Special Education Coordinator, Mrs. Amy O'Neill, who is joining us with many years of experience in this field. Coupled with our intervention team comprised of Ms. Rachel Kruze, Ms. Jean Hurst and Mrs. Erika Dooley (ENL); our SEL team, Mrs. Lauren Grimm; and our curriculum specialists, Mrs. Lisa O'Malley and Ms. Jean Hurst, we are feeling prepared to address the multitude of needs. We also know that this will be a journey and not a 'quick fix', but we are intentional about the steps we need to take to bridge the gaps we are seeing.

Our goal of creating meaningful learning experiences is rooted in our EL model. We are focused on moving our students to the next level of achievement with an emphasis on the learning environment being more engaging, creating relevant experiences and increasing rigor through high level questioning. In our work inside and outside of the classroom, we center our character traits of *collaboration, compassion, courage, gratitude, initiative, perseverance* and *responsibility*. We also encourage you to ask your students about their learning and how they demonstrate the character traits.

Some of our expectations for the school year include student's daily attendance to school, daily reading for approximately 20 minutes at home and daily math practice for approximately 30 minutes. Students need to make the connection that learning happens outside the classroom walls and is ongoing.

We are excited to continue our partnership with the Diversity and Racial Equity Committee, Community Engagement Committee and the Family Association to support families and engage with the Rochester community. We will also continue our affinity groups to assist in developing collaboration and community amongst the different GCCS stakeholders. Additional information will be provided for interested parties.

Lastly, we want to introduce our new staffing line up for the 2022-2023 school year:

Kindergarten: Mrs. Carlson, Ms. Villanueva, Ms. Henderson  
First Grade: Ms. Deutschbein, Mrs. Gonzalez, Mrs. David

Second Grade: Mr. Schumacher, Ms. DiMaria (*interviewing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> teacher*)  
Third Grade: Ms. Edwards, Mrs. Morales, Mrs. Bewley  
Fourth Grade: Mrs. Kraftschik, Mr. Walpole, Ms. Jaruzel  
Fifth Grade: Mr. Ditch, Mrs. Mason, Ms. Smithers  
Sixth Grade: Mr. Dolgos, Mrs. Stubbe, Mrs. Jones (and Ms. Markel)  
Art: Mrs. Rizzari (formerly Petrella)  
Music: *interviewing for this position*  
P.E.: Mrs. Johnson  
Intervention Team: Ms. Hurst, Ms. Kruze, Mrs. O’Neill  
ENL Teacher: Mrs. Dooley  
SEL Team: Mrs. Grimm (*interviewing for the Student Culture Coordinator*)  
Leadership Team: Ms. Bhalai, Mrs. Farrell, Mrs. Hillman, Mrs. Milke, and Mrs. O’Malley (*interviewing for the Director of FACE position*)  
Administrative Support Team: Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Sabia

As you can see, there are still some open positions, and we are actively interviewing to find the staff aligned to our school’s mission and committed to meeting the needs of our diverse learners. I want to assure you that we are working on solutions and will have a plan in place by the first day of school.

Lastly, it is my belief that all children can learn, but not all children learn in the same way. As Acting Director of Genesee Community Charter School, I am committed to providing an equitable environment in which we are meeting students where they are, while challenging them to meet their highest potential.

Please read on for more important information pertaining to the start of school in September.

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### **GCCS Caregivers Squad (formerly Dad Squad)**

We are asking for some dads or any interested caregivers who want to support the school over the school year in helping with facilities, maintenance and beautification needs of the school. If you are interested in supporting, please complete the [Interest Form](#). Thank you so much for considering!



*access interest form*

### **New Families Orientation**

Please join us for our New Families Orientation on **Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>** from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. As a new family, you will have the opportunity to learn more about the school and what to expect while your child is a GCCS student. Additional information will be shared closer to the date!

### **Family Open House and FA Activities Fair**

Please join us on **Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup>** from 6:00 – 8:00pm. You will have an opportunity to visit our classrooms, talk with your child’s teachers, and meet the families of your child’s classmates. **Please plan to bring your child’s extra clothes, classroom snacks, and classroom supply contributions to school the night of the Open House (see attached list).** It is great for us to start the year fully equipped!

During the Family Open House, be sure to visit common spaces throughout the school, which will be set up with tables from representatives of community sports teams, childcare providers, after-school clubs, and others. If you think your child might like to join a team, take swimming lessons, join a scouting troop, or attend an after-care program, you'll find information here. If you know of an organization that might like to have a booth at the fair, please contact Rose Fletcher at [rose.fletcher.ny@gmail.com](mailto:rose.fletcher.ny@gmail.com) or Christina Foster at [cnbfoster@gmail.com](mailto:cnbfoster@gmail.com).

### **First Days of School**

The first day of school for students in first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades is **Wednesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>**. We will have a shorter school day the first week of school. **Dismissal on August 31<sup>st</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> will be at 12:45 p.m.**

There will be **NO BUSES** for August 31<sup>st</sup> – September 2<sup>nd</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup>, so please secure alternative transportation methods.

