



Genesee Community Charter School  
Flour City Campus

# Family Handbook

## 2023-2024



# 2023-2024 Calendar



Genesee Community Charter School

2023-2024 FINAL Calendar

Approved June, 2023

August 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30*	31*	

September 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1*
4	5*	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

October 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

November 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

December 2023				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

**\*NO RCSD BUSES**  
(suburban residents  
check with district)

**School Hours:**  
M, T, Th, F: 7:45 am - 2:45 pm  
W: 7:45 am - 12:45 pm

1 Emergency Day

Additional Emergency Make Up Days:  
3/29, 4/8, 5/24, 6/20, 6/21

## August

- 7-29 Professional Development
- 28 Open House & Activities Fair
- 30 First Day of School for Gr 1-6  
Kindergarten Screenings
- 30-31 12:45pm Dismissal (No buses)  
Kindergarten Screenings

## September

- 1 12:45pm Dismissal (No buses)  
Kindergarten Screenings
- 4 Labor Day (School Closed)
- 5 Kindergarten Orientation (no buses)
- 6 First Full Day for Kindergarten

## October

- 6 Professional Development
- 9 Indigenous People's Day (School Closed)

## November

- 10 Veteran's Day (Observed)
- 20-21 Professional Development
- 22-24 Thanksgiving Recess
- 27-30 Exhibition Night Week

## December

- 12 Family Conferences 11:45 am Dismissal  
(No Lunch)
- 21-29 Winter Recess

## January

- 1 Winter Recess
- 15 Martin Luther King Day (School Closed)

## February

- 7 Student Led Conferences 1pm - 5 pm
- 8 Student Led Conferences (Appointment ONLY)
- 15-16 Professional Development
- 19-23 February Recess

## March

- 11-15 Exhibition Night Week
- 29 Professional Development

## April

- 1-5 Spring Recess
- 8 Solar Eclipse (School Closed)

## May

- 24 Professional Development
- 27 Memorial Day (No School)

## June

- 6 Family Conferences 11:45 am Dismissal  
(No Lunch)
- 10-14 Exhibition Night Week
- 18 Last Day for Students 11:30 Dismissal
- 19 Juneteenth (No School)
- 20-21 Professional Development

January 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

February 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

March 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

April 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

May 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

June 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

Staff Only/No Students	School is Closed	Half Day for Conferences
First Day of School	Last Day Of School	Student-Led Conference Day

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August 2023

Dear Families,

On behalf of the GCCS Board of Trustees and staff, we would like to welcome you to Genesee Community Charter School – Flour City Campus. The Genesee Community Charter School offers a unique educational program for our students that is rooted in an interdisciplinary approach utilizing the skills of inquiry, problem-solving, and creative thinking. Students learn through collaboration and an in-depth study of concepts, which culminates in a richer understanding of topics and development of skills. We also are intentionally focused on creating an inclusive culture for all students and one that promotes anti-racist systems and structures, which is evident in the approaches we utilize on a daily basis. Furthermore, we are a school focused on developing the whole child and maintaining the balance between instruction and socio-emotional needs.

We strongly believe that caregivers must make informed choices about their children’s education, and we are pleased that you have decided GCCS will provide the best learning environment and instructional program for your child. We know that this is a decision you have made with great care and reflection about your child’s educational strengths and needs.

GCCS believes that children learn best when schools and families work in partnership with each other. An important element of that partnership is ongoing communication. The Family Handbook will inform you of GCCS policies and procedures which contribute to the smooth operation of our school. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to speak with your child’s teachers or the School Director.

Thank you for making the decision to share your child with us. GCCS is a school focused on creating a learning environment in which students are challenged to be their best; we are honored that you have chosen us to play a central role in educating your child during these foundational elementary years.

We look forward to working with you to ensure your child’s success!

*Michele Hannagan*

Michele Hannagan  
President  
Board of Trustees

*Shannon Hillman*

Shannon Hillman  
Executive Director  
Genesee Community  
Charter Schools

*Christine Farrell*

Christine Farrell  
School Director  
GCCS – Flour City Campus

## Genesee Community Charter School Mission

The Genesee Community Charter School provides a rich educational experience that values intellectual rigor, respect for diversity, and community responsibility. Our local history-based and globally-connected program immerses our diverse population of children in investigation and discovery, extensively using the cultural and natural resources of our community. We nurture children's natural abilities to be **reflective questioners, articulate communicators, critical thinkers, and skilled problem solvers**, enabling them to reach exemplary standards.

## Our Philosophy

The Genesee Community Charter School provides a rich, active, and sound educational program for children in grades kindergarten through six. We set high expectations for student achievement and provide the necessary support to enable each and every student to achieve these expectations. Children are active participants in their own learning, tackling complex content and ambitious projects that require the application of high-level skills and collaborative, quality work. GCCS is a school where children's ideas are honored, their questions are valued, and their social and emotional growth are fostered by caring adults.

GCCS recognizes community at all levels: the nurturing community of families, teachers, staff and students in the school; the larger metropolitan area; and our place in the world community. We believe our students can take an active part in investigating and contributing to solutions addressing community issues. We view intellectual growth and character development as mutually dependent and of equal importance. In addition to academic skills, we build a strong sense of social and community responsibility.

### **Diverse-by-Design**

The school will promote, celebrate, and foster a racially, economically, academically, linguistically, and ethnically diverse student population by welcoming students and families of all backgrounds and promoting an equitable community through its systems and structures. GCCS will provide an opportunity for children to learn with and from each other regardless of their background.

### **EL Education (Formerly Expeditionary Learning)**

GCCS is an **EL Education School**. EL is a comprehensive school design in place in approximately 160 elementary, middle, and high schools around the country. The model emphasizes intellectual growth, high quality student work, and character development through active pedagogy. With its roots in Outward Bound, the EL approach pushes students to develop skills and knowledge that allows them to succeed at ambitious, collaborative real-world projects.

As an EL School, our students spend most of each day embarking on purposeful, rigorous learning expeditions. Learning expeditions are in-depth studies of a single theme or topic, generally lasting twelve weeks, and are the core of the curriculum. Each expedition revolves around curriculum-related projects and performances, which often take students outside school to conduct fieldwork.

Our emphasis on educational achievement, community building, teamwork and service, combined with our curriculum framework and content, create a context for students to acquire the knowledge and character traits they need to succeed in middle and high school. They become connected, caring and contributing members of their community.

### **Curriculum Framework**

At GCCS, social studies, science, mathematics, literacy, and the arts are integrated through the learning expeditions as we focus on the study of local history. A learning expedition is a focused 12-week investigation of a topic.

Our curriculum is organized around six historical time periods that are explored over a two-year course of study. The six time periods are *Prehistory*, *First Peoples of Americas/Explorers*, *Settler & Colonial Life*, *Village to City*, *City Grows*, and *Today & Tomorrow*. Each year, students at all levels study the same time period at the same time, investigating different aspects of the natural, social, political and economic history of our community. The topics of investigation within each time period increase in complexity and sophistication as children advance through the grade levels. All learning expeditions involve intensive research, reading, writing, scientific exploration and real-world application.

### **Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC)**

Because of our emphasis on science, social studies and our community, the Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) is an ideal partner. The resources and personnel of the RMSC, the exhibits and collections, its Planetarium and Nature Center, the RMSC campus and neighborhood cultural institutions, provide a network which supports our demanding and engaging curriculum.

### **School Organization**

GCCS consists of one class at each grade level from kindergarten through grade six. Flour City holds grades K – 3 this year. In order to build strong classroom cultures, instructional continuity, and teacher-student relationships, we “loop” with our students. Looping occurs when each teacher remains with his or her class from kindergarten to first grade, second to third grade, and fourth to fifth grade. Students spend one year with the sixth grade teachers. We have a class size of 30-32 students with two teachers and a teaching assistant. This allows for personalized learning that better addresses each student’s developmental needs.

## **GCCS Board of Trustees**

As a charter school, GCCS operates independently of the Rochester City School District and reports directly to the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute. The GCCS Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the school operates in a fiscally sound manner and maintains fidelity to the philosophy, program, and policies set forth in the school’s charter.

The Flour City Board of Trustees is made up of up to three caregivers elected by the Family Association, up to two museum representatives appointed by the RMSC President, and approximately 5-7 community representatives elected by the Board. Two staff elected by the GCCS – Flour City staff and the School Director provide advice and consent to the Board in decision-making related to school issues and policies and are called “The Education Governance Council”. Meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. on the second or third Wednesday of each month. At each meeting, the Board approves the minutes from the previous meeting, examines financial statements, and receives updates from the administration. Other

Board responsibilities include adopting the school's annual budget, approving new hires, evaluating the Executive Director, and reviewing and updating policies as needed.

GCCS Board meetings are open to the public. Attendees may observe the meeting but do not join in the discussion, however time for public comment is available at every meeting. If issues related to specific staff members, caregivers, or students are raised, the Board will move into executive session and visitors will be excused from the room.

Caregiver representatives provide an important perspective on the Board. A new caregiver representative is elected by families on the day of the May Family Association meeting each year. Caregivers who wish to serve on the Board, and who have been with the school for at least one school year, are invited to express their interest and describe their qualifications prior to the May Family Association meeting.

For more information about board meeting topics, meeting location, and to find the Minutes from each month's meeting, visit the school's website <https://gccschool.org/about/board-of-trustees-flour-city/> .

# Communication

Ongoing communication between home and school is critical to the success of your child at the Genesee Community Charter School. Because GCCS provides a different kind of educational program, you may have questions about your child's daily classroom work and his or her progress toward the learning standards. We encourage caregivers to send email or notes, schedule conferences, phone school staff, and attend school functions in order to fully understand your child's educational experience and progress.

## Backpack Mail

Many communications are sent home with students in their communication (green) folders. Backpack mail will include weekly classroom newsletters, a monthly school newsletter, quarterly district newsletters, school announcements, Family Association event announcements, and student work. We do not distribute information about community- or church-based lessons or events that have an associated cost. Please check your child's folder daily to stay updated with current happenings of the classroom, school and child's progress.

## Website – [www.GCCSchool.org](http://www.GCCSchool.org)

The GCCS website contains information about the school's philosophy and curriculum, breaking news and announcements, the school calendar, and staff bios, Board meeting minutes, and a host of other useful information.

## Email

In order to reduce paper usage, many communications are sent from the school, Family Association, or room caregivers via email. Please note that email addresses and other contact information received through the school are to be used only for official school business, and are not intended for families to use for any type of solicitations or broadcasts. If you are not receiving emails, please contact the main office.

## Facebook

Each classroom has a private Facebook page intended to celebrate that group of students and share information. Each year, families have the option to fill out a photo release permission form, which allows most families to participate in posting and sharing photos from school-sponsored events. When posting, please adhere to the following:

### Group Membership:

- Caregivers, legal guardians, teachers and other adults who have completed Chaperone Training
- Students may not be members even if they meet the Facebook age requirement of 13
- Persons who have been with the school for more than two years who leave the school before graduation may remain members of a group

### Content:

- Design Principles are always in effect
- Posts are welcome that describe
  - ✓ any school or Family Association activities
  - ✓ any outside school activities that are planned to be inclusive of all class members
  - ✓ photos of school events only
  - ✓ please note that this is not a place for discussion of school policies

Facebook pages are monitored by school personnel. Caregiver administrators verify membership (see above) before approving a request to join a group, monitor posts, and make decisions to edit when necessary. All members are empowered as monitors – members may email the caregiver or staff administrators directly from the Facebook page to address any concerns they may have with written or visual content. After a review, and if appropriate, any request to remove information will be honored.

Facebook pages will continue after graduation as a place for alumni to connect. GCCS alumni are free to become members of their class's page after graduation.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, GCCS started a private GCCS Cares Facebook page. Two of GCCS's Character Traits are Compassion and Collaboration. These traits are ones that students develop during their time at GCCS but are also embodied in the community of families that make up GCCS. GCCS cares, and in that spirit, this private Facebook page is designed to be a place where family members can share resources with each other as well as express needs that they may have.

To join, search Facebook for GCCS Cares and request to join the group. Families can choose to belong to the class Facebook pages, the GCCS Cares page, or both groups.

### **Communicating Concerns**

Caregiver involvement is a very special element of our culture at GCCS, and we strive to make our relationships with caregivers as productive and positive as possible. However, there are times when caregivers have a school-related academic, behavioral, or organizational concern. We welcome caregiver input, and while we can't guarantee that each suggestion will be adopted, or that every issue will be resolved in the manner that you wish, we can guarantee that caregivers will be heard, and that feedback will be thoughtfully considered.

There are many venues for caregivers to express concerns or pose questions. An annual caregiver family culture and climate survey is administered to families each year. Teachers send home weekly newsletters which contain their contact information. The School Director is available to communicate with caregivers via phone, email, or in person. Every issue of *Currents* contains contact information for classroom caregiver volunteer coordinators, Board of Trustees representatives, and Family Association Officers.

***In communicating concerns, we expect that caregivers honor the same guiding principles we have developed for our staff:***

- Go directly to the source – if you have a classroom-level concern, please speak directly with your child's teachers. If you have a school-wide concern, please contact the School Director. The School Director will also field all concerns and questions regarding our facilities. If your concern is related to the Family Association, please contact the appropriate officers or committee chairs.
- Speak only for yourself – concerns are best understood when communicated directly by the person experiencing the issue – not by others attempting to represent one another.
- Involve as few people as necessary to resolve an issue – generally, an issue can be solved with a simple message or conversation between two parties.

Many miscommunications, misunderstandings, and false assumptions are avoided by observing these guidelines. We create a trusting atmosphere when we deal with issues personally and directly.

## **Confidentiality**

Please note that when issues do arise, out of respect for the confidentiality of all our staff, students, and families, we will not discuss personnel issues with caregivers, nor will we discuss students with families other than their own. Our many caregiver volunteers are also required to follow these same confidentiality protocols and must refrain from discussing what they see and hear in the classroom.

## **Complaints**

Any individual or group may bring a complaint to the GCCS leaders and/or Board of Trustees alleging a violation of the provisions of the charter law or the charter. Both formal and informal complaints will be carefully considered and every effort will be made to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Contact Information:

Michele Hannagan, Board President  
mhannagan@gccschool.org

Shannon Hillman, Executive Director  
shillman@gccschool.org

Christine Farrell, School Director  
cfarrell@gccschool.org

Address: Genesee Community Charter School – Flour City Campus, 1100 S. Goodman Street,  
Rochester, NY 14620

## Formal Complaints

A formal complaint may be filed in a situation where someone is alleging a violation of the provisions of the law or the charter. All formal complaints are to be submitted to the President of the Board of Trustees in writing prior to the next monthly meeting. The matter will be placed on the agenda and the Board will discuss the complaint and determine the steps for an appropriate investigation. The investigation may be delegated to staff at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. At the next Board meeting, the Board will hear the results of the investigation and will render a decision. The complainant will receive a written response within one week of the decision. The written response will include the reasoning behind the decision rendered.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the results, he or she may submit an appeal or re-issue the complaint to the President of the Board of Trustees in writing at least three days prior to the next monthly meeting or issue the complaint directly to the authorizer, SUNY Charter Schools Institute. The written response will include both the right to appeal and a copy of the Grievance Guidelines (contact the main office for a copy).

Contact Information for the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute:

SUNY Charter Schools Institute  
41 State Street, Suite 700  
Albany, New York 12207  
Telephone Number: 518-445-4250

Formal complaints may be handled by the School Director, but only if the complainant voluntarily pursues resolution with staff. It will not be required that a complainant first work with staff prior to filing the complaint with the President of the Board of Trustees.

### Informal Complaints

In recognition that many complaints do not allege a violation of the law or of the charter agreement, the informal complaint process will be used when appropriate and will be primarily handled by staff in a multi-tiered approach. Complainants will be encouraged to address the complaint with the staff directly involved in the situation first (ie: a Classroom Teacher; the Intervention Teacher). The complaint should be brought to the School Director in a timely manner if the parties cannot agree on a resolution. At this stage the complaint should be submitted in writing. The School Director will work to sufficiently resolve the complaint to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.

Every effort will be made to reach a swift and mutually agreeable resolution to the situation. A written notice of the decision will not be necessary in most cases, but may be completed to document the outcome.

# Family Involvement

## **GCCS Family Association**

The GCCS Family Association is an important school partner. It is a separately run nonprofit organization created for the purpose of providing families with a formal way to build deep relationships with GCCS. It is led by representatives elected by families. All GCCS family members are automatically members of the GCCS Family Association and FA welcomes your attendance at events and meetings. The Family Association participates in fund raising activities, special events, community service, and additional tasks that benefit the students of Genesee Community Charter School and its families. Family Association meetings and events are announced in *Currents*. Please note GCCS does not oversee nor is it a member of the Family Association.

## **Family Association Social Events & Programs**

The GCCS Family Association plans several informational and social events each year to involve caregivers in the life of the school. These include the new family reception, family game night, the skating party, the dance party, the year-end picnic, and major fundraiser. These events occur for all families at both campuses. Please note that these are family events, and students must be accompanied by at least one caregiver. The use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and drugs is not permitted at any school sponsored or Family Association-sponsored family event.

## **Community Circle**

Each Wednesday, our school gathers together for song, performances, poetry, and reflection. This event takes place from 12:10-12:40 p.m. in the Music Room. Families are invited to join us and take part in this special weekly tradition. There are times select families are invited due to the expected number of participants and room capacity. Updates about family attendance will be shared in the school's monthly newsletters and in email communication to families. Interpreter services are available upon request through our English as a New Language (ENL) Coordinator.

## **Classroom Visitations**

Family members are encouraged to participate in the daily life of their children's classrooms. We welcome family members to work with individuals or small groups, assist with lunch or class projects, and read or make presentations to the class. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a time to visit. Family members interested in being regular classroom volunteers will need to attend our chaperone training once every three years.

## **Family Service Opportunities & Volunteer Background Checks**

We believe families are an integral part of student learning. We have a variety of needs for volunteer services and are happy to have you as a part of our team. We have structured our program to provide the opportunity for families to participate in the daily life of our school community. All families are asked to read, sign, and participate in our Family Service Commitment each school year as part of enrollment materials. Contact the school to speak with the grade-level caregiver about how you can help.

All overnight chaperones and regular classroom volunteers (those who volunteer in classrooms more than five days per year) are required to undergo fingerprinting and criminal background checks and attend volunteer/chaperone training every three years. This policy and our volunteer guidelines are sent home each year as part of the re-enrollment packet and are part of the appendix in this manual.

## **Family & Visitor Behavior Expectations**

GCCS values its “open door policy” and believes caregiver and family involvement and partnership is key to the success of our school community. As members of the GCCS community, family members and visitors are required to follow the same behavioral expectations as students. These expectations are detailed in the GCCS Discipline Policy and Procedures, which can be found in the family section of the GCCSchool.org website (<https://gccschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Attachment-D-GCCS-Discipline-Policy-and-Code-of-Conduct-4-10-19-1.pdf>) and a copy is available in the main office. The Caring Community Commitment Plan and a summary of these procedures can be found in this handbook.

## **Additional School Policies**

### **Exhibitions of Student Learning**

Each three-month learning expedition culminates with an exhibition of student learning. Exhibitions are a team effort in every class, and students’ performance is part of their evaluation on Exhibition Night.

***Attendance at Exhibition Night, three times per year, is mandatory for every GCCS student.***

Exhibitions may take the form of book talks, restorative circles, plays and performances, student-led tours, demonstrations, or displays. Dates for exhibition weeks are listed on the school calendar. Your classroom teacher and the school newsletter will communicate the specific night(s) your student must attend. If a student is unable to attend an exhibition night, please speak with your classroom teacher or a member of the Leadership team. Please speak with your child’s teachers and/or the Family Association Chairs if you will need transportation assistance. If you would like to request any other accommodations, please contact the Main Office.

### **Home Learning (Homework)**

It is our belief that Home Learning should be meaningful and connected to the school day experience. Home Learning may reinforce skills or content previously taught or may help students prepare for an upcoming lesson. To that end, teachers may send home assignments such as math a math game; handwriting practice; a text to pre-read or review; revising and completing a writing assignment; or other tasks. Additionally, families are expected to read daily with their children and practice math fact fluency. Computer-based skill practice programs such as i-Ready may also be assigned as home learning for students. Please alert teachers if your family does not have internet or computer access at home.

### **Holidays & Birthdays**

We understand that children and families observe a variety of holidays and family celebrations. To be sensitive to all families and to devote more time to our learning expeditions, ***we do not have holiday-themed parties in our classrooms or celebrate one-day commemorative events.*** However, we do acknowledge and educate students on some national and religious holidays throughout the school year. Families wishing to observe birthdays may do so during lunch, in cooperation with classroom teachers. Please contact your child’s teacher to discuss arrangements. Only store-bought snack items may be brought in for student birthdays. Also, please check with teachers regarding classroom food allergies. Please use email or the postal service to deliver invitations to birthday parties. This information is available in our school-wide directory that is sent out annually.

### **Dress Code**

Students attending GCCS do not wear uniforms. Students should dress in a way that reflects and expresses their identity, but also allows them the ability and comfortability to learn and play as our days

are filled with movement, exploration, and the natural world. GCCS students should wear shoes that allow them to play freely without risk of injury and therefore sneakers or close-toed shoes are recommended. As a school that embraces and welcomes all families, we will ask students to change if messaging on clothing implies or expresses harm to self or others through racism, discrimination, violence, or the use of illegal substances.

### **Religious, Medical, Gender Identity, and Disability Accommodations**

GCCS will reasonably accommodate a student's religious beliefs, medical condition, gender identity, or disability by making exceptions to this policy. Students/families who need such an accommodation should contact the School Director.

### **Backpacks and Umbrellas**

Please provide your child with a regular sized over-the-shoulders backpack for schoolwork and communications to and from school. Please be sure that the backpack is large enough to hold a 9 x 12 pocket folder. Backpacks with wheels are not permitted at school, as they often don't fit in cubbies and cause safety concerns as children drag them through hallways, on staircases, on buses, and outdoors. Similarly, we prefer your child to leave umbrellas at home as they can be a danger to other children, especially on field studies and during arrival and dismissal. Instead, it would be ideal to provide water-proof rain jackets with hoods for your children.

### **Toys & Electronics**

**Please help your child remember that toys, trading cards, electronics, games, and similar devices need to be left at home.** Each classroom is equipped with age-appropriate games and materials for learning. Toys and electronics from home are not permitted in school.

### **Special Education**

IEPs and Section 504 Accommodation Plans are written documents developed for eligible students with disabilities. Legal guardians have the right to request meetings at any time concerning their child's IEP or Section 504 Accommodation Plan. Requests should be made through the Special Education Coordinator.

Eligible students with disabilities may have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) created by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) in their home district. GCCS teachers follow the IEP and additional services are provided by the child's home district during school hours. Changes to IEPs can only be made by the CSE of the home district.

Other eligible students may have a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, which is a school-based plan created with a multi-disciplinary team at GCCS. Students are eligible for this plan if they have a disability that is defined by federal law as "an individual with a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment" [34 C.F.R. §104.3(j)(1)]. With the classroom teachers, caregivers, and the Special Education Coordinator, a plan is developed to accommodate needs and help the child be successful in the classroom. The plan is reviewed annually.

## Annual FERPA Notification

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives our parents certain rights over student education records. The Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security provides you with additional rights. Among other things, you have the right to:

- *Inspect and review your child's education records* within 45 days after GCCS receives your request. You should submit a written request to the School Director that identifies the record(s) you wish to inspect, and the School Director will notify you of the time and place where you may inspect the records.
- *Request changes to your child's education records* when you believe they are inaccurate, misleading, or violate your child's privacy rights under FERPA. You should make requests to amend records in writing and identify what you want changed and the reason for doing so. If GCCS decides not to amend records as requested, you will be notified of the decision, and of your right to a hearing and certain hearing procedures.
- *Provide written consent before personally identifiable information in your child's education records is disclosed.* However, in certain cases, FERPA allows disclosure without consent such as:
  - Disclosure to school officials who need to review education records to fulfill their professional responsibilities. School officials include: GCCS employees (such as administrators, supervisors, teachers, other instructors, or support staff members); and people whom GCCS engages to perform services or functions for which it would otherwise use its employees. These include (a) individuals and entities providing GCCS services and functions through contracts, (b) employees of other government agencies providing GCCS-related services or functions (such as school nurses and special education providers), (c) parents, students, or other volunteers assisting other school officials in performing their tasks, and (d) other qualifying individuals or organizations, such as consultants and community-based organizations, but only if they have agreed in writing to keep student information confidential. Such people are required to be under the direct control of GCCS with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records. Direct control is achieved in various ways, including by written agreement.
  - When records are requested by officials of another school, district or education institution in which your child seeks or plans to enroll, or is already enrolled if made for purposes of your child's enrollment or transfer.
  - Other exceptions exist that permit disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent include certain types of disclosures. Some are listed below. Most of these types of disclosures are subject to certain additional requirements and limitations.
    - To authorized representatives of government entities and officials in connection with audits, evaluations, or certain other activities;
    - In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received;
    - To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, GCCS
    - To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions;
    - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
    - To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency; and
    - Information that GCCS has designated as "Directory Information (below)."
- File a complaint with the US Department of Education if you believe GCCS failed to comply with FERPA's requirements. Complaints may be filed here: Student Privacy Policy Office U.S.

### **Parents Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security**

Pursuant to Education Law section § 2-d, The Genesee Community Charter School (GCCS) is required to publish on its website a Parents Bill of Rights for data privacy and security. Also made available is information on each third party vendor GCCS contacts with where that vendor receives student, parent/guardian, GCCS staff, faculty, and School Director data. Parents, including legal guardians or persons in a parental relationship, can expect the following:

1. A student's personally identifiable information (PII) cannot be sold or released for any commercial purpose. PII, as defined by Education Law § 2-d and FERPA, includes direct identifiers such as a student's name or identification number, parent's name, or address; and indirect identifiers such as a student's date of birth, which when linked to or combined with other information can be used to distinguish or trace a student's identity. Please see FERPA's regulations at 34 CFR 99.3 for a more complete definition.
2. The right to inspect and review the complete contents of the student's education record stored or maintained by GCCS.
3. State and federal laws such as Education Law § 2-d; the Commissioner of Education's Regulations at 8 NYCRR Part 121, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") at 12 U.S.C. 1232g (34 CFR Part 99); Children's Online Privacy Protection Act ("COPPA") at 15 U.S.C. 6501-6502 (16 CFR Part 312); Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment ("PPRA") at 20 U.S.C. 1232h (34 CFR Part 98); the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") at 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. (34 CFR Part 300); protect the confidentiality of a student's identifiable information.
4. Safeguards associated with industry standards and best practices including but not limited to encryption, firewalls and password protection must be in place when student PII is stored or transferred.
5. A complete list of all student data elements collected by NYSED is available at <http://www.nysed.gov/data-privacy-security/student-data-inventory> and by writing to: Chief Privacy Officer, New York State Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.
6. The right to have complaints about possible breaches and unauthorized disclosures of PII addressed. Complaints may be submitted to Shannon Hillman, GCCS Executive Director by email: [shillman@gccschool.org](mailto:shillman@gccschool.org), by phone: 585-417-7020, by mail to: 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester, NY 14620. Complaints may also be submitted to NYSED at <http://www.nysed.gov/data-privacysecurity/report-improper-disclosure>, by mail to: Chief Privacy Officer, New York State Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234; by email to [privacy@nysed.gov](mailto:privacy@nysed.gov); or by telephone at 518-474- 0937.
7. To be notified in accordance with applicable laws and regulations if a breach or unauthorized release of PII occurs.
8. GCCS workers that handle PII will receive training on applicable state and federal laws, policies, and safeguards associated with industry standards and best practices that protect PII.

9. GCCS contracts with vendors that receive PII will address statutory and regulatory data privacy and security requirements.

### **Internet Use Policy & Internet Safety**

Student use of the internet is an important component of classroom research and learning. Students and their families must sign the school's Internet Use Agreement before being permitted to use internet related tools. Teachers supervise student internet use and students abide by internet safety protocols.

Failure to abide by the rules will result in the suspension of internet privileges for the student. See the Appendix for a copy of the school's Full Electronic Information and Use Policy.

## **Reporting Student Progress**

As an active participant in your child's education, we recognize and appreciate that you want to know how your child is learning and growing both academically and socially. Many tools are used to document and share student academic and social performance, including, but not limited to, work samples, checklists, rubrics, performance recordings, standardized test data, and anecdotal records. Our teachers assess student progress in a variety of ways and are able to provide you with ongoing, comprehensive information.

### **Daily Communication**

School-home dialogue is facilitated by notes and emails home from teachers and provides caregivers with a snapshot of their child's activities at school. A communication (green) folder is carried by the student and will include things such as newsletters, menus, student work, or announcements from the class or school. Families may also contact teachers through email and telephone (**messages will be taken during times of instruction, unless it is an emergency**).

### **Family and Student-led Conferences**

Three formal Family conference days are held during the year, and provide teachers and families an opportunity to share information or concerns about their child's progress. See the school calendar for scheduled conference dates. The teacher or the caregiver may request additional conferences at any time. In addition, a student-led conference is held in February where students share their learning with families in a conference led by them! **Student attendance at a student-led conference is mandatory.**

### **Progress Reports**

Student progress reports are sent home to families three times a year following each expedition (in late December, April, and late June). Progress reports are based on the New York State standards addressed during each expedition and are meant to summarize student learning, highlighting strength and areas of growth academically and socially-emotionally.

### **Annual Goals and Progress Reports for Students with Individual Education Plans (IEP)**

If your child is classified as a student with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), your child's IEP contains annual goals. Your school district is required to provide you with progress reports throughout the school year to let you know how your child is progressing in meeting those annual goals. Please contact the GCCS Special Education Coordinator for more information.

## **Formal Assessments**

Students in Grades 3-6 participate in the New York State English Language Arts and Math exams. Additionally, students in Grade 5 take the New York State Science test. Results will be shared with families at conferences, however, please note that NYS does not release results until the following year.

All students take the i-Ready standardized assessment two to three times per year to monitor their progress. This assessment provides information about ongoing progress in reading and math, and helps teachers pinpoint students' strengths and needs. If teachers identify a particular skill a child needs based on these assessments, teachers will notify families in writing and in conferences to determine a targeted 6-12 week intervention plan to support student learning. Families are expected to support this plan both at home and at school to help students accelerate their learning.

## **Field Studies**

Fieldwork is an integral part of the educational program at GCCS. Field studies are carefully structured to address the learning goals of the expedition, and afford students rich opportunities to "learn on location." Students interview experts, examine artifacts, conduct research, make observations, and gather data through note-taking, sketching, and photography. Fieldwork deepens and extends students' understanding of the content and nurtures their skills as life-long learners. In line with our Outward Bound approach, during fieldwork students are challenged to work to the limits of their stamina and academic ability while collaborating with one another. High quality work is the expectation during field study activities, just as it is during in-school activities.

Most fieldwork takes place at local museums, parks, businesses, and historic sites, and lasts from one to five hours. At times, overnight field studies to locations outside Rochester are planned when distant resources are central to our students' understanding of the content of an expedition.

Student "retreats" occur in the older grades and are designed to focus on social-emotional growth and group dynamics. School staff and other qualified individuals, rather than caregivers, serve as chaperones on retreats.

Safety and learning are our top priorities on fieldwork. If a student's behavior raises safety concerns or is potentially disruptive to the class's learning, the student may require specific interventions or discipline. For example, a one-on-one chaperone may be required or the student may be placed in another location (ie. classroom) for the duration of the field study.

## **Permission Slips**

As part of the enrollment process, a permission slip covering all field studies and excursions for the school year must be completed by the parent or legal guardian and is kept on file. Classroom teachers will communicate dates and destinations of these excursions through classroom newsletters or special announcements. Field studies that last beyond the school day will require trip-specific permission slips.

## **Medication & Overnight Fieldwork**

School personnel, at the direction of the school nurse, will administer medication when the class is on overnight fieldwork. All medications and accompanying paperwork must be submitted to the school nurse at least 72 hours in advance. This time allows school staff to prepare instructions, records, and materials for field study personnel. In addition, an RN from BOCES must come to meet with each child individually to assess self-directedness before a child may access their own medication. Children whose caregivers do not comply with this timeline will not be permitted to attend the fieldwork.

The only exceptions will be last-minute prescriptions for newly-diagnosed conditions, for example antibiotics prescribed for bronchitis. In this case, caregivers should notify the school immediately upon receiving the prescription, and must provide a copy of the doctor's orders are given to the school along with the medication as far in advance as possible.

Please remember that ALL medications – including over-the-counter pain relief, cough drops, topical ointments, and herbal remedies – must include doctor's orders and be submitted to the school in advance.

If you have a child in fourth, fifth, or sixth grade, it is very likely he or she will have an overnight field study as early as September. Please make arrangements now to secure the documentation needed for your child to receive medication while on the trip.

### **Chaperone Policy**

Critical to the success of field studies are the adults entrusted with the care and supervision of our students. For most field studies, a request is announced seeking caregiver volunteers to chaperone. Caregiver involvement is an important part of our school's culture, and chaperoning on fieldwork is a great way to participate in your child's education.

Chaperones perform a wide range of functions. They ensure children's safety, monitor behavior, carry out teachers' instructions, and support individuals and groups in gathering information. Chaperones help interpret exhibits and presentations, and they sometimes provide instruction to small groups of students. On overnight fieldwork, chaperones are also responsible for assisting with meals and supervising children in hotels, tents, or cabins. The GCCS Discipline Policy and Procedures applies to chaperones during fieldwork.

GCCS takes seriously the responsibility to provide safe and productive learning experiences for students. On fieldwork, doing so requires that we make chaperone decisions that we feel are in the best interests of the class. GCCS administration retains all decision-making authority in selecting chaperones and its decisions are final.

#### The following principles guide our chaperone selection process:

- The number of chaperones is established based on the nature and destination of the fieldwork, the needs of students, and what is best for the class.
- Chaperones are selected for each field study with a number of factors in mind, including individual student needs, gender balance, and previous chaperone experience.
- **Caregivers who are not selected as chaperones are not permitted to join the class on their own or to visit their children during the course of the field study.**

Each field study has a carefully designed purpose and set of learning activities. The school strives to prepare chaperones in advance so that they may be most effective in supporting student learning. Before applying to chaperone, please consider whether you are able to meet the following requirements:

Requirements for chaperones for day fieldwork include:

- Ability to commit to the field study for its entire duration free of other responsibilities, ie. care of siblings, cell phone calls, or other appointments
- Ability to safely and responsibly care for a small group of students
- Ability to follow teacher directions and comply with teacher expectations for chaperones

- Ability to maintain confidentiality regarding students and other caregivers
- Successful completion of Volunteer/Chaperone training every three years

In addition to those listed above, requirements for overnight fieldwork chaperones include:

- Previous experience chaperoning day fieldwork and/or volunteering with students in class
- Attendance at a chaperone meeting prior to the field study
- Ability to safely and responsibly care for a small group of students overnight
- Stamina to complete the demands of the field study
- Ability to appropriately support students through rigorous physical and academic tasks
- Knowledge of the learning goals of the expedition and field study

Chaperones for day fieldwork are solicited by the classroom teachers and/or the classroom caregiver volunteer coordinators via backpack mail or phone call. Caregivers wishing to chaperone may communicate their desire to attend up to 24 hours in advance of the field study. Every attempt is made to accommodate all caregivers wishing to attend.

Chaperones for overnight fieldwork are solicited by the classroom teachers in consultation with the School Director via backpack mail at least one month prior to the field study. The fieldwork announcement specifies the number of chaperones needed for the field study. Caregivers who meet the qualifications listed above are welcome to apply to be chaperones. Classroom teachers, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the School Director review applications and weigh the many factors that are unique to individual classes and fieldwork destinations. They select chaperones for the field study, with every effort made to include a combination of new overnight chaperones and veteran overnight chaperones. **Caregivers are encouraged NOT to make plans to attend overnight fieldwork until they receive notification that they will be chaperoning.** Caregivers wishing to chaperone will be notified of chaperone selection by classroom teachers or the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

If you are selected as a chaperone, you agree to meet the following requirements:

- Siblings are not permitted on fieldwork
- Follow the same dress code as students and wear clothing that is appropriate for the weather and fieldwork destination
- Ride the bus with the class
- Follow instructions of school personnel regarding schedules, behavior and academic expectations
- Maintain continuous proximity and supervision of the assigned children
- Avoid “side conversations” with other adults that may be distracting to the learning
- Refrain from excessive cell phone usage
- Comply with the CGGS Discipline Policy and Procedures
- Use student management strategies and language consistent with the school’s approach
- Inform teachers of student management issues that require intervention
- Refrain from purchasing extra treats beyond what is being provided to the whole class
- Provide a level of support to students as directed by the teachers

## **Recess Year Round!**

We believe strongly students, just like adults, need a break from their work. Students have an outdoor recess period of approximately 20-25 minutes daily. We have recess outside, unless it is raining or there are extreme temperatures. Please provide your child with climate appropriate apparel, including snow pants, boots for mud and/or snow, gloves, hats, and scarves to be kept at school during the winter months, sunscreen as needed, and sweaters or jackets. Staff also encourage families to provide extra pants, socks, underwear, shirts, and shoes to keep in cubbies in a marked zip top bag for accidents or extra messy days. It is important to note that some of our recess areas can be muddy and will oftentimes result in children getting mud on their clothes/footwear. If you need assistance with obtaining these items, please contact: [gccs\\_fa@gccschool.org](mailto:gccs_fa@gccschool.org) as the Family Association has maintained a collection of extra items on campus.

## **Arrival & Dismissal**

### **Arrival**

The Genesee Community Charter School day begins at 7:45 a.m. All students remain on their buses or with families outside the door, until 7:35 a.m., when students are permitted to enter the building.

### Walkers

Because we do not offer before-school care, it is important that families make arrangements for the timely arrival of their children. **Students should not be left unattended outside the school prior to 7:35 a.m. Please do not enter the building prior to 7:35 a.m., unless prior arrangements are made with the School Director.**

### Drop Offs

Students who are driven to school are allowed to enter the building at 7:35 a.m. Please do not drop off children prior to 7:35 a.m. We ask that you refrain from parking or discharging children from cars in front of the school, other than as directed by school personnel. There is no parking in the front of the school as this is used for bus drop off.

Caregivers may either drop children off or walk into the school with your child and drop them off at the classroom door. If you are walking to the door, please park in one of the parking lots. The school doors will open promptly at 7:35 a.m. You do not need to sign your child in unless it is after 8:00 a.m.

As teachers are busy greeting students and preparing for an eventful day, they are not available to converse with you at this time. Communication to teachers can be placed in your child's communication folder, which is checked upon arrival. Teachers will respond via phone, email, or note within two school days.

### **Dismissal**

The Genesee Community Charter School day ends at 2:45 p.m., except on Wednesdays, when school is dismissed at 12:45 p.m. We have developed our dismissal procedures to ensure the continuous supervision and safety of your child. Teachers take great care to dismiss children to the proper bus or adult caregiver. We are mindful of daily changes in families' after-school arrangements, and need your cooperation in keeping us informed of those changes. In order for your child to deviate from his or her

usual routine, you must provide written notice to the office on each such day, otherwise teachers are required to follow your child's regular dismissal plan.

Teachers are only permitted to release students to friends and family members designated by the student's caregiver or legal guardian. Please provide a list of people authorized to pick up your child if you have not already done so on the Authorized Pick-Up form as part of the Enrollment packet. We require identification from this person prior to being able to release your child; please inform your designated caregiver that it is for the security of the students that these precautions are taken.

We are unable to provide adequate supervision for children after school hours. If you experience an emergency that prevents you from arriving at dismissal time, please call the school as soon as possible. Please understand that we cannot accommodate late pick-ups on a regular basis.

### Walkers

Teachers escort students from their classrooms to the dismissal point. Students who walk home independently are released at that time. Once released, GCCS is no longer responsible for your child's safety. Therefore, please carefully consider your child's walking route. For example, crossing guards may not be available along the route your child walks home. Please review your expectations and safety procedures with your child.

### Pick Ups

Teachers escort students out of the building. If you are picking up a student by car, please do not park in front of the school. Caregivers should park in parking lot on the east side of campus or directly across from the school and walk to the pick up area. Each class will be waiting in their designated area. Caregivers are requested **not** to pick children up inside the school or to pull children out of line near the school entrance. Students must be signed out by their teachers before leaving. Adults must be prepared to show identification during pick-up.

### Bus Students

If students are transported by bus, it is important that your child's teachers know of any days that your child will not be taking the bus. Teachers escort students out of the building to the buses. During inclement days, students wait inside until the buses arrive. **Please note that if teachers do not receive prior notification that the child is being picked up, they are required to put children on the bus.**

### **Wednesday Dismissal**

Community Circle occurs each Wednesday from 12:10-12:40 p.m. in the Music Room. At the conclusion of Community Circle, teachers line up their students and exit and head to classrooms to gather their belongings. Caregivers should meet their child in the designated pick up area. For your child's safety all students will be dismissed with their class.

### **Late Arrival & Early Dismissal**

Please escort late children into school and sign them in at the office. Children are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:00 a.m.

If your child needs to be released from school early, please send a note with your child or call the school office indicating what time he or she needs to leave. You will need to fill out the early dismissal log in the school office. Your child will then be sent to meet you in the office. Please arrange for early dismissals to occur before 2:30 p.m. so as to avoid the hectic time at the end of the day.

## Transportation

Please be sure that our office has the most recent version of your child’s transportation plan. Families residing in suburban districts should verify their transportation arrangements directly with their districts.

## Attendance

We have a lot to offer our students at GCCS, and want every child to benefit from continuous, on-time attendance at school.

### Excused & Unexcused Absences

Some absences and incidents of tardiness are excused and some are unexcused (see list below). The number of absences and incidents of tardiness will be noted on progress reports and are part of your child’s education records.

Please call the school each day that a child will be absent, tardy, or picked up early. Please note that in order to record absences as “excused,” we must also receive a written note or a verbal explanation from an identified caregiver upon the child’s return to school. Absences may be deemed “excused” only if the reason falls into the category of excused absences listed below. GCCS may require a doctor’s note for students who are absent for 3 or more consecutive days due to an illness. to deem the absences excused.

<b>Excused</b>	<b>Unexcused</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal illness</li><li>• Family illness</li><li>• Death in the family</li><li>• School closures (e.g., weather-related closures)</li><li>• Religious observance</li><li>• Quarantine</li><li>• Required court appearance</li><li>• Medical appointment</li><li>• Middle School Visitation</li><li>• Suspension</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversleeping</li><li>• Lack of transportation/missed bus</li><li>• Family vacation</li><li>• Hunting</li><li>• Babysitting</li><li>• Hair cut</li><li>• Shopping</li><li>• Weather (when school is not closed due to weather)</li><li>• Partial homeschooling</li><li>• Any other reason which does not fall into the categories listed under “excused”</li></ul>

### Written or Verbal Excuses

Absence, tardiness, and early departure is recorded as “excused” only if the caregiver submits a written excuse or verbal excuse outlining the specific reason for the student’s absence, and if the reason falls into the category of excused absences listed above.

### Tardiness

In addition to absences, arriving late regularly will result in your child missing valuable instructional time. It also disrupts the educational learning process in the classroom, and excessive tardiness can become a habit. Students who arrive later than 8:00 a.m. are designated **tardy**. Students who arrive later

than 9:00 a.m. are designated late tardy, and students who arrive after 10:15 a.m. will be marked as absent for .5 day. Please escort tardy students to the office and sign them in. Students who are tardy more than 10% of the days they have been enrolled at GCCS during that school year will be designated as chronically tardy and will be considered for intervention from the school. Students who are late tardy more than 10% of the days they have been enrolled at GCCS will require intervention from the school (see Intervention section below).

### **Withdrawal from School Roster**

In the event that you decide to withdraw your child from GCCS we request that you notify us immediately. After an absence of three days without notification or explanation, the School Director will send an official letter via mail and email explaining that three consecutive absences without contact puts your child at risk of being withdrawn from GCCS. The caregiver will be given the opportunity to respond. After 5 days with no notification or explanation your child may lose their bussing and be withdrawn from GCCS. If there is no response, we will notify your district of residence of your child's withdrawal so that his or her educational program can be continued without delay. The open slot on our roster will be filled with the next child on our waiting list.

### **Moving Within and Out-of-District**

In the event that a child's residence changes at any time, please notify the main office immediately. GCCS requires proof of the new address with a legal guardian's name included on the document as well as the date the move occurred. Caregivers must also notify your home district's transportation department as soon as possible. If the residence is in a different school district, your child is still welcome to attend GCCS, but you need to immediately register with the new district for transfer of bussing, records, and any services. If you are moving out of the area, GCCS will send your child's records to your new school. If you have any questions or concerns related to paperwork or the process, the office staff will be more than happy to assist you.

### **Attendance-Related Interventions**

It is important to maintain ongoing communication with your child's teachers about health or family situations that may negatively affect your child's consistent attendance in school. When absences occur with some regularity or frequency, intervention may be necessary to improve attendance. Intervention may take the form of a phone call, an official letter, home visit, and/or a caregiver conference in which an attendance contract or an "on-time plan" will be agreed upon moving forward. In cases where a student is absent and/or late more than 10 days per school year, it may be necessary for your child to repeat a grade due to too much missed instruction. In extreme cases, a referral may be made to Child Protective Services for an investigation of educational neglect.

## **Health**

### **School Nurse**

We receive nursing services through the Rochester City School District from BOCES. We anticipate having a full-time school health aide who is supervised by a nurse from BOCES for the upcoming school year. The nurse or school health aide evaluates children who become ill during the day and assists children who receive medication in school but are not yet self-directed.

### **When to Keep Your Child Home (Keep Home Criteria)**

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, your child may not attend school:

- A fever of 100.4 or higher
- Open or draining sores

- Vomiting
- Severe coughing
- Loose bowel movements
- Rash or hives
- Pain
- Ringworm or other contagious conditions
- Difficulty breathing
- Pink eye
- Runny nose with thick yellow or green discharge
- COVID-19

### **Early Dismissal Due to Illness**

The determination to send a child home is made by the school nurse, school health aide, School Director, or office staff using the “Keep Home” criteria (listed above). Caregivers will be notified by telephone of the nature of the illness and will be asked to pick the child up. Please provide the school with emergency contact information so that you, or your designee, may be reached at all times. We expect that ill children will be picked up within one hour of notification.

If your child becomes injured at school, you will be contacted and we will administer emergency first aid and complete an accident report for you to share with your child’s physician. In the event of serious injury requiring immediate emergency care, 911 will be called. The School Director or designated staff person will accompany the child to the hospital until the caregiver or emergency contact can be reached.

### **Medication**

All medications, prescription and over-the-counter, must be clearly labeled with the student’s name and presented with written directions for administration from a physician consistent with the labeled directions. We are also required to have written permission from the caregiver or guardian to administer the medication in school. Students may not transport medication via school bus, and may not keep any medication in their personal effects or in classrooms.

A licensed nurse gives medications to all children, unless your child is determined to be self-directed by the nurse. The nurse works with all children to be self-directed. Designated staff in the school setting, following assignment and in conjunction with approval by school nursing personnel, may assist self-directed students with the taking of their own oral, topical, and inhalant medication. These staff persons receive the training and supervision to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner for each specific child.

### **Health Records and Immunizations**

Students’ health records are maintained separately and confidentially from other school records, as required by law. Please be sure that all immunizations are up to date and be prepared to provide documentation of all immunizations. GCCS is required by law to exclude students from school who are not fully immunized.

### **Allergies**

Please alert us to any allergies your child may have and provide medication (if necessary) to prevent a serious allergic reaction. This includes allergies to plants, animals, foods, medicines, and other substances.

### **Absences & Excuses**

Please refer to the school’s attendance policy above for information regarding absences and excuses.

# Safety

## **GCCS Emergency Response Plan**

The Genesee Community Charter School's Emergency Response Plan was developed pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 155.17. At the direction of the GCCS Board of Trustees, the School Director named a School Safety Team and charged it with the development and maintenance of the School Emergency Response Plan. There are three aspects of the GCCS Emergency Response Plan: Risk reduction; response; and recovery. The school has a Building and District Safety plan. A copy of the GCCS District Safety Plan is available for review in the school office and on our school website <https://www.gccschool.org/about/school-safety/>.

## **Mandated Child Abuse Reporting**

As state mandated child abuse or neglect reporters, teachers and the School Director must report suspected maltreatment or neglect of a student to the Monroe County Department of Child Protective Services. All reports are confidential and will be maintained in confidential and secured files apart from the student's school records to the extent allowed and required by law.

## **Building Entry**

Families and visitors are welcome at GCCS. After ringing the bell, visitors will be asked to identify themselves and state the purpose of their visit. Upon entering the building, all caregivers and visitors must first report to the school office and sign in. These precautions are necessary for the safety of our students and staff.

**Caregivers are welcome to volunteer or observe in classrooms. Please make arrangements with the classroom teachers prior to the date on which you would like to visit.**

## **RMSC Security Notifications**

If a threat, act of violence, or emergency requires the assistance of RMSC, the School Director or his/her designee will phone or use the two-way radio to alert RMSC Security.

## **Police Notifications**

School administrators contact the Rochester Police Department (RPD) in two situations: (1) to seek assistance with an emergency situation, or (2) to notify law enforcement of a criminal act.

## **Emergency, Crisis, and Criminal Situations**

School Directors have the responsibility to call 9-1-1 in emergency situations. In any incident, the School Director, with the guidance of the School Safety Team, will determine if additional assistance is needed from local agencies or officials, for example social services, grief counseling, or health intervention. The School Director or his/her designee will contact the appropriate agencies or officials to request advice and assistance. In an emergency situation, administrators must make reasonable efforts to notify caregivers/guardians immediately after contacting RPD.

## **Meals & Snacks**

### **USDA Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch are enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's school meal program. We encourage all families to apply and take advantage of this program. Students who do not qualify for the USDA program may purchase meals at school. Menus are made available at least one week prior to allow families to plan their budgets and menus. Please advise the main office of any special diet needs or food allergies.

### **Our Lunch Time Philosophy**

As part of our caring community commitment, we serve a "family style" lunch in the classrooms. All students participate in the set up, serving, and clean up of the meal. Students who bring lunch from home are expected to participate, too. Teachers eat with the students, modeling appropriate manners and conversation. We want lunch to be an enjoyable, community-building time that provides an opportunity for sharing in small groups.

### **Snacks and Food from Home**

All classes enjoy a snack break mid-morning if a supply of donations is available. Classroom teachers will request a voluntary contribution of wholesome snacks to be brought in by students and shared with the class. Please note that there are many packaged snacks (such as fruit snacks) that contain sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, and preservatives that do not hold nutritional value. If possible, GCCS prefers healthier snack donations to support the growth of all children. To support this effort, classroom caregivers will organize a healthy snack sign up for families to bring store-bought/packaged fresh fruit, vegetables, or other nutritious snacks throughout the year.

There are times when families may wish to share special foods from home with the class. This may be done during lunch after consulting with the classroom teachers. Please see our policy on birthdays and holidays regarding food.

## **School Closings**

### **Snow/Cold/Wind Days**

In the event the school needs to be closed due to a weather-related emergency or other event, announcements will be made on WROC-TV Channel 8, WHAM radio, and via an automated call from the school. If the Rochester City School District cancels school, please check WROC Channel 8 for GCCS's status. GCCS will be listed separately from RCSD and other charter schools. Staff members will also work to keep the school website and classroom Facebook pages up-to-date with school closings and delays. An email and phone call will also be made communicating school delay or closure due to inclement weather.

### **School Calendar**

The GCCS calendar varies from the City School District calendar. Please see the GCCS school calendar on page 10 for our holiday and professional development schedule.

# Our Caring Community

The Genesee Community Charter School believes that a strong school culture forms the foundation for academic and social emotional success at school. We strive to create a caring, supportive, inclusive school community in which students participate fully in solving problems, including problems of behavior. We believe that students' growth toward kindness, respect and critical problem solving depends on becoming active members of a caring community. We further believe that it is the experience with decision-making and problem solving that enables children to handle conflicts that arise. The Community Guide to Responsive Discipline outlines the structures, procedures, and policies that are in place to ensure a safe and productive community.

## Community Responsibilities

Families choose to come to the Genesee Community Charter School for many reasons – to learn, to make friends, and to explore new places and ideas. In order to have a safe and caring school environment, it is very important that each member of our school community, including students, staff, and caregivers, feel safe emotionally and physically and are treated with consideration and respect. Each member of the GCCS community has the responsibility to ensure the safety of self and others.

The foundation of our school culture is rooted in the EL Education Design Principles and the GCCS Character Traits. The design principles and character traits are woven into daily life at GCCS to help all members of our school community be successful students, friends, and community members. All members of the GCCS community have a responsibility to uphold the design principles and character traits so that our school feels safe and inclusive for everyone.

## EL Education Design Principles:

**Primacy of Self Discovery:** “I am here to discover what I can do.”

**Empathy & Caring:** “I care for others; others care for me.”

**The Natural World:** “Nature is our teacher.”

**Solitude & Reflection:** “I need time to be with myself.”

**Diversity & Inclusion:** “Our differences make us stronger.”

**Collaboration & Competition:** “We work together as friends; I compete with myself.”

**Responsibility for Learning:** “I am responsible for my learning, and I help others learn.”

**The Having of Wonderful Ideas:** “I have wonderful ideas.”

**Service & Compassion:** “We do excellent things for others.”

**Success & Failure:** “Success is sweet, but failure is good food.”

## GCCS Character Traits:

**Courage:** “I step out of my comfort zone.”

- I accept my fears yet keep trying.
- I stand up for others even if it is unpopular.
- I take risks in order to learn.

**Responsibility:** “I do what I am supposed to do.”

- I am ready for learning
- I make choices with others in mind.
- I can complete a task with quality.

**Initiative:** “I take action when something needs to be done.”

- I speak up for myself and share my ideas.
- I do my part to help our community.
- I make connections and try to learn more.

**Perseverance:** “I keep trying.”

- I keep going even when I’m tired or something is hard.
- I have patience and do what I can to help my crew move forward.
- I strive to do good work.

**Collaboration:** “I work with others.”

- I contribute my ideas and listen to others.
- I join with others to create work that is beyond what I could create on my own.
- I work with others to achieve a common outcome.

**Compassion:** “I am kind.”

- I am kind to myself.
- I show kindness towards others.
- I can learn from points of view other than my own.

**Gratitude:** “I am thankful.”

- I am grateful for all that I have.
- I say thank you when someone does or says something nice.
- I appreciate the opportunities I have at GCCS.

Each year, students and caregivers sign a Caring Community Commitment to ensure the understanding of the expectations and policies regarding social emotional learning and discipline at GCCS. To help students get a better idea of what is expected of them and the way they interact with others while at GCCS, students will learn about this Community Guide during the first week of school. The agreement will be signed and sent home for families to review, discuss, sign, and return back to school. See Appendix for a copy.

**Social Emotional Learning:** Genesee Community Charter School believes that social emotional learning (SEL) is just as important as academic learning. SEL encourages skill development in self-awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. Students will learn how their words and actions allow them to be positive contributors to the school community. GCCS uses Responsive Classroom and Restorative Practices to build and maintain a strong school culture. While each offers unique structures and strategies in developing and maintaining school and classroom culture there are many commonalities making it a cohesive approach. Zones of Regulation is used as a common language for identifying and communicating the body’s physical response to emotions. Additionally, GCCS is utilizing Second Step as a curricular SEL program and anti-bullying curriculum.

**Responsive Classroom:** *Responsive Classroom* (RC) is a student-centered, social and emotional learning approach to teaching and discipline. This approach to classroom management is designed to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and school communities for both students and teachers. The skills needed to be a productive member of the community are explicitly taught thus preventing many disciplinary problems. GCCS uses structures and strategies such as Morning Meeting, clear and

responsive language, interactive modeling, and consistent expectations to support social and emotional learning.

**Restorative Practices:** Restorative practices build health communities by focusing on strengthening relationships between members of the community. In a school, restorative practices offer an opportunity for all people affected by an action to have a conversation about how to make things right and restore the classroom community. They create a positive school climate and strengthen the social and emotional skills of children. Instead of using punishments and rewards to influence the way students behave, restorative approaches address the underlying reasons for students' hurtful behavior and nurture their intrinsic desire to treat others with care and respect.

When students make decisions that hurt their crewmates the focus is on supporting the offending student in correcting their inappropriate decisions and restoring the school culture to a positive learning environment. There are many practices in which teachers, administrators and students will work together to support offending students. Some of these are:

1. **Crew** – Teachers will use *Crew* to bring people together to build relationships, talk about issues, facilitate SEL lessons, and resolve conflict. The purpose of this is to foster open communication, resolve conflict, strengthen relationships between participants, emphasize respect and understanding and empower all students. These meetings could include Restorative Circles or public “VOSP” (Voice, Ownership, Shoes, Plan) conflict resolution sessions.
2. **Rest and Relax (R & R)** – R & R is a dedicated space within the classroom where a student is able to go to calm down after a difficult situation. The purpose of R & R is to take no more than 15 minutes to calm down, refocus and prepare to rejoin the class. *R & R is non-punitive*. In addition, we have separate R & R rooms for students who need space out of the classroom.
3. **Buddy Classroom** – Buddy Classroom is a short break in a separate classroom with the purpose of calming down, refocusing and preparing to rejoin the class.
4. **Restorative Conversation** – Restorative conversation is the time outside of the academic day (lunch, recess, free choice, etc) for a student to meet with the Crew teacher to reflect on the impact of student's behavior. This meeting takes place after the student has calmed down and returned to the academic setting. It is an opportunity to reflect on the root cause of the conflict, understand the impact it had on the community, and set a goal to avoid future conflicts as well as make plans to resolve any current problems brought about by the students' behavioral choices.
5. **Conflict Resolution**- When two students are in conflict, outside of the academic day (lunch, recess, free choice, etc.) teachers facilitate the VOSP conflict resolution protocol in effort to teach those in conflict to communicate effectively to resolve conflict, build empathy and understanding, clear up misunderstandings, and prevent further conflict.
6. **Mediation** – In response to support a small group of students in conflict, trained staff members or students will lead those involved through a mediation process that resolves disputes between a small group of students. The purpose is to teach students how to communicate effectively to resolve conflict, build empathy and understanding, and ultimately clear up misunderstandings to prevent further conflict.
7. **Restorative Circles** – In response to an individual's harmful behaviors, the harmful behaviors of a large group, or an event that caused community harm, trained staff members will facilitate a Restorative circle in order to support those in conflict to effectively communicate their perspective, build empathy and understanding, clear up misunderstandings, prevent further conflict, and ultimately create a Restorative contract that repairs any harm and prevents further conflict.

## **Dignity for All Students**

Our students' ability to learn is compromised by incidents of discrimination or harassment including bullying, taunting, or intimidation. The Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) makes it the official policy of New York State that all students in public schools have the right to an education free of discrimination and harassment.

DASA includes, but is not limited to, acts of discrimination and harassment based on a student's race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (defined to include gender identity or expression), or sex.

DASA defines material incidents of harassment as a single incident or a series of related incidents where a student is subjected to harassment and/or discrimination by a student or school employee on school property or at a school function that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such a severe or pervasive nature that:

- has or would have the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being; or
- reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.

GCCS is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality, and recognizes that acts of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying, are detrimental to student learning and achievement, and affects not only the students who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

Therefore, GCCS strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying on school property, on school buses, and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus.

All members of the GCCS community, students, caregivers and staff, commit to upholding the standards of the school community. Genesee Community Charter School staff will work to maintain an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment at all times and during all school related functions and activities.

Bullying is a form of harassment. It is defined as aggressive behavior, generally targeted toward specific individuals that exploits one's power over others either directly or indirectly, with an intent to harm. Bullying at GCCS usually takes the form of relational aggression. These behaviors include:

- Spreading rumors
- Keeping certain people out of a group
- Teasing or name-calling with intent to hurt feelings
- Encouraging others to exclude, tease, or gang up on others
- Making looks or sounds of contempt
- Broken promises
- Positioning and posturing

"Bullying" does not refer to every instance of physical contact, teasing, exclusion, or mean behavior. Bullying is meanness with a pattern.

GCCS has designed a multi-faceted approach to reducing bullying. Components include ongoing classroom practices, curricular intervention, and documentation. These measures are intended to help children build positive social skills, and are not intended simply to punish or take revenge.

However, when bullying behavior persists, disciplinary consequences will be enacted. When a pattern of bullying behavior has been demonstrated in school and documented by school staff, interventions will be implemented.

Despite our best efforts, there may be times when students, caregivers, and community members need additional assistance to respond to harassment, intimidation, or bullying behaviors. GCCS has developed a reporting process for these occurrences. In addition, we have established a Dignity Act Coordinator who is responsible for collecting and responding to reports concerning issues of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

To report an issue of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, please fill out the downloadable reporting form found on our website (<https://www.gccschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/DASAREporting-Form-4.pdf>) and submit it to the DASA Coordinator. Once the form is received, the incident will be investigated. Appropriate actions will follow based on the investigation and school policy.

**The Genesee Community Charter School – Flour City Campus’ DASA Coordinator** is Shelby DiRoma and can be contacted by phone, email, or mail using the following contact information:

**DASA Coordinator:** Shelby DiRoma, Student Culture Coordinator  
Email: [sdiroma@gccschool.org](mailto:sdiroma@gccschool.org)  
Shelby DiRoma, DASA Coordinator  
Genesee Community Charter School  
1100 S. Goodman Street  
Rochester, NY 14620  
585-417-7020

# Appendix



## The Genesee Community Charter School Celebrating Our Caring Community

### Welcome to our school community!

You come to the Genesee Community Charter School for many reasons – to learn, to make friends, to explore new places and ideas. In order to have a safe and caring school community, it is very important that each student treat others at the school, including students, teachers, staff, and parents, with consideration and respect. To help you get a better idea of what is expected of you and the way you interact with others while at GCCS, please read and talk about this Caring Community Plan with your family.

Our design principles help form our school culture and have become the very “roots” of Expeditionary Learning (the full text of the EL Design Principles is attached):

**Primacy of Self Discovery:** “I am here to discover what I can do.”

**Empathy & Caring:** “I care for others; others care for me.”

**The Natural World:** “Nature is our teacher.”

**Solitude & Reflection:** “I need time to be with myself.”

**Diversity & Inclusion:** “Our differences make us stronger.”

**Collaboration & Competition:** “We work together as friends; I compete with myself.”

**Responsibility for Learning:** “I am responsible for my learning, and I help others learn.”

**The Having of Wonderful Ideas:** “I have wonderful ideas.”

**Service & Compassion:** “We do excellent things for others.”

**Success & Failure:** “Success is sweet, but failure is good food.”

At GCCS, we have seven Character Traits that are at the core of our school culture. As our school has grown, we have begun to define these traits as a way to become more successful as students, friends, and community members. These traits are:

**Courage:** “I step out of my comfort zone.”

- ☆ I accept my fears yet keep trying.
- ☆ I stand up for others even if it unpopular.
- ☆ I take risks in order to learn.

**Responsibility:** “I do what I am supposed to do.”

- ☆ I am ready for learning
- ☆ I make choices with others in mind.
- ☆ I can complete a task with quality.

**Initiative:** “I take action when something needs to be done.”

- ☆ I speak up for myself and share my ideas.
- ☆ I do my part to help our community.
- ☆ I make connections and try to learn more.

**Perseverance:** “I keep trying.”

- ☆ I keep going even when I’m tired or something is hard.
- ☆ I have patience and do what I can to help my crew move forward.
- ☆ I strive to do good work.

**Collaboration:** “I work with others.”

- ☆ I contribute my ideas and listen to others.
- ☆ I join with others to create work that is beyond what I could create on my own.
- ☆ I work with others to achieve a common outcome.

**Compassion:** “I am kind.”

- ☆ I am kind to myself.
- ☆ I show kindness towards others.
- ☆ I can learn from points of view other than my own.

**Gratitude:** “I am thankful.”

- ☆ I am grateful for all that I have.
- ☆ I say thank you when someone does or says something nice.
- ☆ I appreciate the opportunities I have at GCCS.

If you are unsure how to behave in any situation, ask yourself the following questions to determine if your actions support the values of the Genesee Community Charter School:

**Is it safe?**

Think about the safety of yourself and others. There is some risk in many things we do. Ask yourself: **Am I being responsible? Am I going to hurt myself or someone else by my actions?**

**Is it kind?**

Think about how others want to be treated. Choose your words and actions so that they protect the feelings of others. Ask yourself: **How am I treating others and how will my actions make them feel?**

**Is it appropriate?**

Appropriate means that an action is acceptable for a particular person, place, or condition. What may be appropriate at home may not be appropriate at school. What is appropriate on the playground may not be appropriate in the hallway. Ask yourself: **Are my actions appropriate to where I am, who I am with, and the conditions that surround me?**

**Zero Tolerance Policy**

Our school has a zero-tolerance policy regarding harmful physical contact. This is our most serious rule. Harmful and aggressive behaviors such as hitting, scratching, pushing, kicking, and other forms of hurtful physical contact are strictly forbidden and are cause for immediate action by your teacher or another adult in the building. This could mean you may be sent home or suspended from school for your actions. In addition, ongoing teasing and other forms of bullying are grounds for immediate adult attention and possibly suspension. Upon suspension, or if you are sent home early for other disciplinary reasons, your parents must pick you up as soon as possible.

**Bullying**

Bullying is a *pattern* of mean behavior that may include spreading rumors, keeping certain people out of a group, teasing or name-calling, making looks or sounds of contempt, breaking promises, or encouraging others to do these things. These behaviors are also grounds for adult intervention and possibly suspension.

All members of our community have a right to feel safe, and you need to know that harming others is never OK. As a member of our school community, the above expectations will help guide you.

**The Caring Community Commitment**

Now you are asked to sign a commitment supporting our Caring Community Plan. By signing, you are making a serious promise to follow our design principles and our character trait. You are an important part of our school community. The school and your family will do everything we can to help you learn and grow as a member of our community.



## **Genesee Community Charter School Data Data Security and Privacy Policy**

(Board of Trustees adopted March 10, 2021)

### **Purpose**

This policy addresses The Genesee Community Charter School's (GCCS) responsibility to adopt appropriate administrative, technical and physical safeguards and controls to protect and maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of its data, data systems and information technology resources.

### **Policy Statement**

It is the responsibility of GCCS:

1. To comply with legal and regulatory requirements governing the collection, retention, dissemination, protection, and destruction of information.
2. To maintain a comprehensive Data Privacy and Security Program designed to satisfy its statutory and regulatory obligations, enable and assure core services, and fully support GCCS's mission.
3. To protect personally identifiable information (PII), and sensitive and confidential information from unauthorized use or disclosure.
4. To address the adherence of its vendors with federal, State and GCCS requirements in its vendor agreements.
5. To communicate its required data security and privacy responsibilities to its users, and train its users to share a measure of responsibility for protecting GCCS's data and data systems.

### **Standard**

GCCS will utilize the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Cybersecurity Framework (NIST CSF) as the standard for its Data Privacy and Security Program.

### **Scope**

The policy applies to all GCCS students, caregivers, consultants, and third-parties who receive or have access to GCCS' data and/or data systems ("Users").

This policy encompasses all systems, automated and manual, including systems managed or hosted by third parties on behalf of GCCS, and it addresses all information, regardless of the form or format, which is created or used in support of the activities of GCCS.

This policy shall be published on the GCCS website and notice of its existence shall be provided to all Users.

### **Compliance**

GCCS' Board of Trustees, School Director, and Data Protection Officer are responsible for the compliance of their programs with this policy, related policies, and their applicable standards, guidelines and procedures. Instances of non-compliance will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. All cases will be documented, and corrective practices will be adopted as applicable.

### **Oversight**

GCCS' School Director and Data Protection Officer shall report to the Board of Trustees on data privacy and security activities, the number and disposition of reported breaches, if any, and a summary of any complaints submitted pursuant to Education Law §2-d.

### **Data Privacy**

1. Laws such as the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), NYS Education Law §2-d and other state or federal laws establish baseline parameters for what is permissible when sharing student PII.
2. Data protected by law must only be used in accordance with law and regulation, and GCCS policies to ensure it is protected from unauthorized use and/or disclosure.
3. The GCCS administrative team will manage its use of data protected by law. This team will determine whether a proposed use of PII would benefit student needs. This team will also ensure that PII is not included in public reports or other public documents, or otherwise publicly disclosed, unless documented written consent is given.
4. No student data shall be shared with a third party without a written agreement that complies with state and federal laws and regulations. No student data will be provided to third parties unless it is permitted by state and federal laws and regulations. Third-party contracts must include provisions required by state and federal laws and regulation.
5. The identity of all individuals requesting PII, even where they claim to be a GCCS employee, student caregiver, eligible student or the data subject, must be authenticated by GCCS procedures.
6. It is GCCS' policy to provide all protections afforded to GCCS caregivers and persons in caregiver relationships, or students where applicable, required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, and the federal regulations implementing such statutes. Therefore, GCCS shall ensure that its contracts require that the confidentiality of student PII be maintained in accordance with federal and state law and its policy.
7. Contracts with third parties that will receive or have access to PII must include a Data Privacy and Security Plan that outlines how the contractor will ensure the confidentiality of data is maintained in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and this policy.

## **Incident Response and Notification**

GCCS will respond to data privacy and security incidents in accordance with its Incident Response Policy. The incident response process will determine if there is a breach. All breaches must be reported to the Data Protection Officer or the School Director. For purposes of this policy, a breach means the unauthorized acquisition, access, use, or disclosure of student PII as defined by Education Law §2-d., or any GCCS sensitive or confidential data system that stores data, by a person not authorized to acquire, access, user or receive the data.

GCCS will comply with legal requirements that pertain to the notification of individuals affected by a breach or unauthorized disclosure of PII.

## **Acceptable Use Policy, User Account Password Policy and other Related School Policies**

1. Users must comply with GCCS' Information Security Policy which outlines the responsibilities of all users of GCCS information systems to maintain the security of the system and to safeguard the confidentiality of GCCS information.
2. Users must comply with the Acceptance Use of IT Resources Policy in using GCCS' resources. Access privileges will be granted in accordance with the user's job responsibilities and will be limited only to those necessary to accomplish assigned tasks in accordance with GCCS' mission and business functions.
3. Users must comply with the User Account Password Policy
4. All remote connections must be made through managed points-of-entry in accordance with the Data Privacy and Security Guidelines for Remote Work.

## **Training**

GCCS Users must annually complete GCCS' information privacy and security training.

## **Policy on Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks**

Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the right to freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. Such rights extend to minors as well as adults. Schools facilitate the exercise of these rights by providing access to information regardless of format or technology. In a free and democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship.

In making decisions regarding student access to the Internet, Genesee Community Charter School considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The District expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources should be structured in ways that point students to those which have been evaluated prior to use. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to learning objectives.

Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies, and other possibly offensive media.

Students utilizing school-provided Internet access must first have the permission of and must be supervised by the Genesee Community Charter School's staff. Students utilizing school-provided Internet access are responsible for good behavior on-line just as they are in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

The purpose of Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of Genesee Community Charter School. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers will always be private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers.

Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and insure that users are acting responsibly.

The following uses of school-provided Internet access are not permitted:

- a. to access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material;

- b. to transmit obscene, abusive, sexually explicit, or threatening language;
- c. to violate any local, state, or federal statute;
- d. to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another individual or organization;
- e. to access another individual's materials, information, or files without permission; and,
- f. to violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.

Any violation of Genesee Community Charter School's policy and rules may result in loss of access to the Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined by the school in keeping with existing procedures and practices regarding inappropriate language or behavior. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Genesee Community Charter School makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the Internet access it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damages users suffer, including—but not limited to—loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service. The school will not be responsible for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information stored on school diskettes, hard drives, or servers; nor for the accuracy, nature, or quality of information gathered through school-provided Internet access. Genesee Community Charter School will not be responsible for personal property used to access school computers or networks or for school provided Internet access. The school will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations or loss of privacy resulting from access to the Internet.

Caregivers of students at Genesee Community Charter School shall be provided with the following information:

Genesee Community Charter School is pleased to offer its students access to the Internet. The Internet is an electronic highway connecting hundreds of thousands of computers and millions of individual users all over the world. This computer technology will help propel our schools through the communication age by allowing students and staff to access and use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups around the world, and significantly expand their available information base. The Internet is a tool for life-long learning.

Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. In addition, it is possible to purchase certain goods and services via the Internet that could result in unwanted financial obligations for which a student's caregiver or guardian would be liable.

While the school's intent is to make Internet access available in order to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. Even should the school institute technical methods or systems to regulate students' Internet access, those methods could not guarantee compliance with our acceptable use policy. That notwithstanding, Genesee Community Charter School believes that the benefits to students of access to the Internet exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, however, caregivers and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. NOTICE: This policy and all its provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal statutes.



## Genesee Community Charter School Pesticide Applications

Dear Caregivers, Guardians, Faculty and Staff:

Effective July 1, 2001, New York State Education Law Section 409-H requires all public and non-public elementary and secondary schools to provide written notice to all persons in caregival relation, faculty and staff regarding the potential use of pesticides periodically throughout the year.

The Genesee Community Charter School is required to maintain a list of all persons in caregival relation, faculty and staff who wish to receive 48-hour written identification of certain pesticide applications. The following applications are NOT subject to prior notification requirements:

- A school that remains unoccupied for a continuous 72-hour period following a pesticides application
- Anti-microbial products
- Nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children
- Silica gels and other nonvolatile ready to use pastes, foams, or gels in areas inaccessible to children
- Boric acid and disodium octaborate tetrahydrate
- The application of EPA designated biopesticides
- The application of EPA designated exempt materials under 40CRF152.25
- The use of aerosol products with a directed spray in a container of 18 fluid ounces or less when used to protect individuals from imminent threat from stinging and biting insects including venomous spiders, bees, wasps, and hornets

In the event an emergency application is necessary to protect against imminent threat to human health, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the 48-hour notification list.

If you would like to receive 48-hour prior notification of pesticide applications that are scheduled to occur, please complete the attached form and return it to Maureen Milke in the school's main office.

### Request For Prior Notification Of Pesticide Applications

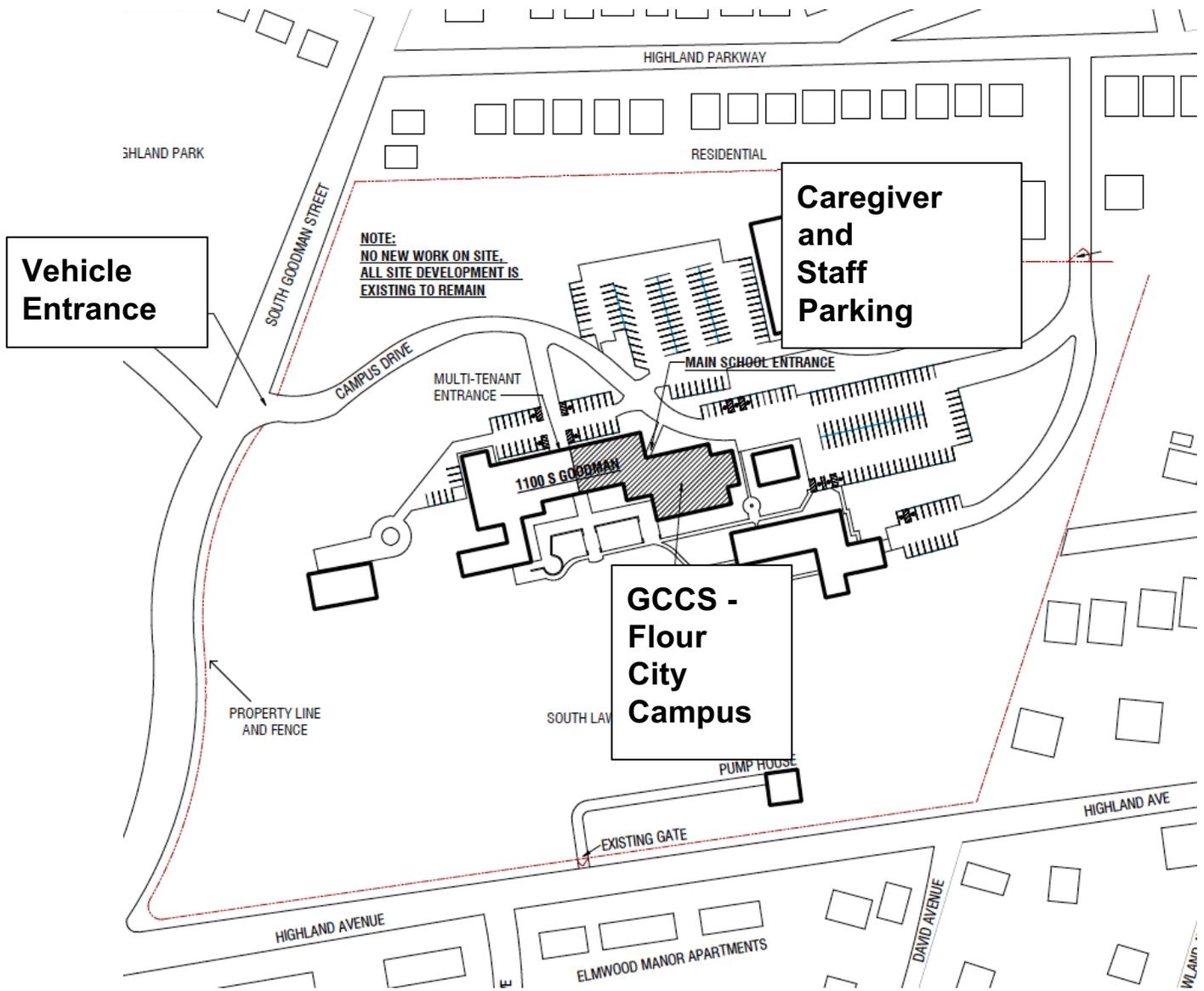
Caregiver/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Colgate Divinity Campus Map**  
**1100 Goodman Street South, Strong Hall, Rochester, NY 14620**



## **Volunteer Guidelines**

We believe that families are an integral part of student learning and we have structured our program to provide the opportunity for families to participate in the daily life of our school community. We have a variety of needs for volunteer services and are happy to have you as a part of our “team.”

### **Who May Volunteer?**

We welcome family members of current GCCS students who are 18 years of age or older to volunteer within the school and/or chaperone field studies. Volunteers are expected to schedule their time in advance with the classroom teachers. GCCS alumni are not permitted to visit or volunteer without the express prior permission of a classroom teacher or the School Director.

### **What Types of Volunteer Opportunities are Available?**

There are many needs for volunteers both within and outside of the classroom. Some volunteer opportunities will require that family members be in school during school hours, while others will allow families to participate in the evening or on weekends, depending on the specific task. Volunteers at GCCS can be classified into six groups:

#### Occasional Volunteers or Visitors

- in classrooms on an infrequent basis – less than five days per school year
- typically visit for lunch or to work with small groups of children on one-time projects
- work in classrooms under the direct supervision of a teacher or another staff member

#### Regular Volunteers

- in classrooms on a frequent basis – more than five days per school year
- work with small groups of children on reading, writing, or expedition projects
- work in classrooms or in hallways under the direct supervision of a teacher or another staff member

#### Day Chaperones

- supervise a small group of students on fieldwork
- sit with their groups on the bus and remain with their groups during all activities
- teachers and other staff members are responsible for supervising the whole group and for guiding chaperones during activities

#### Overnight Chaperones

- are selected by school staff through an application process (see Family Handbook)
- supervise 3-5 students on fieldwork out of the Rochester area
- sit with their groups on the bus and remain with their groups during all activities
- stay with groups in hotel rooms or tents, depending on the fieldwork destination
- teachers and other staff members are responsible for supervising the whole group and for guiding chaperones during activities

### Drivers

- drive 3-8 students in personal or rented vehicles on fieldwork in or out of the Rochester area
- fulfill responsibilities of day or overnight chaperones, depending of the nature of the fieldwork

### After-hours Volunteers

- complete clerical, maintenance, craft, or construction tasks outside of school hours
- have no responsibility for supervising children other than their own
- complete tasks as requested by the teachers or other school staff

## **How Will You Know What to Do as a Volunteer?**

When coming into school for a volunteer assignment or to chaperone, please sign the volunteer book in the office. Instructions for your volunteer assignment will come from the person requesting assistance. However, we have established some “ground rules” both to assist the volunteer in his/her efforts and to maintain continuity for the students.

## **What are the Ground Rules for Volunteers?**

### **Expectations of caregiver volunteers include:**

- Keep your commitment and be punctual; if unforeseen circumstances prevent you from keeping your commitment, please call the school office as soon as possible.
- Leave siblings under the care of another adult, as siblings are not permitted in classrooms or on fieldwork.
- Follow the same dress code as students (see Family Handbook), and wear clothing that is appropriate for the school, weather, and/or fieldwork destination.
- Follow instructions of school personnel regarding schedules, behavior and academic expectations.
- Maintain continuous proximity and supervision of the assigned children.
- Use student management strategies and language consistent with the school’s approach.
- Inform teachers of student management issues that require intervention.
- Provide a level of support to students as directed by the teachers.
- Maintain an enthusiastic and positive attitude toward children and staff.
- Do not meet privately with one student at a time, or escort individual children to the restroom. Other students or staff must be present.

### **In addition to those listed above, expectations of chaperones include:**

- Complete chaperone certification training session (offered three times per year) every three years.
- Stay for the duration of the field study.
- Follow teacher directions at all times.
- Ride the bus with the class.
- Refrain from purchasing extra treats beyond what is being provided to the whole class.
- Wear clothing that is appropriate for the weather and fieldwork destination.

## **Volunteer Guidelines (continued)**

### **How Do Volunteers Handle Confidential Information that They May Encounter?**

When working with students and families, it is inevitable that volunteers will encounter confidential information.. This could occur by overhearing students' conversations, witnessing conflicts between students and teachers, or observing a student with a medical, social, financial or educational problem. Volunteers must adhere to the same standards of confidentiality as professional staff. Volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality by refraining from speaking about other people's children in front of their own children or to others. All comments and questions about children and families should be directed to the teachers or the School Director.

### **What are the requirements for Volunteers and Chaperones?**

The New York State Education Department has issued a directive requiring charter schools to conduct background checks and receive clearance for all regular volunteers. To comply, GCCS requires regular volunteers, defined as those who volunteer with children more than five days per school year or any overnight chaperone undergo background checks and receive clearance.

Here are the requirements for each type of volunteer or chaperone:

#### **Overnight Chaperones and Regular Volunteers**

- chaperone certification training completed every three years
- background check completed once; background check will be updated if there is any reason to suspect that the information may have changed
- signed volunteer guidelines acknowledgment on file

#### **Day Chaperones**

- chaperone certification training completed every three years
- signed volunteer guidelines acknowledgement on file

#### **Occasional Volunteers or Visitors and After-hours Volunteers**

- signed volunteer guidelines acknowledgment on file

#### **Drivers**

- DMV records check completed annually
- chaperone certification training completed every three years
- signed volunteer guidelines acknowledgment on file