Parents of children entering kindergarten, please see the note included at the end of the packet.

**Beginning September 6<sup>th</sup>, school hours are 7:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.**

**School hours every Friday are 7:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**

### **Medical Forms**

All health-related forms are due at the school by **Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>**. If you have not submitted these forms, please do so as soon as possible. **Remember that children cannot begin school without required immunizations.**

Currently, COVID-19 vaccinations are not required to attend school, but we do encourage vaccinations to continue supporting a healthy and safe environment.

### **After-school and Vacation Care**

After-school and vacation care are not offered at GCCS, but many of our families send their children to programs in the area. If you need to make arrangements for after-school care, you are welcome to call the directors of these programs. Please note that we are currently unable to supervise children prior to 7:35 a.m. and after dismissal. We request that you make arrangements for before and after school care, if needed. Please note that school transportation can transport children to their aftercare sites if it is within the same school district. Call your district transportation office for more information.

Here are a few options to support your search:

- After School in the Park - <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/afterschoolprogram/> - 428-6755
- Child Care Council, Inc. (Online Childcare Database) - 585-654-4720  
<https://childcarecouncil.com/for-parents/find-child-care/>
- R-Centers <https://www.cityofrochester.gov/rcenters/>
- YMCA Before and After School Program - <https://rochesterymca.org/child-care/basp/>
- Kids Out and About Rochester (list of Rochester-area childcare centers)  
<https://rochester.kidsoutandabout.com/content/preschools-and-child-care-greater-rochester-ny>

You can also visit the school website for additional resources.

## **Transportation**

You will receive notification regarding routes and times mid to late August. As you know, the GCCS calendar differs from that of traditional districts. Due to our differing calendar, there may be days that transportation is not provided by your home district. Please reach out to your district's transportation departments.

## **Breakfast and Lunch**

An application for free and reduced-price meals is included in this packet. Although you may not plan to participate in our meal program and/or believe that you don't qualify for free or reduced priced meals, all families need to complete this form and return it to school.

August/September menus will be mailed separately.

## **Withdrawal of Students**

If you have decided to send your child to another school, please call Maureen at 585.697.1960 ext. 460 as soon as possible.

## **Family Handbook**

The 2022-23 Family Handbook will be mailed in late August so that you can become familiar with the school's policies and procedures.

## **Volunteer & Chaperone Orientation**

We require Volunteer & Chaperone Orientation for all volunteers and chaperones so that caregivers have a common understanding of our program and how we support our students. Caregivers who volunteer in classrooms, attend day field studies more than five days per year, and overnight chaperones also need to be background checked.

Volunteer & Chaperone Orientation will be held on **(choose one session to attend)**:

Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

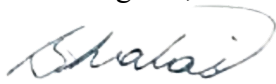
Attendance at this orientation is required every three years. Caregivers who need to renew their volunteer and chaperone certification will receive a notice later this month.

## **Calendar Enclosed**

A copy of our school calendar is enclosed. Please make special note of Professional Development days and Conference Days.


Once again, thank you for making the decision of choosing GCCS for your child(ren). We are committed to achieving the highest academic and character standards with our students, and we look forward to a *Year of Innovation*.

Kind Regards,



Kemouy Bhalai  
Assistant School Leader/Acting School Director

## Genesee Community Charter Schools Supply List 22/23

Kindergarten	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 box of 24 count crayons</li> <li>• 1 box of 10 count broad line markers</li> <li>• 1 box of colored pencils</li> <li>• 1 pack of dry erase markers</li> <li>• 1 red folder</li> <li>• 1 labeled pair of headphones</li> <li>• 1 labeled water bottle</li> <li>• Pack of 4 x 6 index cards</li> <li>• Labeled full set of extra clothes in a gallon sized bag</li> </ul> <p>Optional Classroom Donations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elmer’s Glue</li> <li>• Painter’s Tape</li> <li>• Copy Paper</li> <li>• Child Safe Scissors</li> <li>• 1 Pack of Band Aid</li> <li>• 1 bottle of pump hand sanitizer</li> <li>• 1 bottle of pump hand soap</li> <li>• 1 box of tissues</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 box of 24 count crayons</li> <li>• 10ct. broad line markers</li> <li>• 1 labeled pair of headphones</li> <li>• 1 labeled water bottle</li> <li>• 1 package of white copy paper</li> <li>• Labeled full set of extra clothes in a gallon sized bag</li> </ul> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 roll of blue painter's tape</li> <li>• 1 box of band-aids</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 lined composition notebook</li> <li>• 1 package of glue sticks</li> <li>• 1 pencil box</li> <li>• 1 pack of fine-tip black dry-erase markers</li> </ul> <p>For the Classroom Community:</p> <p><b><i>If your last name begins with A-M</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sanitizer</li> <li>• Gallon sized bags</li> </ul> <p><b><i>If your last name begins with N-Z</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pack of sheet protectors</li> <li>• Hand soap</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 composition notebooks (<i>you can reuse last year’s if you still have them</i>)</li> </ul> <p>For the Classroom Community:</p> <p><b><i>If your last name starts with A - G</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 box of washable markers</li> <li>• 1 box of colored pencils</li> <li>• 1 package of glue sticks</li> </ul> <p><b><i>If your last name starts with H - Z</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 pack of 24 pencils</li> <li>• 1 box of Tissues</li> <li>• 2 bottles of Hand soap</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (1 inch) binder with plastic sleeve on the front</li> <li>• 1 (1.5 or 2 inch) binder with plastic sleeve on the front</li> <li>• 1 composition notebook (with lined paper)</li> <li>• 1 handheld pencil sharpener (plastic shaving catcher is preferred)</li> <li>• 1 pencil pouch or case</li> </ul> <p>This link will take families to an Amazon wish list for the classroom:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b><u>Each Student Needs:</u></b></p> <p><b><i>Please label these items with your child’s name:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One 1.5 or 2-inch 3 ring binder (with clear vinyl covers and inside pocket if possible) (<i>some students were able to save their binder from last year - ask your child</i>)</li> <li>• 1 composition notebook (<i>with ruled paper</i>)</li> <li>• 1 handheld pencil sharpener</li> <li>• Headphones</li> <li>• Extra shoes for recess</li> </ul>

Optional Classroom Donations:

- Ziploc bags- *gallon, quart, or sandwich size*
- Copy paper
- Thin black Sharpies
- Low odor dry erase markers
- crayons
- Scotch Tape & Blue Tape (painter's tape)

*These are classroom supplies that we will share as a community. No names necessary on these items.*

- 1 bottle of hand soap with dispenser (*we don't need any more sanitizer*)
- 1 package of pencils - **Ticonderoga** brand *please*
- Peanut/tree nut free snack for 32 students

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Each student will be provided with:** a 2" binder with paper and divider tabs.

**Each student will need to bring their own:** please see general student supply list, this includes a water bottle and wired headphones/ earbuds

**If you wish to support our Classroom Community, we have created a Target Wish List:**



**FOR ALL CLASSROOMS**

**Each Student Needs:**

- A complete change of clothing, including pants, shirt, underwear, socks, and sneakers. Please place these items in a 1- or 2- gallon zip-top bag, labeled with your child's name.
- 1 pair of headphones labeled with your child's name
- A water bottle with your child's name
- 2 masks in your child's backpack

**All classrooms will accept snack donations for hungry tummies! (Nut-free)**

Large packages of graham crackers, animal crackers, Goldfish, or pretzels. Please keep an eye on sugar content and look out for healthy-snack sign-ups sent out by Classroom Caregivers.

**All Students will need this by November 1<sup>st</sup>:**

- Sweater or sweatshirt
- Snow pants to be left at school
- Boots to be left at school
- Extra mittens or gloves
- Extra winter hat and scarf

Please clearly label each item of the above with your child's name.

*A reminder about backpacks! Please select a modestly-sized backpack without wheels for your child. Wheeled backpacks and large backpacks cause safety and storage difficulties for our students.*

***Thank you for your donations!!***



## A Note to Caregivers of Children Entering Kindergarten

To ease our youngest students into school, we have designed an alternative schedule for kindergarten children for the first few days. Kindergarten children will NOT begin school on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

August 31<sup>st</sup> – September 2<sup>nd</sup> will be used for kindergarten screening and for a brief orientation. Each child will meet individually with one of the kindergarten teachers. **Please sign up for a one-hour screening slot as soon as possible - <https://tinyurl.com/Kindergarten-Screening>.** If you would like to change your time and cannot swap slots on the slot, please contact the teaching team at 585-697-1960 to reschedule your slot.

Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> will be a half-day orientation for kindergarten students. Half the class will come in the morning and half the class will come in the afternoon. Your kindergarten child may come from 8:30 - 11:00 or 12:00 - 2:30. **Please sign up for either the morning or afternoon session for Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> - <https://tinyurl.com/Kin-Orientation>.**

Your child will begin full day sessions on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> from 7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Bus transportation will begin for kindergarten children on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>.

Please let us know if you need assistance in attending your child’s screening time.

<b>August 29</b> School is Closed	<b>August 30</b> School is Closed	<b>August 31</b> 7:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. First day of school for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	<b>September 1<sup>st</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. First day of school for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	<b>September 2<sup>nd</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. First day of school for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> grades
	NO school <b>August 31 – September 2</b> for Kindergarten Students – Please call for a one-hour screening and visitation appointment. NO BUS transportation for kindergarten students.			
<b>September 5<sup>th</sup></b> School is Closed	<b>September 6<sup>th</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. 1/2 day session for Kindergarten. Please call for a.m. or p.m. session. NO BUS transportation for Kindergarten.	<b>September 7<sup>th</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Full day of school for all Grades K-6. Bus Transportation begins for Kindergarten.	<b>September 8<sup>th</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Full day of school for all Grades K-6.	<b>September 9<sup>th</sup></b> 7:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Full day of school for all Grades K-6.

Kindergarten Screening  
Scan the QR Code:



Half-Day Orientation  
Scan the QR Code:

