

GREAT LAKES ACADEMY FAMILY HANDBOOK & STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT



2026-27



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Dear Great Lakes Academy Families:

We are honored to welcome you to Great Lakes Academy Charter School! We know that our success as a school depends on the support of our parents, and we look forward to forming positive partnerships with each of you. We expect a lot from members of the Great Lakes Academy community, and in turn, you can expect a lot from us.

The following pages will help you become familiar with school procedures, policies, and practices, and should serve as a resource for families from the first day of school through the last. While we cannot say this handbook will answer all of your questions, we do know there is a lot of valuable information in here, so please take the time to read it carefully. In fact, read it twice or even three times, and then please put it somewhere safe to refer to throughout the school year. In this handbook, you'll learn a lot of different things about Great Lakes Academy Charter School. You'll learn about the structure of the school, the policies that we have in place, and our expectations of members of our school community.

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to ask any teacher or staff member.

Sincerely,

The Faculty and Staff
Great Lakes Academy Charter School

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GREAT LAKES ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION

Our Mission

The Great Lakes Academy mission is to prepare all of our students with the fundamental academic skills, critical thinking ability, and strength of character to excel in high school, college, and careers of their choice. We empower all of our students with the education today that they will need to change the world tomorrow.

Our Philosophy

Great Lakes Academy Charter School holds members of the school community – students, families, and staff – to the highest standards. We know that you have selected Great Lakes Academy because you have these same high standards for your child as we do, and are eager to work with us to maximize your child's success.

To provide the best education for Great Lakes Academy students, we must all work together to create an atmosphere of excellence. Our Code of Conduct is based on responsibility and accountability.

The Great Lakes Academy Contract on the last page outlines the responsibilities of the school, the family, and the student over the course of the coming year. The Contract is not an exhaustive list of what must be done, but it does represent essential elements of our academic program.

Our Virtues

We expect our students (and our staff) to **Be GREAT** every moment of every day. We teach what it means to be a GLA scholar through our school virtues. Virtues are behaviors. When we practice virtues we are demonstrating our character. These are our GLA virtues:

- **Gratitude:** We express appreciation.
- **Respect:** We care for ourselves and others.
- **Excellence:** We strive to do our best...always!
- **Accountability:** We take responsibility for our actions.
- **Truthfulness:** We are honest with ourselves and others.

Student Bill of Rights

Students have the:

- Right to present their perspective if accused of a violation. They have a right to explain their side of the situation to the Dean of Culture & Climate or other designee of the principal, who should collect witness accounts.
- Right to have ideas heard and respected by a staff member when presented in a respectful manner.
- Right to make up work for excused absences.
- Right to request a student-teacher conference.

Freedom of Speech

Students have the right to free speech as long as the speech:

- Does not materially disrupt the school or class.
- Does not upset or invade the rights of others.
- Is not obscene, offensive, lewd, or indecent.
- Does not hurt another person's reputation.
- Does not use violent words or words that could provoke violence.
- Does not promote illegal drug use, alcohol use, or criminal activity.

Freedom of Press

Students may express their opinions in publications and other written material as long as it is in good taste. Publications distributed at school will not be censored as long as they are signed by the author(s) and meet the requirements of free speech. Great Lakes Academy has the right to regulate the content of official school newspapers, performances, signs, and material produced and stored on the school's technology network.

Freedom of Religion

Students have the right to be excused from school for holy days of their religion.

Right to Equal Education

Great Lakes Academy students cannot be prevented or discouraged from participating in any school activity because of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual preference/identity, religion, national origin, or disability/impairment. Great Lakes Academy ensures that equal educational opportunities are offered to all students and that students are not discriminated against because of any of the factors noted above.

Great Lakes Academy will never impose fines or fees upon students as a form of disciplinary measure. Fees may be charged for replacement costs of lost, stolen, or damaged property or to pay for aftercare for students not picked up on time.

Great Lakes Academy will never administer academic consequences for behavioral violations.

Violation of Rights

Students may file a complaint to the Executive Director or the Principal for review.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Hours of School Operation

On days where students are in session, GLA's office hours are as follows:

- Monday-Thursday: 7:30 am - 4:30 pm
- Friday: 7:30 am - 2:00 pm

GLA's building closes early on Fridays to allow for all staff to attend a staff meeting and training. This is an essential component of our school's structure to offer the highest quality school experience as possible.

Grade Level	Monday - Thursday			Friday		
	Doors Open	Instruction Starts	Instruction Ends	Doors Open	Instruction Starts	Instruction Ends
K-4	7:00 AM	8:00 AM	3:20 PM	7:00 AM	8:00 AM	1:50 PM
5-8	7:00 AM	8:00 AM*	3:20 PM	7:00 AM	8:00 AM*	1:50 PM

*5th-8th grade students must be in their classrooms to be considered on-time for school. Students who are not in the classroom will be considered tardy regardless of whether they were dropped off by 7:55 am.

Students waiting outside the school prior to 7:00 am **must** be accompanied by an adult for their safety. The school does not monitor children prior to 7:00 am.

General Pick Up and Drop Off Procedures

First and foremost, the safety of our students, staff, and families is of the utmost importance when dropping off or picking up students. We strive to be as efficient as possible with drop off and pick up procedures but that should **never** come at the expense of safety. Our procedures are designed with both of these in mind, and we can only achieve the highest level of safety when families follow drop-off and pick-up procedures with fidelity.

The following car line behaviors are prohibited:

- Dropping students off in the middle of the street (use the car line along the curb)
- Crossing the street or having students cross the street in places where there is not a crosswalk and crossing guard
- Blocking the car line for an extended period of time
- Blocking residential driveways
- Speeding
- Not following the signals of crossing guards
- Intentionally ignoring the directions of school staff
- Engaging in verbal or physical altercations with other families

School administration will address family behavior that is not aligned with our procedures. Egregious or repeated behavior that is not aligned with our procedures will result in families being banned from participating in the car line. School administration will give these families alternative options on how they can drop off and pick up their students.

AM Student Drop-Off

Students IN ALL GRADES waiting outside the school before doors open must be accompanied by an adult until 7:00 am as there is no one assigned to oversee students and ensure their safety. The school is not responsible for any students left unaccompanied on school grounds prior to 7:00.

Students in all grades should enter at the South Entrance in the driveway from 7:00-7:39 am. Beginning at 7:40 am:

- Students in grades K-2 should enter at the South Entrance off the parking lot.
- Students in grades 3-8 should enter at the North Gate Entrance off of 84th street until the North Entrance Gate is closed.

All car exits are self-administered. GLA will have staff outside supporting traffic flow but students should get out of cars on their own. Please have your child ready to exit to keep the line moving.

Safety is of the utmost importance. Students should be dropped off along curbs at designated entrances. All cars and walkers should always obey the direction of crossing guards. Cars must observe posted speed limits.

All students and families should always use crosswalks. Any walking students in K-4th grades should be accompanied by an adult or a student in 5th-8th grade who is an approved walker.

Dismissal Pick Up Policy

We only release our students to authorized adults as indicated on a student's Emergency Contact form.

Parents/Guardians or their designees may pick students up directly from school at dismissal time. Only individuals with prior written consent from a guardian may pick up students. Individuals listed as authorized pick-ups must be at least 16 years of age to pick up a student (note: Emergency Contacts must be at least 21 years of age and anyone under the age of 21 is not authorized for early dismissal pick-up). Parents may not enter the school during dismissal.

Parents/Guardians may authorize additional individuals to pick up their student(s) by providing approval and contact information in writing via email, by calling the front office at least **1 hour** prior to dismissal, or by completing necessary paperwork in our office. Any changes to regular routines not communicated to the school 1 hour prior to dismissal time may delay the release of your child. This may include changes to bus transportation or your student not attending after-school programming. We also require ID upon pick-up.

Walkers dismiss from the North side of the link. Any person picking up a student as a walker must have "pick-up" cards to get the scholar and must be on our pick-up list. Older siblings in 5th-8th grade may pick-up K-4 siblings on the North side of the link as long as the school has

written permission on file for all students, signed by the parent/guardian. This form must be filled out annually.

Students in grades K-3 who ride in cars will be released through the main entrance to cars in the drive. Students in grades 4-8 will be released out the north doors to be picked up on Marquette.

Please be aware that our neighbors along Saginaw, Marquette, and 84th Street require access to their driveways during drop-off and pick-up. Accordingly, please do not bring your car to a temporary stop in front of a driveway.

5th-8th grade walkers with written parental consent may be dismissed directly from the 84th Street doors to walk home. They may accompany siblings. If your 4th-8th grader is a rider being picked up in a car, please utilize the above pick-up procedure.

We never release students alone to rideshare services, including taxis, Uber, Lyft, etc. unless there is an accompanying parent/guardian or other emergency contact present in the vehicle. GLA has a responsibility to ensure that students are released to authorized individuals. The only exception to this policy is for a student who is 13 or older and has a valid Uber Teen account. GLA will release that student to an Uber (or other rideshare service with a similar policy) if: 1) the parent has signed a waiver that authorizes GLA to release their child to Uber (or other rideshare service with a similar policy) and 2) GLA staff is able to verify the student's ride matches the information in their Uber account. GLA has a responsibility to ensure that students are released to authorized individuals. GLA is not liable if a student leaves the building on a current walker permission form and is picked up by a rideshare service.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Monday – Thursday: Students are expected to be picked up at 3:20 pm.

Fridays: Students are expected to be picked up at 1:50 pm.

Enrichment and Athletics Practice: Students should be picked up at the program's scheduled end time.

Families who are persistently late in picking up their students will have a meeting with the Dean of Culture, Assistant Principal, Principal, or other designee of the principal to create a pick-up plan. Persistently late families may also run the risk of not being able to participate in schoolwide extracurricular events or after-school activities, at the discretion of the Principal or Executive Director.

- If a student is not picked up by 3:45 pm (or by 2:15 pm on Fridays), the school will take the following steps:
 - Attempt to contact the parent/guardian (at least twice if the number is working) and emergency contacts.
 - If unanswered, school staff will leave a message with all contacts stating, "If the parent, guardian, or emergency contact does not come to the school to pick up [student name(s)] by **4:30pm**¹, the school will be obligated to call the Chicago

¹ For afterschool programs, the time will be 30 minutes after the scheduled end time of the program. For example, for students in enrichment with a 5:00 dismissal, 5:30pm will be the notification time for when the protocol for a stranded child will move to reaching out to authorities.

Police Department and the Department of Child and Family Services hotline to report child neglect.”

- If nobody has come to pick up the student by that time, school staff will:
 - contact the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report child neglect and
 - call CPS Student Safety Center at 773-553-3335 to explain that a student is stranded and provide the student’s emergency contact information.
- At that point, Great Lakes Academy staff will follow the direction of CPS’s Office of Safety and Security, which may include contacting 911 and/or transporting the child to the nearest police station to place the child in their protective custody.

Early Dismissal Policy

- In order to run an orderly and efficient dismissal, **NO early dismissals are allowed after 3:00 pm on Monday-Thursday or 1:30 pm on Friday.**
- At ten early dismissals, a parent/guardian conference may be required to put an Attendance Plan in place.
- Children will not be dismissed early unless an adult parent/guardian or emergency contact visits the office in-person and signs the student out. ID is required for unknown adults. No exceptions will be made.

Attendance Policy

At Great Lakes Academy, we are committed to making every minute of learning time count. In order for students to learn and to reach their academic potential, they should be in school every minute of every day. Missing even one hour of instruction can result in students falling behind. Families should take advantage of the 1:50 pm dismissal on Friday, as well as school vacation days, to schedule appointments and travel.

All student absences, **including excused absences** count as absences. Absences can be considered “excused” for the following reasons:

- student illness
- death of an immediate family member
- observance of religious holiday
- taking a “mental health” day (per Illinois state law no more than 5 times)
- medical appointments

Every instance for any of the above reasons will only be considered excused if a student’s parent/guardian:

- calls to notify the school of the absence on the day of the absence.
- OR brings or sends a note documenting the absence and the reason for the absence no more than 1 school day from the absence.

All excused absences count towards a student’s overall attendance for each school year. For example: a student has 3 excused absences due to illness, took 3 mental health days, and has 5 unexcused absences. This student has 11 absences for the school year.

Students may make up work missed from excused absences or suspensions.

In the event of an absence, we ask that parents/guardians notify the school by 8:30 a.m. When students are absent, the school will try to contact parents. Parents/guardians are expected to answer calls from Great Lakes Academy regarding student illness.

If school staff determines a student is too ill to remain at school, a parent will be notified. The student must be picked up by an approved designee within 1 hour of notification, as there is no nurse on site.

Students who are absent for any part of a school day are not allowed to attend or participate in extracurricular events after school that same day without written or verbal permission from the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Attendance Intervention

The school makes extra efforts to support students and families with school attendance. A school Attendance Team, which includes school Social Workers, meets biweekly to review attendance data and implement outreach and other interventions for students struggling with attendance.

The following support policy will be followed to help ensure that students do not exceed 15 absences:

- A GLA Attendance Team member will contact the parent/guardian after five absences and will serve as a source of support.
- At 10 absences, a member of the GLA Attendance Team will contact the parent or guardian via Attendance Letter and discuss your student's attendance concerns.
- At 15 absences, a parent or guardian will be asked to attend a meeting and complete an **Attendance Plan** with the GLA Attendance Team and, possibly, a member of administration.

Students who miss more than 10% (17 days) of school days in a year are considered "chronically absent" by the Illinois State Board of Education. Research shows students who are chronically absent are more likely to fall behind their grade level academically and have poor relationships with peers and school staff. Remember that every absence matters, and just a couple of days a month adds up.

The school reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy in the instance of an extended absence due to extreme medical conditions.

Tardy Policy

Illinois state law requires a minimum of 300 minutes of instruction for students to receive credit for a full-day of attendance, and at least 150 minutes of instruction for students to receive credit for a half-day of attendance. GLA will not take custody of students who arrive at school and are unable to receive at least 150 minutes of instruction.

- **Late students will be considered tardy**

- Students in K-4th grade must arrive inside the doors of the school by 8:00 am to be considered on time.
- Students in 5th-8th grade must be in their assigned start of day classroom by the 8:00 am bell to be considered on-time. 5th-8th grade students who are not in classrooms by 8:00 will be considered tardy.
- Three tardies or early dismissals equal one absence with respect to attendance-specific awards or incentives.
- At twenty tardies, a parent/guardian conference may be held to create an attendance plan.

Enrollment

All students who are enrolling at GLA for the first time must submit the required documents to PowerSchool by the communicated deadline. This paperwork includes, but is not limited to: student birth certificate, proof of residency documents, emergency contact information, health and allergy information, up-to-date vaccination, physical, dental, and vision forms, and media and social work releases. Failure to provide documentation of up-to-date health records by the stated deadline may result in your student being medically excluded from school.

All students who are returning to GLA for a new school year may be required to submit updated, annual documents to PowerSchool by a communicated deadline. If a family relocates, they are required to inform the school and provide two updated proofs of residency to the front office within 30 days of moving.

Withdrawal from Enrollment

Great Lakes Academy maintains an open-enrollment public charter school, to which students are admitted in conformity with Great Lakes Academy's obligations under its Charter Agreement. A waitlist is maintained, also in accordance with GLA's obligations under its Charter Agreement.

Parents whose children fail to attend Great Lakes Academy on the first day of school, applicable to their grade level, will be called/emailed by Great Lakes Academy's Main Office using the contact information furnished by the parent, and asked to bring their student to school on the following day. Subsequent to the first day and throughout the first week of school, the parent(s) of scholars wholly absent from the classroom on each school day of the first week of school, will be contacted by the Main Office using the contact information furnished by the parent, and urged to bring their scholar to school.

Great Lakes Academy can only unenroll students who do not attend school the first week if they are new enrollees and the district's "Lost Child" process is followed. Great Lakes Academy will make every effort to locate students who are not attending at the start of the year. We ask parents to inform Great Lakes Academy of any plans to transfer or change their schooling option of choice.

This Policy is adopted to ensure fairness to families on the school's waitlist, and in conformity with Great Lakes Academy's commitment to offer every scholar an excellent education within the context of an extended school day and an extended school year.

If a parent/guardian wishes to withdraw their student from Great Lakes Academy, they will need to complete and submit a verification of transfer form to the front office. Upon receipt of the completed form, the school will contact the student's new school to confirm enrollment and, once confirmed, release records to the new school. If a parent/guardian wishes to homeschool their student, additional paperwork will be required.

Transfer Policy

Any student offered a seat for enrollment in grades 2-8 are considered transfer students. Transfer students must complete the entire term of any suspension or expulsion imposed on the student by any public or private school. Please note that any offer of enrollment is contingent upon eligibility, verified during registration. If a student is found ineligible for enrollment during the registration process, they will be offered an alternative seat if eligible or added to the waitlist.

Once a student is enrolled at Great Lakes Academy, that student stays enrolled until one of the following occurs:

- A guardian notifies Great Lakes Academy the student will be transferring and completes transfer paperwork.
- The student is not attending Great Lakes Academy and the school is unable to locate the student and is able to confirm the student is attending another school.
- The student graduates from Great Lakes Academy.
- The student is expelled for a period of time.

Once a student transfers from Great Lakes Academy to another school, the student must go through the school's application process and be offered a seat through the lottery to re-enroll back at the school. Previously enrolled students, except those who were enrolled in the Students in Temporary Living Situations program while attending Great Lakes Academy, are not granted any special rights for re-entry.

When applying for a seat at Great Lakes Academy, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide the school with accurate information about their child's previous schooling. Great Lakes Academy will determine grade level placement. Students must be in good standing from their previous school. The Principal makes final determinations on grade placement. Seat offers with grade placement will be based on the following criteria:

- If a student was previously enrolled in another public school, the student will be offered a seat one grade level above the most recently completed grade level.
- If a student was previously enrolled in a private school, the student will be offered a seat one grade level above the most recently completed grade level.
- If a student was previously homeschooled, the student will be offered a seat at a grade level determined by the school based on student readiness. Homeschooled students will be offered a 5 day window to take a diagnostic math and reading assessment at Great Lakes Academy. The assessment results will be used to help determine grade level placement. Parents of homeschooled students are encouraged to provide evidence of completion of course curricula and assessment data that indicates readiness for a desired grade level.

UNIFORM POLICY

Guiding Philosophy

At GLA we believe that student clothing choices often represent the many facets of a student's identity such as ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, and gender identity. Our uniform policy is designed to allow predictability for students and families, and foster a school environment more conducive to learning.

Student Dress Code

Students are expected to wear the complete GLA school uniform daily. The GLA uniform consists of a GLA branded or navy blue top, bottoms (see below), and footwear. GLA students will never be held out of class for uniform infractions. Upon arrival at school, if a GLA student does not meet the uniform expectations, the parent/guardian will be contacted directly. Additionally, if the student dress is not aligned with the guiding philosophy, GLA staff will use discretion and adjust the student dress onsite to ensure no disruptions to their instructional time.

Student Expectations	
Tops	Students are required to wear a GLA branded polo, sweatshirt, or t-shirt. GLA branded cardigans may be worn over plain, neutral t-shirts or students may wear a non-GLA branded <u>navy blue</u> polo in place of GLA-branded tops. Undergarments should not be visible and cannot be worn as outerwear. No exposed midriffs.
Bottoms	Students may wear black, navy blue, or khaki/tan pants, black or navy blue joggers, sweatpants, or leggings, blue jeans, skirts, skorts, or jumpers. Please click here for a sample bank of images. All hems can be no shorter than three inches above the knee. No rips or tears or see-through material.
Footwear	Students are required to wear footwear that is appropriately sized and cover the entirety of their feet. Shoes may be of any color/design as long as they do not impede the student's mobility in an emergency situation. <u>Crocs or other sandal-type shoes are considered to be in violation of the uniform code.</u> Students are not allowed to wear inclement weather footwear (snow or rain boots) throughout the building. It is recommended that change of shoes be stored in the student's locker or brought to school on a daily basis.

	Kindergarten and First Grade Students: We highly encourage families to dress these students in footwear with velcro, or easy snap closures.
Belts	Belts are allowed. Note: We highly encourage families not to dress students in belts if it limits their mobility or ability to navigate restroom protocols.
Jewelry	Jewelry is allowed as long as it is not disruptive to the learning environment or prevents mobility in emergency situations.
Handbags	Handbags besides pencil cases should be kept in lockers. Accommodations are available for health, wellness or medical reasons. Please contact the main office to request an accommodation.
Headwear	Headwear is not allowed. The exception to this rule is accommodations for medical, religious, or cultural reasons. Please contact the main office to request an exemption.
Outerwear	Students are not allowed to wear outerwear throughout the building during instructional time.

Uniform Violations

- If a student arrives at school out of uniform, students may be required to wear loaner clothes/shoes and parents will be notified.
- If a student is wearing an article of clothing that is out of uniform, the child may be required to remove them and the parent will be notified.
- Multiple uniform violations may result in students not being allowed to participate in school incentive events.
- After ten uniform violations, a parent/guardian conference may be required.

Purchasing GLA Uniforms

GLA School Store

The school store has several types of clothing for Great Lakes Academy scholars, staff, and families to purchase, including a variety of school-branded t-shirts and crewneck sweatshirts that can be worn as part of your scholar's uniform.

These items may be purchased at the front desk during school hours:

Monday-Thursday, 7:30-4:30 pm

Friday, 7:30-2:30 pm

GLA-branded Polos

Parents can also purchase short sleeved, GLA-branded polos directly from the school (this is the quickest way to get a GLA-branded uniform piece). Stop by the school during school hours to purchase.

All orders will ship directly to your home through the spirit wear store.

Loaner Uniform Repayment

Each year, GLA has a small supply of donated uniform pieces. These are utilized if a student has an accident or needs a change of clothes. If your child receives loaner clothes from the school, please return those items (washed) within one week. If GLA runs out of loaner clothing items, parents will be called to bring in a change of clothes if their student has an accident that requires a change of clothes.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Homework

Homework is an essential component to your child's academic success. Students receive nightly homework and one homework grade weekly beginning in kindergarten. The opportunity to practice important skills is critical to a child's academic success.

Accordingly, students will not be excused from completing homework for any reason. In the event of an absence, students are required to complete any missed homework within a time frame equal to the number of school days missed. For example, a student who is absent for four days will have four school days after returning to complete the assigned work. All students who have an IEP or a 504 plan must be provided homework accommodations in accordance with their IEP or 504 plan (e.g. a student who has extended time must be provided an extension on the return of homework in accordance with their IEP or 504 plan).

Phone calls home may be made for incomplete homework. Homework is tracked by teachers in DeansList and should be noted on a student's weekly report.

We strongly encourage families to check their child's homework nightly. We also encourage families to designate time and place for students to complete homework. We do not consider parental support on homework cheating—parental support is a key component to student success. Students should be able to complete homework independently, but we encourage parents to check over work and answer any questions. Additionally, we may assign homework to be done jointly with younger students - for example, practicing flashcards for learning sight words or math fact fluency with addition and subtraction, or having students read a book out loud to a parent/guardian.

Make-Up Work

It is important for students to be in school every day. When students miss class, they miss critical instruction and skill practice in many subject areas. Students are only allowed to make up work for excused absences from school. Students are responsible for all missed work while absent. Students have the number of days they were absent to turn in work after they return from an excused absence (e.g. they were absent 2 days, they have 2 days upon their return to make up work). Please reach out to your child's teacher for information on what was missed.

Grading Guidelines:

GLA's academic calendar is broken into 2 semesters. Each semester is broken into 2 quarters. Both Quarter and Semester grades will be reported on report cards. Per Illinois State Board of Education policy, GLA is required to submit a yearly final grade for each core subject.

Grades Kindergarten-3rd

For Kindergarten through third grade, we use the standard-based grading scale. Grades reflect a synthesis of class participation, homework completion, exit tickets, assessments, and projects. Our grading scale is structured as follows:

Grade Key:

- 0 = No Attempt (insufficient work submitted)
- 1 = Basic Understanding of Grade-Level Standards
- 2 = Developing Understanding of Grade-Level Standards
- 3 = Proficient Understanding of Grade-Level Standards
- 4 = Mastery of Grade-Level Standards

Student grades will appear as a decimal rounded to the nearest quarter point (e.g. 3.25).

For Kindergarten through 3rd grade, semester grades will be determined by averaging the point values of each quarter grade for the semester in which it occurs. This semester grade will be rounded to the nearest quarter point. For example, a Quarter 1 grade of 3.5 and a Quarter 2 grade of 3.0 will result in a semester grade of 3.25.

For Kindergarten through 3rd grade, year-long grades will be determined by averaging the point values of Semester 1 and Semester 2. This year-long grade will be rounded to the nearest quarter point. For example, a Semester 1 grade of 2.75 and a Semester 2 grade of 2.0 will result in a year-long grade of 2.5.

Grades 4th-8th

From 4th to 8th grade, we transition to a traditional grading scale to evaluate students' academic progress. Grades are determined by class participation, homework completion, exit tickets, assessments, and projects. Our grading scale is outlined below:

Grade Key:

- A: 90-100%
- B: 80-89%
- C: 70-79%
- D: 60-69%
- F: Below 60%

For 4th-8th grades, semester grades will be determined by averaging the percentage values of each quarter grade for the semester in which it occurs. This averaged semester percentage will be assigned a grade according to the scale outlined above. For example, a Quarter 1 grade of 73% and a Quarter 2 grade of 88% will average to a semester grade of 81% which is a B.

For 4th-8th grades, year-long grades will be determined by averaging the grade percentages of Semester 1 and Semester 2. For example, a Semester 1 grade of 92% and a Semester 2 grade of 86% will average to a year-long grade of 89% which is a B.

Category Weights

Student grades are calculated using 3-4 weighted categories that reflect different components of academic performance and learning. Each category is assigned a specific percentage of the total grade, allowing for a balanced assessment that values various types of student work such as participation, assessments, exit tickets and homework. This weighted approach ensures that grades accurately reflect both mastery of content and the development of essential learning habits.

Assessments

In addition to traditional classroom assessment measures, we use a variety of assessments to determine students' academic progress and if additional instructional interventions are needed. These are:

- In grades K-4, the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) will be used to assess development of literacy skills in grades K-4. This developmental reading assessment gives teachers and parents important information regarding the development of phonics, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and comprehension skills.
- All grades will take benchmark assessments in math and reading on i-Ready four times throughout the year: at the beginning of the year and after each MTSS cycle. The i-Ready assessment is computer-adaptive and measures a student's academic achievement level in relation to grade-level expectations. Interim assessments on grade level standard progress in Math and Reading and Writing will be administered 3 or 4 times per year.
 - 2nd-8th grade students take assessments from the Achievement Network for Reading and Writing.
 - K-8th grade students take assessments developed by Leap in math.
- Students in grades 3-8 also take the state's Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), as required by the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Students in 5th and 8th grade will take the Illinois Science Assessment as required by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Report Cards and School-Parent Meetings

Teachers and administration will use the Powerschool gradebook, My PowerHub, and weekly paycheck and report cards to communicate students' academic and behavioral performance.

We invite every family to attend a 10-15 minute conference at the end of quarter one and three. Conferences are held between parents and their child's teacher(s) to discuss report cards and

current academic progress. We strongly encourage parents to attend and go to great lengths communicating conference logistics and making conferences accessible for families.

8th Grade Valedictorian and Salutatorian:

A valedictorian and a salutatorian will be determined each year prior to graduation. The class valedictorian will be given to the student with the highest grade point average (GPA) in the class. The salutatorian will be given to the student with the second-highest GPA in the class. If there is a GPA tie, all students with the highest GPA will be honored as valedictorians and all students with the second highest GPA will be honored as salutatorians.

For the purposes of valedictorian and salutatorian honors, cumulative GPA's will be calculated based on all classes earning report card grades in students' 7th and 8th grade years. Only students who have been enrolled at GLA for the entirety of their 7th and 8th grade years are eligible to be honored as a valedictorian or salutatorian.

Honor Roll

At the end of each quarterly marking period, 5th-8th grade students who achieve a 3.0 GPA or higher will be named to the GLA Honor Roll. GLA has the following honor roll categories:

- GPA of 4.0 - Principal's Honor Roll
- GPA of 3.50-3.99 - High Honor Roll
- GPA of 3.00-3.49 - Honor Roll

Great Lakes Academy

PROMOTION POLICY

Great Lakes Academy's promotion policy is rooted in a balance of understanding that students learn at different rates and may experience plateaus at different times as they grow. Mastery of grade level academic standards is the best measure for promotion to the next grade level. It ensures that a student can be successful in the academic challenges of the next grade level.

We provide students multiple tiers of intervention support in our instructional program to develop student skill mastery necessary for readiness at the next grade level.

We communicate regularly with families to ensure that every student is able to meet our attendance requirement, including through the use of weekly progress reports, three formal report cards, attendance on-track outreach, and intervention from an attendance team. The school's front office closely monitors attendance accuracy.

Daily attendance is vital to student success. This allows the school to support students as they pursue academic achievement and ensures adequate instructional time is provided to develop students academic skills. Therefore, it is especially important that parents ensure their children are in school each day except for cases of excused absence for illness or mental health days.

The school looks at multiple data points for each student and understands that multiple factors and data points should be considered when determining a student's readiness for the next grade. ***Final promotion decisions will be made by the Principal and/or the Assistant Principal and approved by the Executive Director.*** The school reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy given special circumstances.

The following chart (**CHART 1**) illustrates criteria needed to meet promotion requirements at Great Lakes Academy. Students must meet criteria in each column for their grade level to be promoted to the next grade level.

CHART 1

Promotion Requirements		
Grade Level	Academic Achievement Requirement - Math	Academic Achievement Requirement - Reading
Kindergarten	EoY ² iReady Math placement of Early K or higher	A score of <u>2G or higher</u> by the end of year Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA)
1 st Grade	EoY iReady Math placement of Early 1 or higher	A score of <u>2B or higher</u> by the end of year IRLA
2 nd Grade	EoY iReady Math placement of Early 2 or higher	A score of <u>2R or higher</u> by the end of year IRLA
3 rd Grade	EoY iReady Math placement of Level 2 or higher	A score of <u>Wt or higher</u> by the end of year IRLA
4 th Grade	EoY iReady Math placement of Level 3 or higher	A score of <u>3.25 Wt or higher</u> by the end of year IRLA
5 th Grade	A final grade average of "C" or better in Math and Reading and "D" or better in Science and Social Studies.	
6 th Grade	A final grade average of "C" or better in Math and Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	
7 th Grade	A final grade average of "C" or better in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	
8 th Grade	A final grade average of "C" or better in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	

Students who do not meet the criteria above will not be promoted to the next grade level without successful completion of summer school.

Students who do not meet the baseline academic standards for the next grade level, will not be promoted regardless of summer school attendance. Please reference **Chart 2** to note the baseline academic standards for each grade level.

² EoY = End of Year

CHART 2

Baseline Academic Standards		
Grade Level	Academic Requirement - Math	Academic Requirement - Reading
Kindergarten	EoY iReady Math scale score of 345 or higher AND Count to 100 and write numbers 1-20	A score of 1G or higher by the end of year Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA)
1 st Grade	EoY iReady Math scale score of 365 or higher	A score of 2G or higher by the end of year IRLA
2 nd Grade	EoY iReady Math scale score of 390 or higher	A score of 1B or higher by the end of year IRLA
3 rd Grade	EoY iReady Math scale score of 405 or higher	A score of 1R or higher by the end of year IRLA
4 th Grade	EoY iReady Math placement of Level 2 or higher	A score of 2R or higher by the end of year IRLA
5 th Grade	A final grade average of "D" or better in Math and Reading.	
6 th Grade	A final grade average of "D" or better in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	
7 th Grade	A final grade average of "D" or better in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	
8 th Grade	A final grade average of "D" or better in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.	

Summer School

Eligible students who have not met the promotion requirements for a subject at their grade level will be offered summer school, for an additional fee of \$75 per session, to avoid grade level retention.

Successful completion of summer school requires the following:

- Earn a C or higher in math and/or reading classes.
- Have no more than 1 absence per 2 week session (at 2 absences students will be dropped from summer school and retained).

Students who are eligible for summer school who do not complete summer school successfully will be retained in the same grade level.

Promotion of Students with Disabilities

In compliance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* ("IDEA"), all students with Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") or Section 504 Plans will need to meet all promotion criteria for Great Lakes Academy in content areas where they are not receiving IEP services. For content areas where services are required, a student will be promoted without summer school if they have met benchmarks and goals outlined in their IEP.

For standardized testing, students with disabilities must be provided the accommodations and modifications outlined on their IEP.

Graduation Policy

For graduation from 8th grade, students who do not meet the assessment promotion criteria may participate in the graduation ceremony, but will not be awarded a diploma until successful completion of summer school or a Principal approved alternative education program.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Medication

All students who have medication that may need to be given during the school day are required to have paperwork filled out and submitted to the front office **annually** prior to the administration of any medication. This includes any prescription or over-the-counter (e.g. cough syrup, Tylenol, ibuprofen, etc). Paperwork may require the signature of a doctor. After the nurse approves this paperwork, the parent/guardian will be contacted to bring in the medication in its original packaging. All parents/guardians must deliver any medication to the front office; at no time should a student transport medication on behalf of the parent.

Inclement Weather Closings

In the event of poor weather conditions such as heavy snow or ice, Great Lakes Academy will send out electronic communication to notify of school closure by 7am the morning of school.

Great Lakes Academy typically follows the same weather delay and cancellation policies as the Chicago Public Schools system. However, we reserve the right to differ from CPS on decisions of school cancellation.

Building Safety and Security

There are a number of basic procedures the school has in order to ensure the safety and security of its students and staff. Cooperation on everyone's part will go a long way in guaranteeing that the business of the school – teaching and learning – can take place. Great Lakes Academy may take reasonable action against a student and/or parent/guardian for failure to follow school policies and procedures that may risk the safety and security of students, staff and school community, including dismissal from the school. Please refer to the Great Lakes Academy Code of Conduct and Parent Conduct Policy.

Students in the fifth grade or older are required to have parent/guardian signed consent forms on file to walk home. Students with walker forms on file may pick up younger siblings by providing their names to staff at the walker pickup location. The younger scholar's name(s) must appear on the permission slip. If the younger scholar does not have the same parent/guardian as the older sibling, the younger scholar's parent/guardian must fill out and sign a separate permission slip. Younger siblings will be sent down by their teacher.

Parent Conduct Policy

Great Lakes Academy Charter School believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's Parent/Guardian(s) is essential to fulfilling the School's mission and creating a culture in which students, parents, and school staff work together with respect, civility and trust. As such, Great Lakes Academy reserves the right to limit a parent's access to school grounds, staff, and students if the School reasonably concludes that the actions and behaviors of a Parent/Guardian make it impossible to foster a positive and constructive relationship or cause serious interference with the School's accomplishment of its educational purposes and mission, and the education of the student, including safety.

Great Lakes Academy expects a standard of conduct and decorum in words and actions whereby all GLA staff, all students, family members, board members, visitors and other members of the school community interact in a courteous, respectful manner. Should a Parent/Guardian's actions, inactions, or behavior while at the school and toward school staff be in conflict with the mission of the school, its goals, or in violation of the school policies stated herein, the Executive Director will inform the Parent/Guardian of the issue and provide the Parent/Guardian the opportunity to cure the situation and, as applicable, change his/her problematic behavior. If there is no improvement or if repeated issues concerning a Parent/Guardian's action, inaction or behavior arise, Great Lakes Academy reserves the right to limit a parent's access to school grounds and staff.

Behavior and language that erodes the school community is unacceptable and as such will be addressed when it occurs. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to: disruptive, demeaning or antagonistic behavior at school, at school-related meetings or at school-sponsored events and activities that interfere with the operation of the school day, meetings or events. The following are examples:

- Inciting violence
- Using disruptive and/or offensive language, speaking in an insulting or demeaning manner, through personal actions, spoken words, graphic representations or in writing.
- Threatening staff, students, parents, board members, visitors or other members of the school community.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive, threatening or obscene letters, e-mails or other electronic messages or voice messages.

Anyone who exhibits unacceptable behavior(s) may be directed to leave the premises and if they are uncooperative and refuse to do so, they shall be subject to ejection and the police may be called. In instances of threats or acts of violence, Great Lakes Academy may render a No Trespass Letter, withdrawing the privilege of being on school grounds.

Closed Campus

Under no circumstances are students allowed to leave the school building without permission. A student with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult. Families should be aware that the school has neighbors and should be respectful and courteous of their needs. Once students have entered the school in the morning,

they may not leave the building unless they are escorted by a school staff member or other authorized adult.

Fire Safety Procedures

In case of an emergency – if a staff member sees fire or smells smoke – he or she should close the door and pull the fire alarm located at either end of the corridor. Upon hearing the alarm, school staff will assemble students in their rooms and proceed out of the building according to the fire evacuation plan posted in each room. Students should follow the direction of the staff, who will verify the safety of the stairwells and lead students outside the building to the designated locations, where school staff will line up students by class and take attendance.

During the first month of school and frequently throughout the school year, students and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency.

Bathroom Policy

Parents of Kindergarten and 1st grade students and of older students with a record of bathroom accidents should send an extra pair of pants, underwear, and socks to school. Your child can quickly and easily change clothes if parents have provided a change of clothes. If a child has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, we will provide loaner pants and underwear for your child and require it to be washed and returned to school.

Students may use bathroom passes during academic class time. Students may use the bathroom without passes during breakfast and lunch. We encourage middle school students to use the bathroom at non-academic times (e.g. passing periods, lunch, advisory).

Locker Usage

Each student will receive a locker. Only magnetic, school-distributed decorations can be added to the inside of the locker and must be easy to remove, cannot cause damage, and must be morally appropriate. Students may not go into other students' lockers. Teachers and administrators may go into a student's locker for inspection at any time. Lockers are NOT locked. The school has the right to remove any decorations at any time. Please do not send any valuables. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Smartphone Policy

We strive to create and uphold academic environments where students are highly engaged and focused on learning. Additionally, emerging research is showing that smartphones and social media use have a negative impact on focus and attention, student sense of connection, and mental health, particularly in young people.

Thus, we do not allow students to carry or use smartphones during the instructional day. Students may bring smartphones to school. Phones should be powered off during the school day while in the building.

Any K-4th grade students who have a smartphone must keep it in their backpack stored in their assigned locker. All 5th-8th grade students must bring their Yondr pouch each day. All 5th-8th grade students who have a smartphone will be required to power off their phone, put it in their assigned Yondr pouch, and lock the pouch. The smartphones in the Yondr pouches should be stored inside backpacks in assigned student lockers. At dismissal, students will be able to unlock their phones from their pouch as they leave the building.

Students are responsible for bringing their pouches to school each day (pouches with phones inside should be kept in backpacks). Students who forget their pouches must put their phones in their backpack before entering the building and will receive a deduction. Students who have multiple infractions will receive a referral for unauthorized possession of a cellular device and lose special and incentive event privileges. A phone call will be placed to the guardian to discuss lack of adherence to school policies.

All 5th grade students and transfer students will be issued a free Yondr pouch by the school. Parents may opt for their child to not to receive a Yondr pouch if their child does not have a phone or will not be carrying a phone to school. Parents must inform the school that their child will not have a phone at school. If their child begins carrying a phone to school, the parent must let the school know so that a Yondr pouch can be issued.

If students lose their Yondr pouch, they need to inform a member of the Behavior Team. Students will be issued a replacement Yondr pouch and their account will be charged \$20 for the replacement cost of their pouch.

Students who are caught carrying or using a smartphone during the school day will have their phone confiscated by staff. A parent or guardian will have to come to the school to pick up the phone. A student who refuses to turn over their smartphone to staff will receive a referral and additional consequences according to the Student Code of Conduct.

Lost and Stolen Property

We strongly encourage families to ensure that children do not bring valuable objects to school. Any items that students bring to school that may cause disruption will be confiscated at the school. We make every reasonable effort to return all personal property to the appropriate parent; however, the school is not responsible for replacing lost, damaged or stolen property or compensating the family for the value of that property. We strongly encourage that electronic devices, including phones, are left at home.

Toys, Electronic Devices, and Comic Books

To limit distraction, we ask that students leave all toys, cell phones, smart watches, electronic devices and other personal items at home. If personal items are brought to school, they must be left in student backpacks. Student property will **not** be locked up and will **not** be safely monitored. If a student is using a personal item that is distracting them or other students from learning, a staff member may confiscate it, and the parent must come to the school personally to retrieve the item. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen or damaged property. When in doubt, please leave it home.

Student Responsibilities for Chromebooks

Chromebooks are utilized in all GLA classrooms. In all grade levels, students will be assigned a specific device to use while in the classroom, and the student is responsible for the general care of that Chromebook. All students are required to follow the guidelines for technology established in this Family Handbook at all times.

Students will be charged for any Chromebook damage that occurs while a Chromebook is in their use in a classroom. Upon the notice of any damage, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the student's teacher, a follow-up letter will be emailed, and a fee will be owed. Failure to pay outstanding Chromebook fees will result in loss of participation in extracurricular activities, assemblies, and/or student programming. If a student breaks a second Chromebook, loss of participation in extracurricular activities, assemblies, and/or student programming will occur and a second fee will be owed.

Students may lose Chromebook privileges entirely at the discretion of school staff and administration in the event of gross negligence, multiple instances of damage to school Chromebooks, and/or continued misuse that violates the school's technology policy and Student Code of Conduct. If a student loses Chromebook privileges, they will be provided similar materials that allow continued engagement in class with their peers (e.g. printed text instead of a digital text) and the opportunity to complete any class assignments.

Chromebook Care: General Precautions for Students

- In grades K-8th, students should always utilize the numbered Chromebook that matches their desk number (unless a loaner Chromebook is required).
- No food or drink is allowed next to the Chromebook while it is in use.
- Students should never carry Chromebooks while the screens are open unless directed to do so by a teacher.
- Chromebooks should never leave the classroom, unless directed to do so by a teacher.
- Do not lean on top of the Chromebook.
- Do not place anything on top of a closed Chromebook (e.g. when storing in a desk, do not place anything on top of the closed Chromebook).
- Do not poke the screen.
- Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, and notebooks).
- Chromebooks must remain free of any decorative writing, drawings, stickers, paint, tape, or labels that are not the property of GLA.

School Breakfast and Lunch

The school participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced price meals and free milk to eligible students. At the beginning of the school year, each student will be given an application for families to complete.

Breakfast is served until 8:20 am. Students who do not arrive by 8:00 am will have limited time to eat breakfast.

Students who choose to bring lunch will not have access to a microwave to heat food.

Students **should not** bring food or drinks in glass containers or bottles. Glass is a potential safety hazard. Glass containers or bottles will be confiscated.

Students **should not** bring food or drinks into the building larger than a single portion size. For example, students should not bring full size bags of chips, bags of candy, etc. Students with these items will have them confiscated and returned at the end of the day at dismissal.

Food Allergies

The school will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate students with food allergies. Parents are required to inform the school and fill out necessary, CPS mandated health forms. Once parents have informed the school, school officials will meet with the family in order to develop an Individual Health Care Plan. If a lunch substitution is required, an additional form must be requested from the front office and filled out by the scholar's parent/guardian and physician. Sharing or trading of food is prohibited for all students.

The school maintains a nut-free environment due to multiple student allergies. Accordingly, please do not pack any nut containing products in your child's lunch. Nut products will be discarded.

Recess

We believe that outdoor play is an important part of a child's development and contributes to their health and wellness. Recess will be held outdoors as long as the temperature is above freezing (32°F) and the "Real Feel" temperature is above 25°F. Please ensure your child comes to school with adequate warm clothing.

Birthday Celebrations

We cannot allow birthday celebrations to interrupt the academic day or allow birthday celebrations at lunch considering that classes are eating together in the cafeteria. **We only allow treats for birthday celebrations in grades K-4.** If you would like to bring a birthday treat, please contact your child's classroom teacher **one day in advance** to make arrangements for the treat to be distributed during Choice Time or at dismissal. Parents will be informed if there is a food allergy in the class; if such an allergy exists, we ask parents to be considerate and avoid that food product in birthday snacks. Treats must be store bought (not homemade).

Children may not distribute invitations to parties within the school building unless every member of the class is invited.

Student Religious Accommodation Policy

Guiding Philosophy

GLA is a public charter school, under the authorization of the Chicago Public Schools district and the Illinois State Board of Education. As a public school, we will provide accommodations for student religious practices provided that such practices can be accommodated in a manner that does not violate the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and to the extent that the accommodation does not place an undue burden on the school.

Student Religious Accommodation

Students are entitled to excused absences for the observance of religious holidays. Students who are absent for the observance of a religious holiday will be given an opportunity to make up any missed work, examination, or assignment.

GLA will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for students who have particular religious needs if requested in writing by a parent/legal guardian to the principal. GLA is not required to accommodate a religious request if granting such a request would place an undue burden on the school.

To the extent possible, students should fulfill their religious obligations during lunch or a free period. If a student must fulfill a religious obligation during class time, the principal should grant an excused absence for a limited, defined time. Students who are excused from class for religious needs will have an opportunity to make up any work, assignment or test missed as a result of the absence.

The use of staff time, including making curriculum modifications, to accommodate students' religious needs is both a burden to the school and support for a particular religious practice which is in violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, no staff time shall be required to monitor or supervise a student's religious activities nor provide an alternative curriculum. Requests for accommodations that would require staff supervision or additional time will be denied.

In order to be granted religious accommodation, a student's parent or legal guardian must submit a written request to the principal. The written request must state: (a) the specific accommodation requested; (b) why the accommodation is needed and (c) the time and duration of the accommodation.

Transportation

Purpose: GLA seeks to provide and maintain an efficient and safe transportation system for all students to ensure they are able to attend school every day.

Definitions:

Low-income students – Students eligible for free or reduced lunch based on their family income.

At-Risk students – Students who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically and/or dropping out of school, especially due to low attendance related to transportation and financial challenges

Diverse Learners – Students with an IEP or 504 plan.

Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS) – Students who are homeless, doubled-up, or in any other temporary living situation as defined by the STLS program, and who are formally enrolled in the STLS program.

General Student Population – Any GLA student who is not included in the above categories.

The school day starts at 8:00 am and doors open to all students at 7:00 am. Students should not be dropped off prior to 7:00 am without approval from the Principal.

GLA considers itself a neighborhood school and is proud to serve its direct neighborhood families. Our student community comprises economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students, students with specialized needs, and students in the STLS program. Within the general student population, some families at GLA carpool, others drive individually and many walk.

Special education transportation requests must be due to difficulties caused by a student's disability designation. If a student with an IEP or 504 has a need for transportation to and from school, the case manager will support the request and write it into the student's plan. These requests require approval from the district representative from CPS; approvals and denials are not the decision of GLA. Great Lakes follows a calendar similar to CPS to avoid any issues that may arise due to differences.

If a student is in the STLS program and moves a significant distance from the school making transportation a challenge, the school will meet with and support the family in creating a transportation plan to get to school, and may receive STLS transportation support if approved by the district. Paper CTA cards are only available to students and their caregiver who are formally enrolled in the STLS program and for whom GLA is their school of origin (the school the student was formally enrolled in when permanently housed or the school where they were last enrolled). Parents or adult caregivers of students in grades K-8 are required to sign for each CTA card received.

Parents or caregivers of students in grades K-8 must be present at both pick-up and drop-off times daily for their student in order to continue to receive adult transportation assistance. One adult per family may receive the CTA Ventra card if at least one child in the family is in 4th grade or younger. If the parent/caregiver is temporarily unable to accompany his/her child (in K-4th grade only) to and from school, accommodations will be made for an alternate adult to receive the adult CTA Ventra card. The parent/caregiver must provide the STLS Clerk or Liaison in writing the name of the person to receive the CTA Ventra card on their behalf and the time period for the substitution. The paper cards will be distributed weekly by our STLS liaison or clerk. It is the responsibility of the STLS students and/or their families to keep track of their cards and to use them only to commute to and from school. No additional cards will be given if lost or misused.

GLA highly encourages families to carpool with one another. GLA has also made available the names of some private transportation services when families have asked.

Services that some of our families already use include Family Affair, Kenyatta's, Children's Garden, Loren's, Chicago Youth Centers (CYC), Rainbow, and TinyTots. However, it is important to note that Great Lakes Academy does not promote or endorse any of these businesses.

GLA has also partnered with state sponsored after-school programs, such as Chicago Youth Centers, that provide transportation to support families who cannot pick up their children after school.

In general, if a family is experiencing transportation challenges for any reason, the school's STLS Liaison/Coordinator, Dean of Student and Family Supports, Case Manager, Social Worker, Assistant Principal, and/or Principal will meet with the family to support them in creating a plan to get their child to and from school safely and timely.

GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Guiding Philosophy

Good communication between staff, parents, guardians, and family and community members is crucial for fostering a high quality learning environment at GLA. We strive for open, positive, thorough, and meaningful communication in everything we do.

This Standard Operating Procedure will be utilized so all parents/guardians are aware of communication expectations for both GLA staff and GLA families.

Conduct

- Treat all Great Lakes Academy community members - students, families, staff members - with respect, regardless of position, background, or beliefs.
- Staff members and families will use polite and professional language in all forms of communication, including written, verbal, electronic channels.
- Staff members and families will respond promptly to messages and requests.
- Staff members will acknowledge receipt of important messages and set expectations for when a more detailed response can be provided.
- Families will consistently read all school messaging, including the Weekly Wave newsletter and general email and text messages. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to reach out to the front office with any questions or concerns.
- Communicate within the boundaries of professional conduct.
- Utilize approved communication channels and tools designated by GLA for work-related conversations.
- Staff members will respect the confidentiality of sensitive information shared by parents/guardians or designated school staff members; staff members will not share confidential information with unauthorized individuals or external parties.

Family Communication

It is vitally important that the school has methods of contacting parents or other family members at all times. This is of critical importance in case of emergency, illness, or behavior requiring immediate family contact. Parents should notify the office of moves, changes of home or emergency telephone numbers, and/or places of employment. Parents are encouraged to also

notify the school social worker with changes in the home life (new baby, break-ups, illnesses, etc.), disabilities, allergies, asthma, etc.

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the Front Desk either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact students in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members at the Front Desk.

Phone Call Follow-up Requests

If the parent/guardian reaches out to the front office, the front office will make every attempt to answer the question or concern first. If the front office is unable to do so, a message will be sent to the appropriate staff member.

- Staff members are expected to respond to phone calls when their work schedule permits between the hours of 7:00-6:00 pm Monday-Friday.
- Staff members are expected to respond to follow-up requests within 48 hours (two business days).

Visitor Policy and Meeting Requests

GLA welcomes family members and other community members to our school. We encourage open lines of communication between the school and families, and these guidelines have been established to help ensure student safety and minimize disruption of instruction during visits.

Please note, we limit parent and guardian visits for the first month of school, as students are acclimating to the school year and their new classrooms. After the first month, parents may visit classrooms (see information below). Exceptions are made by the Principal and Executive Director only.

Parents/guardians who wish to visit the school are required to arrange each visit in advance (>24 hours, or one business day). Do not expect that someone will be available to meet if you drop in for an unscheduled meeting. School personnel will not meet with non-parents/guardians without a parents/guardian present.

- Meeting with a staff member: Meetings should be scheduled directly with the teacher at least 24 hours (one business day) in advance. Teachers will not use class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
- Classroom visits (for observation): Meetings should be scheduled with the Assistant Principal, Dean of Culture and Climate, or Culture Team designee.
- Meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal: Meetings should be scheduled directly with the Principal or Assistant Principal at least 24 hours (one business day) in advance.

In each instance, you may reach out to the front office to request a follow-up call from the appropriate staff member to schedule the meeting. Please allow 48 hours/two business days for follow-up.

Written Communication

While school is in session, Great Lakes Academy will send a weekly newsletter, *The Weekly Wave*. All parents/guardians are responsible for reading the weekly newsletter and are welcome to contact the school for further clarification on what is noted. Weekly Wave newsletters are also posted on the school's website and archived throughout the school year.

Additionally, GLA will periodically send important student programming information via email and will always use the email address parents/guardians provide in their annual PowerSchool paperwork. It is therefore essential that parents/guardians always contact the front office with any changes in contact information (i.e. email address, phone number).

All parents/guardians are required to review written notice regarding any mandatory or required student programming sent via email.

Parent Volunteers

Our school encourages parents to volunteer at school events, field trips, and for specific projects. Chicago Public Schools' district policy requires that we have different processes for volunteers depending on their level of engagement. Parents who are volunteering for less than 10 hours per week are considered Level II volunteers and are required to fill out a registration form. Parents who would like to volunteer for more than 10 hours per week are considered Level I volunteers and must go through a more extensive process with the district that includes a background check. GLA will support parents with both processes.

Additionally, GLA may require additional training to volunteer at the school. Those trainings will be communicated to interested families.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student Records Access

In accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) and the Illinois School Student Records Act ([ISSRA](#)), individuals not verified as the parent or legal guardian must have documentation on file granting them permission to engage in conversation or receive documentation related to student academic performance, attendance, behavior, or any other protected information. If there are members of your family that you would like to grant this level of authorization, please complete the GLA Student Records Release form found [here](#) and return it to our main office. Permission is valid for one calendar year from the date submitted.

If a parent/guardian requests transcripts, proof of enrollment, or other documentation from the front office, they should contact the front office and ask for the "GLA Front Office Request Form". Once filled out and submitted, there is a 48 business hours turnaround time or any requested documents.

Emergency contacts only have the right to receive physical custody of the student. Listing someone as an emergency contact does not give them authorization to access student records.

GLA Staff is not allowed to restrict access to student records for verified parents/guardians, regardless of their personal relationship to the student or primary parent/guardian without valid court documentation on file.

(1) Standardized Testing

As is required by the state, third grade students and older will take the IAR exam.

From time to time, students may take other exams as well in order to measure their academic progress and may be asked to provide routine information.

(2) Student Records

(a) General

Access and Request for Copies: A parent has the right to request access to his or her child's temporary and permanent student record file. All requests to inspect or copy the student's record must be in writing. A reasonable fee for the copying of school student records may be charged. Upon the review of the student's record, if a parent or student finds that his or her student record includes inaccurate, misleading, unnecessary or irrelevant information, the family should bring any such information to the attention of the Executive Director. All requests to access and copy records should be directed to the Executive Director.

Confidentiality: Release of student records requires consent of the parent and the student if his/her files include special education records, Protected Personally Identifiable Information, or Protected Health Records, and if the student is 12 years of age or older. Great Lakes Academy will not release a student's school record to anyone who is not authorized to receive the record, without receipt of a valid, signed school record release form or valid court order. Staff employed or under contract to the school have access to records as needed to perform their duties. Great Lakes Academy Charter School may also release a student's complete student record to authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without further notice to, or receipt of consent upon the request of the authorized school personnel or student.

Photographs, Video, Audio, Recorded Comments: For the purpose of publicizing student and school accomplishments, and/or documenting and studying teacher practice, Great Lakes Academy Charter School has a practice of recording student life through photography, video, audio, or otherwise recorded comments. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release or publication of any of the above, the parent/eligible student may state that objection in writing to the Executive Director. Parents have signed consent forms in their enrollment packets. Absent receipt of a written objection, any of the above may be released without further notice or consent.

Nondiscrimination

Great Lakes Academy Charter School does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin, in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of

1964 (Title VI and Title VII); on the basis of sex, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation or marital status in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA); or on the basis of any other protected category pursuant state and federal law.

School Network and Internet Use Policy

I. Acceptable Use

The Internet is a global network linking computers around the world. Great Lakes Academy Charter School offers Internet access to students and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of the school. The school expects that students and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose. While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. Great Lakes Academy makes no warranties of any kind, whether implied or expressed, for the service it is providing. Great Lakes Academy shall be held harmless from and against any responsibility, liability, damages or suit that may arise as a result of or related to a student's or staff's use of the School's Internet, school network, and/or computers. The school makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the school's Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet.

II. Unacceptable Use

The following is a list of prohibited behaviors. The list is not exhaustive but illustrates unacceptable uses of the school's Internet Service:

- Disclosing, using or disseminating personal identification information about self or others including, but not limited to, Internet account numbers, passwords, etc.;
- Accessing, sending or forwarding materials or communications that are defamatory, abusive, pornographic, obscene, profane, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, racially or sexually offensive, or illegal;
- Using the Internet service for any illegal activities such as gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above;
- Vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means;
- Copying or downloading copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research as determined by school staff. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the Executive Director, nor shall users violate any software license agreements, or any applicable federal, state or local laws concerning copyright;
- Using the network or Internet while privileges are revoked or suspended; and

- Plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited to sources.

Any violation of the above policy may result in the loss of computer, Internet and network privileges, and possible disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action (See Violations below).

III. Safety Issues

The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications.

- Never reveal *any* identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs.
- Use the "back" key whenever you encounter a site that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Immediately tell a teacher if you receive a message that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Never share your password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you should change it immediately and notify a teacher.

School Network Privacy

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. The school reserves the right to examine all data involved in the user's use of the school's Internet service. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

School Network Violations

Access to the school's Internet service is a privilege not a right. The school reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (students), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. The school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the school's Internet service. The school also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The Student Code of Conduct (SCC) has been designed to provide a positive learning environment and a safe environment for student learning. The goal of this policy is to provide students with the necessary tools to develop self-management before leaving our doors on their way to high school and the choices they will have after high school

Great Lakes Academy will use a multi-tiered process for behavior. School wide behavior expectations will be modeled and positively communicated and enforced throughout the school day. All students are expected to follow school and classroom expectations. Students will be supported social-emotionally through advisory lessons, classroom management systems, and continuous written and verbal communication with parents and guardians.

Teachers will enforce the school's behavioral expectations in their classrooms through clear systems, procedures and routines, clear directions to students, and consistent positive reinforcements.

Classroom teachers will redirect students who are not meeting classroom expectations. Classroom consequences include loss of privileges including, but not limited to, students sitting at a reflection desk for 2-3 minutes, the loss of a privilege, and may escalate to missing school events, trips, or school-wide activities for repeated misbehavior.

In all grades, parents will be able to see positive and negative student behavior using the PowerSchool app. Behavior will be tracked on a paycheck system that encourages positive rewards for good choices and is part of an overall PBIS approach at the school. Parents will receive weekly updates of their student's "paycheck" through a weekly report. Students earn dollars for positive choices such as completing homework, supporting a classmate, completing exemplary schoolwork, etc. Students earn dollar deductions for incomplete homework or classwork, refusing to follow directions, being off-task, or making other choices that do not meet school expectations. Students must maintain a minimum balance to participate in school-wide positive incentives such as special events. Additionally, students may use their paycheck to purchase rewards from the school store. Students will receive weekly printouts of their "paycheck" while families will receive those via email. All students are expected to follow school and classroom expectations. Students will be supported with Social Emotional Learning through direct lessons in Advisory, Leader In Me program initiatives, the paycheck system, Character & Fitness, and SEL support from teachers, social workers and behavioral support staff, and continuous written and verbal communication with parents and guardians.

For students that have not responded to Tier 1 instruction and interventions or students who do not meet the criteria for exceptions, they will be provided with additional instructional and motivational support.

Student Code of Conduct

Our Approach to Discipline

To ensure that our school culture fosters student learning in a safe environment, we have implemented a schoolwide Behavior Management System. The Student Code of Conduct supports execution of behavior management in and outside classrooms. The goal of the Student Code of Conduct is to reinforce a safe learning environment for students. It focuses on building and maintaining positive relationships and correcting behavior through problem solving, restorative practices, and consistent consequences. The leveled system outlined below provides clear information about how misbehavior will be appropriately addressed.

- Level 1 lists mild to moderate impulsive behaviors that are minimally disruptive to the learning environment.
- Level 2 lists repeated mild to moderate impulsive behaviors that disrupts the learning environment.
- Level 3 lists moderate to severe misbehaviors after receiving Level 2 disciplinary action and intervention.
- Level 4 lists behaviors that are very seriously disruptive.
- Level 5 lists behaviors that may be illegal and are most seriously disruptive.
- Level 6 behaviors are illegal and seriously disruptive.

Special Notes:

Individual School Rules and Academic Progress

Great Lakes Academy may develop school rules that are consistent with this SCC and may address inappropriate student behaviors not specifically included in this SCC. Poor academic achievement is not an inappropriate behavior. The SCC and school rules will *not* be used to discipline students for poor academic progress.

SCC and Other Laws, Policies, Rules, and Contracts

The inappropriate behaviors and range of possible consequences and interventions listed in this policy are consistent with the Illinois School Code, Board Rules and Policies, negotiated agreements, and all other applicable state and federal laws.

Minor Behavior Incidents - Level 1

Example Behaviors	Possible Response(s)	Range of Disciplinary Actions
1-1 Refusal to follow directions or participate in classroom procedures as directed	• Role play/ practice the correct behavior. • Pump the student up / acknowledge appropriate behavior. • Lightning-fast correction	• Use of the calm down area inside of the classroom. • Formal or Informal Student-Teacher conference (use an instructional approach to

1-2 Disruption of the learning environment in a manner that does not physically harm others	• Narrate the positive • Eye contact with misbehaving student • Closer proximity • Nonverbal correction • Hand on desk • Positive group correction • Anonymous individual correction	changing the behavior. Focus on the relationship!) • Point deduction • Restorative conversation or restitution • Reflection session • Restorative Lunch Reflection
1-3 Unauthorized use or possession of cellular telephones or other information technology devices		
1-4 General off-task behaviors		
1-5 Communication at inappropriate times or in appropriate voice levels (i.e., talking out, laughing, yelling)		
1-6 Dishonesty		

Moderate Behavior Incidents - Level 2

Example Behaviors	Possible Response(s)	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
2-1 Disrespect (i.e., talking back or arguing with an adult, use of profane language)	• Role play/ practice correct behavior • Complete appropriate documentation • Restorative conversation/scholar apology • Private individual correction • Clear "What to Do" directions with a countdown. • Temporary seat change • Scholar stands. • Brief private conversation w/ scholar • Reminder or check • Calm Corner • Parent/Guardian contact	• Use of Calm Corner inside of the classroom. • Formal or Informal Student-Teacher conference (use an instructional approach to changing the behavior. Focus on the relationship!) • Reflection Sheet • Temporary Reflection Room coaching from Principal, Assistant Principal, Behavior Interventionist, Social Worker, or designee (return within 15 minutes) removal from class to buddy classroom w/reflection. • Point deduction • Documented teacher, student, parent/guardian, and/or Administrator conference focused on expectation violation, cause of behavior, and a strategy to prevent recurrence.
2-2 Distracting behavior that causes frustration (i.e., teasing)		
2-3 Leaving a classroom without permission		
2-4 Persistent tardiness to school or class (3 or more incidents per semester, applicable to grades 5-8)		
2-5 Use of Great Lakes Academy networks for the purpose of accessing non-educational materials, such as games and other inappropriate materials. ³		
2-6 Physical contact that is inappropriate but does not endanger others		

³ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of the Great Lakes Academy network for one to five days, in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

2-7 Defiance		• Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response. • Restorative Lunch Reflection • Loss of classroom privileges for remainder of day and next day for example: ○ Sit away from the group. ○ Loss of classroom job
2-8 Dress code violation (wearing profane or other clothing with inappropriate messaging)		
2-9 Throwing objects and other inappropriate objects, that do not necessarily endanger others		
2-10 Minor damage to school property		
2-11 Theft of item(s) under \$20		
2-12 Unauthorized use or possession of cellular telephones or other information technology devices		

Moderate Behavior Incidents - Level 3

Example Behaviors	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
3-1 Posting or distributing unauthorized written materials on school grounds	• Parent/Guardian contact (phone call or face to face) by staff member and <u>at least one additional disciplinary action from the range of disciplinary actions</u> to the right. • Loss of student programming and/or attendance at Community Celebrations (classroom, whole school)	• Restorative Lunch Reflection • Documented teacher, student, parent/guardian, and/or Administrator conference focused on expectation violation, cause of behavior, and a strategy to prevent recurrence. • Structured Reflection Day • Letter of Apology • Point deduction • Behavior Courses w/Behavior Interventionist • Silent Lunch • Parent Shadow • Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response. • Reflection Room coaching from Principal, Assistant Principal, Behavior Interventionist, Social Worker, or designee
3-2 Leaving the school without permission		
3-3 Interfering with school authorities and programs through walkouts or sit-ins		
3-4 Failing to abide by school rules and regulations not otherwise listed in the SCC		
3-5 Exhibiting or publishing any profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, libelous, or offensive materials, or using such language or gestures.		

3-6 Possession (physical control over, such as contained in clothing, lockers, or bags) and/or use of tobacco or nicotine products, matches, or cigarette lighters		• Skill building in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a combination in-school and out-of-school suspension. • Removal from athletics or afterschool programming. • Loss of privileges to attend enrichment or special events (e.g. incentive events⁴)
3-7 Disregard for the instructions or direction of school personnel causing interruption to other students' participation in school activities		
3-8 Use of the Great Lakes Academy network for the purposes of distributing or downloading non-educational material ⁵		
3-9 Tantruming, running in school away from adults, attempting to/or leaving the building, screaming/making loud disruptive noises (squealing, etc.)		
3-10 Second or more documented violation of a Level 1 and 2 behavior categories		
3-11 Plagiarizing, cheating, and/or copying the work of another student or source		

Severe Behavior Incidents - Level 4

⁴ In the event that a student with a documented disability is unable to meet the requirements for incentive and academic trips or events due to behavioral or academic performance, the Case Manager and Dean of Culture and Climate will convene to review behavior logs and academic data for those students to determine if the cause of their unmet expectations is manifested in their disability. If that is the case, requirements or limits for these events and trips may be raised by up to 100% or lowered by 50% (Ex: 4 reset or referrals may be raised to 8 resets or referrals allowed, or 10 reading logs may be lowered to 5 reading logs collected) depending on what is appropriate for the expectation as well as the severity of the student's disability.

⁵ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of the Great Lakes Academy network for five to ten days (for first violation) or up to one semester (for second or subsequent violation), in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

Severe behavioral incidents include but are not limited to:	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
4-1 Mistreatment or inappropriate use of Technology (damaging device or searching for inappropriate content online) ⁶	• Parent/Guardian Conference with Principal, Assistant Principal, or designee <u>and at least one additional disciplinary action from the range of disciplinary actions</u> to the right. • Time spent in the Reflection Room	• Behavior Improvement Plan (chronic level 2 and 3 behaviors only) • Loss of attendance at school wide events • Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response. • Conflict resolution/Restorative Circle • Documented teacher, student, parent/guardian, and/or Administrator conference focused on expectation, violation, cause of behavior, and a strategy to prevent recurrence⁷ • Behavior Courses w/Behavior Interventionist • Parent supervision in school (shadowing) • Behavior Interventionist pushes into classroom/scholar space. • Skill building in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a combination in-school and out-of-school suspension. ADDITIONAL CONSEQUENCES AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED GROUP 4 INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR Request for expulsion hearing
4-2 Stealing personal or school property (over \$20 value)		
4-3 Elopement from space (within/out of adult eyesight)		
4-4 Physical assault to another person or self which intends to cause harm, but no injuries result		
4-5 Aggressive verbal assault which includes profane, obscene, indecent, and immoral or seriously offensive language and gestures, propositions, behavior, or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, gender identity, gender expression or disability.		
4-6 Repeated refusal to comply with adult directions from more than 1 staff member		
4-7 Destruction or vandalism of property over \$50 value		
4-8 Verbal or written threats of physical harm to others		
4-9 Attending school wide events after losing privilege		
4-11 Threat against staff member or school		

⁶ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of the Great Lakes Academy network for five to ten days (for first violation) or up to one semester (for second or subsequent violation), in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

⁷ Options pertaining to parent engagement (conferences, shadowing, etc.) are intended to support the successful reengagement of the student. However, in any case where the school is unable to engage parents in follow up responses (conferences, shadowing, etc.), the school will not exclude a student from returning to school after a disciplinary incident. The purpose is to use it as an important tool for successful re-engagement.

4-12 Gambling – participating in games of chance or skill for money or things of value		
4-13 Any behavior not otherwise listed in Levels 1 through 3 of the SCC that seriously disrupts the educational process		
4-14 Overt display of gang affiliation ⁸		
4-15 Bullying behaviors – conduct directed towards a student that can be reasonably predicted to cause fear of physical or mental harm, harm to property, and/or interfere with student’s ability to participate in school or school activities		
4-16 Use of cellular telephones or other information technology device to harass, incite violence, or interrupt other students’ participation in school activities, including use of device to record others without permission or unauthorized distribution of recordings ⁹		

⁸ A gang is any ongoing organization or group of three or more persons having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal activity. Gang activity means any act (e.g., recruitment with use of intimidation, tagging or marking, assault, battery, theft, trespassing, or extortion) performed by a gang member or on behalf of a gang, and intended to further a common criminal objective. An overt display of gang affiliation means any act (e.g., wearing clothing or paraphernalia, displaying gang signs, symbols, and signals) that signifies or exhibits affiliation with a gang. Gang activity and overt displays of gang affiliation can be implied from the character of the acts and the circumstances surrounding the misconduct. Repeated violations of Behavior 3-9 of the SCC may result in a referral for an expulsion hearing and should be submitted as Behavior 5-6.

⁹ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of information technology devices for one semester (for first violation) or up to one year (for second or subsequent violation), in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

4-17 Use of the Great Lakes Academy network for a seriously disruptive purpose not otherwise listed in this SCC ¹⁰		
4-18 Initiating or participating in inappropriate physical contact with school personnel, such as pushing school personnel out of the way to physically fight with another student, with no intent to harm school personnel		
4-19 Forgery - false and fraudulent making or altering of a document or the use of such a document		

Severe Behavior Incidents - Level 5 Behaviors

Severe behavioral incidents include but are not limited to:	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
5-1 False activation of a fire alarm that does not cause a school facility to be evacuated or does not cause emergency services to be notified	• Parent/Guardian Conference with Principal, Assistant Principal, or designee <u>and at least one additional disciplinary action from the range of disciplinary actions</u> to the right.	• Documented Teacher, Student, Parent/Guardian, and Administrator conference focused on expectation violated, cause of behavior, and strategy to prevent recurrence. • Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response. • Detention
5-2 Extortion – obtaining money or information from another by coercion or intimidation		

¹⁰ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of the Great Lakes Academy network for one semester (for first violation) or up to one year (for second or subsequent violation), in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

Severe behavioral incidents include but are not limited to:	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
5-3 Assault – an attempt or reasonable threat to inflict injury on someone with a show of force that would cause the victim to expect an immediate battery ¹¹	• Time spent in the Reflection Room	• Skill building in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a combination in-school and out-of-school suspension. • Request for expulsion hearing
5-4 Vandalism (willful or malicious destruction or defacing of the property of others) or criminal damage to property at a cost less than \$100		
5-5 Battery (unwanted bodily contact with another person without legal justification) or aiding or abetting in the commission of a battery which does not result in a physical injury		
5-6 Fighting/physical contact between more than two people with intent to harm, or physical contact between two people with intent to harm that results in injury ¹²		
5-7 Theft (unauthorized control over the physical property of another) or possession (physical control over, such as contained in clothing, lockers, or bags) of stolen property that costs less than \$150.		
5-8 Possession, use, sale, or distribution of fireworks		
5-9 Any behavior not otherwise listed in Groups 1 through 5 of this SCC that very seriously disrupts the educational process		

¹¹ An assault may be committed without touching, striking, or injuring the victim.

¹² It is not an act of misconduct to defend oneself as provided by the law.

Severe behavioral incidents include but are not limited to:	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
5-10 Trespassing on Great Lakes Academy property – entering Great Lakes Academy property when previously prohibited or remaining on school grounds after receiving a request to depart		
5-11 Knowingly or intentionally using the Great Lakes Academy network or information technology devices to spread viruses to the Great Lakes Academy network ¹³		
5-12 Possession of any dangerous object as defined by this SCC, first documented behavior (see Reference Guide) ¹⁴		
5-13 Use or possession of alcohol in school or at, before, or after a school related function, first documented behavior ¹⁵		

Illegal Behavior Incidents - Level 6

Severe behavioral incidents include but are not limited to the behaviors named below:	REQUIRED Response	Range of Interventions and/or Disciplinary Actions
6-1 Aggravated assault – assault with a deadly weapon or done by a person who conceals his/her identity, or any assault against school personnel	• Skill building in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a combination in-school and out-of-school suspension. • Parent/Guardian Conference with Principal, Assistant	• Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response. • Request for expulsion hearing

¹³ Students may be suspended from Great Lakes Academy network privileges for improper use of the Great Lakes Academy network for up to one year, in addition to any other interventions and consequences listed.

¹⁴ Second or repeated violations of Behavior 5-12 may result in a request for an expulsion hearing and must be submitted as Behavior 5-9.

¹⁵ Second or repeated violations of Behavior 5-13 may result in a request for an expulsion hearing and must be submitted as Behavior 5-18

6-2 Burglary – knowingly and without authority entering or remaining in a building or vehicle with intent to commit a felony or theft therein	Principal, or designee <u>and at least one additional disciplinary action from the range of disciplinary actions</u> to the right.	
6-3 Theft (obtaining or exerting unauthorized control over) or possession (physical control over, including in clothing, lockers, or bags) of stolen property that costs more than \$100		
6-4 Use of intimidation, credible threats of violence, coercion, or persistent severe bullying. Intimidation is behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to education, or using force against students, school personnel and school visitors. For severe bullying, see the Anti-Bullying Policy <i>before</i> assigning an intervention or consequence.		
6-5 Gang activity or overt displays of gang affiliation		
6-6 Inappropriate sexual conduct, including unwelcome sexual contact, indecent exposure, transmitting sexually suggestive images through information technology devices, or other sexual activities which do not involve the use of force		
6-7 Engaging in or attempting any illegal behavior which interferes with the school's educational process		
6-8 Persistent or severe acts of sexual harassment – unwelcome sexual or gender-based conduct (either physical or verbal) and/or conduct of a sexual nature which is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or which creates a hostile or abusive school environment		

6-9 False activation of a fire alarm which causes a school facility to be evacuated or causes emergency services to be notified		
6-10 Second or repeated violation of Behavior 5-12, possession of any dangerous object as defined by this SCC		
6-11 Battery or aiding or abetting in the commission of a battery, which results in a physical injury. Battery means unwanted bodily contact with another person without legal justification.		
6-12 Use of any computer, including social networking websites, or use of any information technology device to threaten, stalk, harass, bully, or otherwise intimidate others. Or hacking (intentionally gaining access by illegal means or without authorization) into the Great Lakes Academy network to access student records or other unauthorized information, or to otherwise circumvent the information security system ¹⁶		
6-13 Vandalism (willful or malicious destruction or defacing of property) or criminal damage to property that results in damage exceeding \$100 or that is done to personal property belonging to any school personnel		
6-14 Inappropriate consensual sexual activity		

¹⁶ A student may be disciplined for circumventing the information security system regardless of the student's intent.

6-15 Use or possession of illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, “look alikes” ¹⁷ of such substances, or contraband ¹⁸ , or use of any other substance for the purpose of intoxication in or before school or a school-related function		
6-16 Second or repeated violation of Behavior 5-13, use or possession of alcohol in school or at, before or after a school-related function		
6-17 Participating in a mob action – a large or disorderly group of students using force to cause injury to a person or property, or persisting in severe disruption after being directed to cease by school personnel or Police		
6-18 Sexual Misconduct, as defined as any conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, or inappropriate, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, sexual assault, grooming, child sexual abuse, dating violence, and inappropriate touch or electronic recordings of a sexual nature.”		
6-19 Use, possession, and/or concealment of a firearm ¹⁹ /destructive device or other weapon ²⁰ or “look-alikes” of weapons as defined in the Reference Guide, or use or intent to use any other object to inflict bodily harm		
6-20 Intentionally causing or attempting to cause all or a portion of the Great Lakes Academy network to become inoperable		

¹⁷ “Look-alike” means any substance which by appearance, representation, or manner of distribution would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is an illegal drug or other controlled substance.

¹⁸ Contraband means any instrument used to commit a crime or violation, and any other item, when possessing that item violates any applicable law, City ordinance, rule, or policy of the school.

¹⁹ “Look-alike” means any substance which by appearance, representation, or manner of distribution would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is an illegal drug or other controlled substance.

²⁰ Contraband means any instrument used to commit a crime or violation, and any other item, when possessing that item violates any applicable law, City ordinance, rule, or policy of the school.

6-21 Arson – knowingly damaging, by means of fire or explosive, a building and/or the personal property of others		
6-22 Bomb threat – false indication that a bomb, or other explosive of any nature, is concealed in a place that would endanger human life if activated		
6-23 Robbery – taking personal property in the possession of another by use of force or by threatening the imminent use of force		
6-24 Sale, distribution, or intent to sell or distribute alcohol, illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, “look-alikes” of such substances, contraband, or any other substance used for the purpose of intoxication, or repeated violation of Behavior 5-17		
6-25 Sex acts which include the use of force		
6-26 Aggravated battery (battery that causes great harm, is done with a deadly weapon, is done by a person who conceals his/her identity, or the use of physical force against school personnel) or aiding and abetting in the commission of an aggravated battery		
6-27 Murder		
6-28 Attempted murder – an act that constitutes a substantial step toward intended commission of murder		
6-29 Kidnapping – secret confinement of another against his/her will or transportation of another by force or deceit from one place to another with the intent to secretly confine		
6-30 Theft (obtaining or exerting unauthorized control over) or possession (physical control over, including in clothing, lockers, or bags) of stolen property that costs more than \$500		

Suspension Guidelines

Students in grades third through eighth grade may be assigned in-school or out-of-school suspensions that will last no longer than 10 days. If a student in third through eighth grade exhibits behavior that presents an imminent endangerment to the physical, emotional, or mental safety of specific students/staff, the Executive Director or Principal or their designee may assign an in-school or out-of-school suspension after the student's parent/guardian has been notified in writing and attempts at notification have been made through a phone call or text message. During the suspension, the principal or designee will develop a plan addressing the safety of students/staff and including strategies for preventing future behavior incidents, restoring relationships, and addressing the student's ongoing social, emotional, and academic needs.

Students in grades pre-kindergarten through second may NOT be assigned in-school or out-of-school suspensions. If a student in kindergarten through second grade exhibits behavior that presents an imminent endangerment to the physical, emotional, or mental safety of specific students/staff, the Executive Director or designee may grant an exception and assign an emergency one-day in-school or out-of-school suspension after the student's parent/guardian has been notified. During the suspension, the principal or designee must develop a plan addressing the safety of students/staff and including strategies for preventing future behavior incidents, restoring relationships, and addressing the student's ongoing social, emotional, and academic needs.

Skill-Building In-School Suspension

A skill-building in-school suspension is the removal of a student from his/her regular educational schedule for more than 90 minutes of the school day to an alternative supervised setting inside the school building to engage in structured activities that develop academic, social, emotional, and/or behavioral skills.

A student in third through eighth grade may be assigned a skill-building in-school suspension if:

- Skill-building in-school suspension is listed as an available consequence for the SCC behavior category, and
- The student was informed of his/her reported misbehavior, provided an opportunity to respond, and reasonable efforts were made to contact the parents/guardians.

Out-of-School Suspension

An out-of-school suspension is the removal of the student from school attendance in response to an inappropriate behavior. School staff must consider a student's disability and whether the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) was implemented as one factor in determining response to any behavior incident. The school has discretion to limit the use of consequences that remove students with disabilities from the classroom, which are otherwise permitted in the Student Code of Conduct. School staff should consider whether the student's needs require individually tailored positive behavior supports beyond what is outlined in this Code.

Before recommending a consequence, the Case Manager and the Dean of Culture and Climate or their designee must review a student's IEP and any behavior intervention plan included in the IEP. If the IEP and this Code conflict, school staff must follow the IEP. School staff may suspend students with disabilities for a total of up to 10 school days in one school year without providing procedural safeguards beyond those that apply to general education students.

If an out-of-school suspension is recommended as the consequence, the following procedures must also be followed.

A student in grades third through eighth²¹ may be assigned an out-of-school suspension if:

- Out-of-school suspension is listed as an available consequence for the SCC behavior category, and The Executive Director or principal determines that the student's attendance at school presents an imminent endangerment to the physical, emotional, or mental safety of specific students/staff and this threat is documented, or
- The ED or designee determines that the student's behavior has caused chronic or extreme interruption to other students' participation in school activities and prior interventions have been utilized and documented, and:
 - The student was informed of his/her reported misbehavior, provided an opportunity to respond, and reasonable efforts were made to contact the parents/guardians, and
 - A copy of the misconduct report, including the specific misconduct and its accompanying code(s), rationale, and duration and right to review will be provided to the student's parents/guardians.
 - Suspensions may be appealed by emailing the Executive Director.

The Board is given a summary of suspension notices. There may be a review by the Board or hearing officer. Parents may appear and discuss the suspension.

A student serving out-of-school suspension is not allowed to come onto school property, participate in extracurricular activities, or attend school-sponsored events. A student may be considered trespassing if he or she comes onto school grounds while suspended out of school. Out-of-school suspensions are excused absences. The principal or designee will ensure that a student serving suspension is able to obtain classwork and homework, and upon the student's return, can make up any quizzes, tests, special projects, or final exams given during the period of suspension for full credit. A student serving suspension will be allowed to take state assessments at school and may participate in test preparation activities with the Executive Director, Principal, or his/her designee's approval. A suspended student will be able to make up work for equivalent credit. The student's attendance will still be marked as suspended. The

²¹ For students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade, only the Executive Director can assign an out-of-school suspension when the criteria listed is met.

Executive Director or Principal must approve any other exception to the out-of-school suspension guidelines.

For the student to re-enter Great Lakes Academy following a suspension:

- The parent/guardian will be asked to attend a re-entry meeting and
- The parent/guardian may be asked to accompany the child to class for a minimum of 1 hour to ensure the student is able to reintegrate and to get back on track¹.
- The student may have to write a letter apologizing to the Great Lakes Academy Community. This condition will be made clear upon the suspension.

The criteria for a suspension of three days and under includes that the student's continued presence in school would pose a threat to school safety or be a disruption to other students' learning opportunities. For a suspension 4 days or more, or an expulsion, other appropriate and available behavioral interventions must have been exhausted and the student's continued presence in the school would pose a threat to the safety of other staff, students, or members of the school community, or substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school. A suspension of 4 or more days includes notice whether support services are to be provided during the period or whether it was determined that there were no such appropriate and available services.

The school prohibits encouraging dropping out and prohibits monetary fees or fines as disciplinary techniques. The school has no zero tolerance policies unless required by law. The school prohibits academic punishments for behavioral violations.

Re-Engagement Plan

When a student returns from an out of school suspension, expulsion, or an alternative school setting, the school will go through a process to re-engage the student with school. This includes:

- A return meeting that takes place with the Principal's designee and may include the scholar's classroom teacher(s) and other relevant Student Support staff. During the meeting, all supportive next steps will be outlined in a return plan and implemented.
 - If a scholar is in middle school, the scholar should be in attendance.
- GLA staff and parent(s) will collaboratively implement next steps and meet deadlines.

Police Notification Guidelines

School administrators contact the Chicago Police Department (CPD) in two situations: (1) to seek assistance with an emergency beyond what is reasonable for school personnel to handle, or (2) to notify law enforcement of a criminal act.

Search

The Executive Director, Principal, or designee has the authority to approve the search of any student's person, locker, room or property when the Executive Director, Principal, or designee has a reasonable belief that the student has alcohol, drugs, a weapon, stolen goods or any other item prohibited by the school's rules. Any search of a person must be made by staff of the same gender as the student being searched with another staff person present as a witness. Great Lakes Academy staff are never allowed to engage in strip searches of students for any reason.

Any contraband, as defined by the Criminal Code of 1961 [720 ILCS 5], found during the search shall be seized and held until its proper disposition is determined through consultations with CPS's Office of Safety and Security and/or local or state law enforcement officials as indicated by the situation.

A search shall not be approved as a means of embarrassing or punishing a student. Insofar as feasible, any search shall be made in such a manner that it is not observed by or known to other students.

Emergency

School administrators have the responsibility to call 9-1-1 in situations they determine to be emergencies. In an emergency, administrators must make reasonable efforts to notify parents/guardians immediately after contacting CPD.

Criminal Acts

When a student engages in illegal activity, it may be necessary for school staff to report the act to the Chicago Police Department. In this situation, school officials contact CPD to report violations of the law. School officials will not contact CPD merely to request removal of a disruptive student from the school in a non-emergency situation.

In an emergency situation, administrators must make reasonable efforts to contact parents/guardians prior to contacting CPD.

School officials must assess the situation before determining whether to contact CPD to report a criminal act.

School officials should consider factors including:

- Whether the student distributed or was in possession of illegal drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, or "look-alikes" of such substances. If so, CPD must be notified.
- Whether the student was in possession of a firearm.¹ If so, CPD must be notified.
- The severity of the criminal violation and the degree of harm to the school community;
- Whether a person was physically injured because of the student's conduct;
- Whether the student presents an imminent danger to the health, safety, or welfare of others, and the student's age.

Once school staff members contact CPD, the responding police officers ultimately will determine whether to investigate, arrest, and/or take any other steps in response. School principals and staff do not have the authority to decide whether a student will be arrested. Moreover, responding police officers do not have the authority to decide whether a student will receive interventions or consequences at school. The Principal will use the SCC to determine the appropriate intervention(s) and/or consequence(s) to address a student's behavior.

Procedural Safeguards for Discipline of Students with Disabilities/Impairments

School officials may suspend students with disabilities when school officials anticipate a referral for expulsion, including referrals requesting emergency assignment pursuant to the Great Lakes Academy SCC, the following apply:

- Schools must provide written notice to the parent/guardian or surrogate parent of the request for an expulsion hearing and the date of an Individualized Education Plan revision and review date. Federal regulations offer some flexibility in suspending students with disabilities more than 10 school days in the school year in certain circumstances.
 - The behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. After reviewing all current and relevant information, including evaluation and diagnostic results, information from the parent/guardian, observations of the student, and the student's current IEP, the school may not utilize an exclusionary consequence for a student if the following criteria are met:
 - the conduct in question was caused by the student's disability or has a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; and/or
 - the conduct in question was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP.
 - Review, and revise if necessary, the student's existing behavior intervention plan or develop a functional behavior assessment as part of the Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meeting, which must be held within 10 school days of the date of the decision to request the expulsion hearing. The school must also provide a parent/guardian/surrogate with a written copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.
- During the MDR, the multi-disciplinary team:
 - Determine whether the misconduct is related to the student's disabilities/impairments and cease educational services for a total of up to 10 consecutive or 10 cumulative school days in one school year without providing procedural safeguards. Detentions do not count toward the 10-day limit. Additionally, if students with disabilities continue to participate in the general education curriculum, continue to receive their IEP services, and continue to participate with non-disabled peers to the same extent as specified in the IEPs, in-school suspensions and Lunch Reflections do not count toward the 10-day limit. Administrators are not required to suspend students with disabilities for the

recommended periods set forth in this Code for a single incident. Specifically, the Principal or his/her designee has discretion to suspend students with disabilities fewer days than set forth for a single behavior intervention plan (FBA/BIP) to address the misconduct. The behavior intervention plan must address the misconduct for which the student is being disciplined.

If the student's behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, school officials may apply the SCC, taking into consideration the student's special education and disciplinary records. In no event, however, may the student be suspended for more than 10 consecutive or cumulative school days in a school year without providing appropriate educational services.

If the student's behavior is a manifestation of the disability, a disciplinary change in placement (expulsion) cannot occur. Students with disabilities, even if expelled, must be provided with an appropriate education in an alternative educational setting.

A copy of Chicago Public Schools' district policy on [Procedural Safeguards for Discipline of Students With Disabilities/Impairments here](#).

Sections 5-12 AND 6-19

If a student simply has any of these objects in his or her possession, but does not use them, (s)he may be recorded to have violated Section 5-12 of the SCC for a first-time violation or 6-19 of the SCC for a second or repeated violation. *If a student uses, or intends to use, any of these objects to inflict harm on someone, the student should be recorded to have violated Section 6-9 and expulsion for at least 1 year, adjusted on a case-by-case basis for bringing the following items.*

Tools, including but not limited to:

- Hammers
- Screwdrivers
- Saws
- Crowbars/Metal pipes
- Other objects commonly used for construction or household repair

Other Objects, including but not limited to:

- Wooden sticks/boards

SECTION 6-19

If a student has any of these objects in his or her possession or uses any of these objects, (s)he should be recorded to have violated Section 6-19 of the SCC.

Firearms - these include:

- Pistol
- Revolver

- Other firearms
- Any part or portion of a machine gun or rifle

Knives – including, but not limited to:

- Switchblade knives (open automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring, or other device in the handle of the knife)
- Ballistic knives (operated by a coil spring, elastic material, or an air or gas pump Steak knife or other kitchen knives
- Pen knives/Pocket knives
- Hunting knives
- Swiss Army knife
- Box cutters
- Razors

Explosive Devices/Gases - these include:

- Tear gas guns
- Projector bombs
- Noxious liquid gas
- Grenades
- Other explosive substances

Other Objects - these include:

- Blackjack
- Slingshot
- Sand club
- Sandbag
- Metal/brass knuckles
- Throwing stars
- Tasers/stun guns
- Crowbars
- Mace/Pepper spray
- Live ammunition/Live bullets
- Broken bottles or other pieces of glass

“Look-Alike” Firearms - these include:

- B.B. guns
- Air guns
- Other objects, including “toys” or replicas that reasonably resemble real firearms

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

If a student simply has any of the objects below, or any other similar object in his/her possession, (s)he should not be recorded to have violated the SCC. *If a student uses, or intends to*

use, any of these objects to inflict bodily harm on someone, the student should be recorded to have violated Section 6-1.

Sporting Equipment - these include but are not limited to:

- Baseball bats
- Golf Clubs
- Skateboards

Personal Grooming Products - these include but are not limited to:

- Nail clippers/files
- Combs with sharp handles
- Tweezers

School Supplies - these include but are not limited to:

- Scissors
- Laser pointers
- Pens/Pencils
- Rulers
- Padlocks/Combination locks
- Other objects commonly used for educational purposes.

Expulsion Hearing Guidelines

Request for Expulsion Hearing

- Expulsion is the removal of a student from school for 11 or more consecutive days, up to permanent expulsion from the school for up to 2 years.
- If a student's inappropriate behavior falls within Level 5 or 6 of the SCC, the GLA ED, or Principal may request an expulsion hearing for the student. A principal may also request assignment to an intervention program.
- If a student's inappropriate behavior falls within Level 6 of the SCC, the GLA ED or Principal must request an expulsion hearing for a student in 6th through 8th grade or for any student violating section 6-1; the ED or Principal may request an expulsion hearing for a student in 5th grade or below committing any other Level 6 behavior.
- The GLA ED or Principal or designee will review the expulsion hearing request and determine whether to refer the student for an expulsion hearing or refer the student back to the school for intervention/support.

Emergency Assignment to Interim Alternative Education Setting

- Students who commit Level 5 or 6 misconducts may be assigned to an interim alternative education setting on an emergency basis ("emergency assignment") while a request for an expulsion hearing is pending without being given the opportunity for a hearing.

- Students with disabilities may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting for a maximum of 45 school days, even in instances where the student's misconduct is ultimately determined to be a manifestation of his or her disability. Students with disabilities may be referred for emergency assignment when in possession of weapons or drugs, or for inflicting serious bodily injury on another person while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event. The parent or legal guardian may request a due process hearing to challenge the emergency assignment.

Expulsion Hearing Procedures

- The school will schedule expulsion hearings and send parents/guardians a notice letter. The notice will provide a description of the incident, the date of the incident, the SCC inappropriate behavior code(s), and the place, time, and date for the expulsion hearing. The notice will be sent by registered or certified mail. Within the expulsion decision, it will be documented whether other interventions were attempted and whether it was determined no other appropriate interventions were available.
- The hearing will be conducted before the designated Hearing Officer on the GLA Board. The Executive Director's representatives will call witnesses to testify and introduce documents regarding the incident. The school must present more than hearsay evidence to prove allegations. The student may also call witnesses to testify and introduce documents regarding the incident. Parents and students are allowed to cross-examine witnesses or evidence during the hearing.

Expulsion Final Determination

- After the hearing, the hearing officer will provide a summary of the evidence included in the hearing and will make a recommendation for intervention or discipline, up to expulsion for a set term of two calendar years.
- The hearing officer's recommendation may be modified on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director or designee.
- In the event of an expulsion, the Board will provide details of the specific reason why removing the student is in the best interest of the school and the rationale for the length of the expulsion.
- The student has the right to file an appeal of the expulsion with the school's Board of Directors.

Bullying Prevention/Anti-Bullying Policy²²

Purpose

The Illinois General Assembly has found that a safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve and that bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional

²² This policy was revised on 8/26/24 to fully align with changes in the Illinois School Code to take effect in the 2024-25 school year.

harm to students and interferes with their ability to learn and participate in school activities. Bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping, and dropping out of school, fighting, using drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment, and violence. It is the goal of Great Lakes Academy to create a learning environment in all its school communities where students are protected from bullying, so they feel safe and supported in their efforts to succeed academically and develop emotionally into responsible, caring individuals. The Great Lakes Academy bullying policy is aligned with other school policies, including but not limited to, the school's Student Code of Conduct and Family Handbook.

The school asks every Great Lakes Academy student, with the support of his/her parent(s), guardian(s), and the adults at school, to commit to the following principles, which will apply to everyone on school property and at school-related activities:

- I will not bully others.
- I will try to help anyone I suspect is being bullied.
- I will work to include students who are left out.
- If someone is being bullied, I will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Scope

Bullying is contrary to Illinois law and this Policy is consistent with the Illinois School Code. This Policy protects Great Lakes Academy students against bullying and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. Great Lakes Academy recognizes the vulnerability of students with actual or perceived disabilities and those who identify as or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Nothing in this Policy is intended to infringe upon any expression protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

This Policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians. Great Lakes Academy or its designee will re-evaluate this Policy every two (2) years based on an assessment of its outcomes and effectiveness, including, but not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The policy is included in the school's Family Handbook which is distributed annually to families, and is posted in areas of the school where other policies are posted.

Bullying is prohibited:

- during any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned program or activity.
- in school, on school property, on school buses or other provided transportation; (3) through the transmission of information from a Great Lakes Academy computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment.
- when communicated through any electronic technology or personal electronic device while on school property, on school buses or other provided transportation, and at school-sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.

- when it is conveyed that a threat will be carried out in a school setting, including threats made outside school hours with intent to carry them out during any school-related or sponsored program or activity or on other provided transportation.
- when it is a Student Code of Conduct (“SCC”) Level 4 or 5 behavior that occurs off campus but seriously disrupts any student’s education.

Definitions

“Bullying” means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

- placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. All of these forms of bullying, including any form of retaliation as defined below, are strictly prohibited. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Bullying behaviors may also qualify as other inappropriate behaviors listed in the SCC. When deciding whether inappropriate behavior constitutes bullying, administrators should consider the student’s intent, the frequency or recurrence of the inappropriate behavior, and whether there are power imbalances between the students involved. While bullying is often characterized by repeated acts, sometimes a single incident constitutes bullying depending on the student’s intent and power imbalances.

“Cyberbullying” means using information and communication technologies to bully. This definition includes cyberbullying by means of technology that is not owned, leased, or used by Great Lakes Academy when an administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred. This Policy does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

“Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal including but not limited to the submission of knowingly false bullying allegations, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is prohibited and will result in the imposition of appropriate interventions/consequences according to this Policy and the SCC.

“Peer Conflict” means disagreements and oppositional interactions that are situational, immediate, and developmentally appropriate. When school employees are aware of peer conflict, they are expected to guide students in developing new skills in social competency, learning personal boundaries, and peaceably resolving conflict, and to model appropriate social

interactions. These interventions are designed to prevent Peer Conflict from escalating to Bullying.

“Restorative Measures” means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline that are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, contribute to maintaining school safety, protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students’ behavioral health needs.

Bullying Prevention

Great Lakes Academy takes several measures to promote the prevention of bullying. This includes:

- Social Emotional Learning lessons for students about bullying that include:
 - Definitions of bullying
 - Appropriate language and physical touch
 - Prohibited behaviors
 - How to respond to and report bullying
- Dissemination of bullying policies and procedures to parents through the Student Code of Conduct, Summer Orientation meetings, and other school communications
- Training for staff that includes:
 - Definitions of bullying
 - School policies and procedures and their role in responding

Intervening to Address Bullying

Responsibilities of Great Lakes Academy Employees and Contractors

All Great Lakes Academy employees and contractors, including security officers, lunchroom staff and bus drivers, who witness incidents of bullying or school violence or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, must:

- intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all people involved.
- report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Principal/Designee as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours; and
- cooperate fully in any investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Principal/Designee.

Responsibilities of Students, Parents and Guardians

No student who witnesses bullying may stand by or participate in the bullying but must notify an adult at school and an adult at home as quickly as practicable. Any parent or guardian who witnesses or is notified of bullying has an obligation to advise the Principal/Designee as quickly as practicable. Reports can be made to any Great Lakes Academy administrator in person, [via](#)

[this form](#), by phone (773.530.3040), by direct email or to the school's general email account which will be forwarded to the Principal/Designee (info@glachicago.org). Reports via phone or email will be forwarded to the Principal or Designee for follow up. Students may report bullying through the same channels.

Parents or guardians and students may make anonymous reports to the Principal/Designee by [completing this form](#) and leaving off their name and email address. No disciplinary action will be taken on the sole basis of an anonymous report.

Investigation

- The Principal shall select a designee, knowledgeable about bullying prevention and intervention, to perform the investigation.
- Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within five school days of receipt of a report and completed within 10 school days, unless the Principal grants in writing an additional 5-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. The Principal/ Designee shall document the extension in the investigation report and shall notify the parties involved.
- The investigation shall include:
 - Identifying the perpetrator(s), target(s), and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information about it.
 - Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged perpetrator and target. The alleged perpetrator and target should never be interviewed together or in public. Individual interviews shall also be conducted in private with student and adult bystanders.
 - Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education was affected.
 - Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
 - Providing and/or informing the victim(s) of additional supports in the school or available in the community.
 - When appropriate, prepare a Misconduct Report identifying his/her recommendation for individual consequences.
 - Comprehensively documenting the details of the investigation.
- When the investigation is complete, the Principal/Designee shall ensure the investigation report is attached to the Incident Report.

Notification

School officials will make every reasonable effort to notify parents within 24 hours of being made aware of a student's involvement in an incident. The Principal/Designee shall report to the parent/legal guardian of all involved students, via telephone, personal conference and/or in writing, the occurrence of any alleged incident of bullying, and shall document these notifications in the Incident Management portal in the school's online data system. School officials will also report all instances of threats, suggestions, or threats of self-harm believed to be the result of bullying to the legal guardian(s) of a student.

When the investigation is complete, the Principal/Designee shall notify the parents/legal guardians of all students involved of the outcome of the investigation. Parents/legal guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation may request a personal conference with the Principal/Designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying, and any resources available in or outside the school to help the students address the underlying reasons for the bullying (see “Referrals” section below).

If the investigation results in the imposition of consequences, the Principal/Designee may advise the parent/legal guardian of students other than the perpetrator that the Student Code of Conduct was followed. S/he may not advise them of the specific consequence imposed, as that would violate the confidentiality of school-record information required by law.

When communicating incidents of bullying to the target’s parent/guardian, the Principal/Designee should consider whether the student may want to keep certain information confidential. For example, if a student is bullied after coming out as gay, the Principal/Designee shall not disclose the student’s sexual orientation to the parent/guardian without the student’s permission, unless there is a legitimate, school-related reason for doing so.

If the target is a student with a disability, the school shall convene the IEP Team to determine whether additional or different special education or related services are needed to address the student’s individual needs to revise the IEP accordingly. For example, if the student’s disability affects social skill development or makes the student vulnerable to bullying, the Principal/Designee shall ask the student’s IEP Team to consider whether the IEP should include provisions to develop the student’s skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying.

If the student who engaged in bullying behavior is a student with a disability, the school shall convene the IEP Team to determine if additional support and services are needed to address the inappropriate behavior and consider examining the environment in which the bullying occurred to determine if changes to the environment are warranted. For example, the IEP Team should consider a behavior intervention plan for the student or review a current behavior intervention plan and revise if necessary. The Principal/Designee shall comply with the Procedural Safeguards for Discipline of Students with Disabilities/Impairments when considering interventions and consequences for students with disabilities.

Assigning Interventions and/or Consequences

Many Peer Conflicts can be resolved immediately and do not require reporting or creation of a Misconduct or Incident Report. If, however, a conflict is ongoing and meets the definition of bullying, the investigation procedures in this Policy must be followed.

GLA will respond to bullying in a manner tailored to the individual incident, considering the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student’s history of problem behaviors and performance. Appropriate responses and consequences are outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

When an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the Principal/Designee will explain the consequences in a non-hostile manner and shall impose any consequence immediately and

consistently. The Principal/Designee will keep communicating and working with all parties involved until the situation is resolved. Some key indicators of resolution include:

1. The perpetrator is no longer bullying and is interacting civilly with the target.
2. The target reports feeling safe and is interacting civilly with the perpetrator.
3. School staff notice an increase in positive behavior and social-emotional competency in the perpetrator and/or the target.
4. School staff notice a more positive climate in the areas where bullying incidents were high.

Great Lakes Academy has a range of interventions and consequences for bullying (which includes retaliation against a student for reporting bullying or making false accusations of bullying) outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Assigned consequences will consider many factors including the severity of the incident and whether the behavior has been repeated.

The range of interventions and consequences include:

- Parent/Guardian Conference with Principal, Assistant Principal, or designee and at least one additional disciplinary action from the range of disciplinary actions.
- Safety and/or Intervention Plan (chronic level 2 and 3 behaviors only)
- Loss of attendance at school wide events
- Recommended instructive, corrective, or restorative response.
- Conflict resolution/Restorative Circle
- Documented teacher, student, parent/guardian, and/or Administrator conference focused on expectation violation, cause of behavior, and a strategy to prevent recurrence.
- Behavior Courses w/Behavior Interventionist
- Parent supervision in school (shadowing)
- Behavior Interventionist pushes into classroom/scholar space.
- Detention - lunch, before school, after school, or Saturday
- Skill building in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or a combination in-school and out-of-school suspension.
- **Recommendation for expulsion for repeated behaviors**

Referrals

Interventions with students who are bullying others will not focus on feelings, but on changing thinking. The Principal/Designee may refer students who bully to positive-behavior small-group interventions (for anger management, trauma, or social skills), social work, counseling, or school psychological services within the school, if necessary, to reinforce the behavioral expectation they violated and increase their social-emotional competency.

The targets of bullying need protection from bullies but may also need support and help in changing their own behavior. The Principal/Designee shall ask a school mental health professional to refer these students to individual or group therapy where they can openly express their feelings about their bullying experience, social-skills training and/or groups where they can practice assertiveness and coping mechanisms, or social work, counseling, or school psychological services available within the school.

Appeal

Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal to the Executive Director, within 15 calendar days of notification of the ED / Principal's decision. The ED shall render a final determination in accordance with the timeline and procedures set out in the anti-bullying appeal guidelines. The ED may return the incident for further investigation or reconsideration of the consequence(s), direct the imposition of other consequence(s), or deny the appeal. The ED shall notify the party requesting the appeal that its decision is final and shall document that notification in the Incident Report.

Consequences for Great Lakes Academy Employees and Contractors

When it is determined that an employee or contractor was aware that bullying was taking place but failed to report it, the employee/contractor will be considered to have violated this Policy. The Principal shall consider employee discipline for such violations, referring to any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Remedies for offending contractors should be imposed according to their contracts.

Notice and Dissemination of Requirements

GLA will post its SCC Anti-Bullying Policy on the school's website, as well as disseminating and presenting this Policy to school staff as part of pre-school-year professional development.

Training and Professional Development

Professional development will be offered to build the skills of all Great Lakes Academy employee's contractors and volunteers to implement this Policy. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent incidents of bullying and to intervene immediately and effectively to stop them.
- Information about the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, target, and witness to the bullying.
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk, and any specific interventions that may be particularly effective for addressing bias-based bullying; and
- Information about Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.
- Information about techniques to prevent bullying in the classroom

Great Lakes Academy is required to submit data on reports of bullying to the Illinois State Board of Education after the conclusion of the school year.

STUDENT NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Great Lakes Academy provides equal educational opportunities to all students without regard to race, color, national origin, immigration status, age, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, language, religious beliefs, physical or mental handicap or disability, economic and social conditions, status of being homeless, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, or pregnancy. No student shall be denied access to

programs, activities, services, or benefits on the basis of sex. Any student may file a discrimination or sex equity complaint.

Harassment Policy

Great Lakes Academy has adopted a policy with expectations students and individuals working or volunteering within Great Lakes Academy will abide by this policy. Complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying are handled according to the reporting and due process procedures described below. The Great Lakes Academy Executive Director or his/her designee shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students that the Network will not tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying by including the Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Anti Bullying Policy in the appropriate handbooks and on its website (glachicago.org)

General Statement on Harassment

Great Lakes Academy is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. No person, including a Great Lakes Academy employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate or bully another student based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristic, or other protected group status.

Great Lakes Academy will not tolerate harassing or bullying conduct that affects tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

It is a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of Great Lakes Academy to harass a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion, race, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, age or other protected class as defined by this policy. For purposes of this policy, school personnel include board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors or persons subject to the supervision and control of Great Lakes Academy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of Great Lakes Academy to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict violence against a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel based upon the person's religion, race, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, age or other protected class as defined by this policy.

Great Lakes Academy will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, filed based on religion, race, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, age or other protected class as defined by this policy.

Definitions

A. Harassment.

“Harassment” under this policy shall include any harassment based upon an individual’s membership in a protected class by a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel, or by any other person who is participating in, observing or otherwise engaged in activities, including extra-curricular or enrichment activities whether on or off school grounds before, during and after school hours, under the auspices of Great Lakes Academy.

B . Sexual Harassment.

“Sexual harassment” is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment prohibited by Title IX. Sexual harassment exists when:

- a school employee causes a student to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or when an employee or third party agent of Great Lakes Academy causes a student to believe that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to unwelcome sexual conduct; or
- the unwelcome sexual conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment; or
- the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment is denied or limited; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student’s academic status; or has the purpose or effect of:
 - Substantially interfering with a student’s educational environment;
 - Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
 - Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
 - Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms “intimidating,” “hostile,” and “offensive” include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort.

Examples of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- sexual advances;
- requests for sexual favors;
- touching, patting, grabbing or pinching another person’s intimate parts, whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex;
- coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone’s intimate parts;
- graffiti of a sexual nature;
- sexual gestures;
- sexual or dirty jokes;
- engages in other verbal, physical, or electronic conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature;
- touching oneself sexually or talking about one’s sexual activity in front of others;
- spreading rumors about or rating other students as to sexual activity or performance;

- unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching or physical contact. This prohibition does not preclude legitimate, non-sexual physical conduct such as the use of necessary restraints to avoid physical harm to persons or property, or conduct such as teacher's consoling hug of a young student, or one student's demonstration of a sports move requiring contact with another student;
- other unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's educational status or implied or overt promises of preferential treatment.

C. Harassment based on Race/Color.

Racial harassment of a student consists of verbal or physical conduct or electronic conduct related to an individual's race or color, when:

- the harassing conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student's or employee's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment;
- the harassing conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
- the harassing conduct otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment because of race or color includes, but is not limited to:

- graffiti containing racially offensive language;
- name calling, jokes or rumors;
- threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's race or color;
- notes or cartoons;
- racial slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's race or color;
- written or graphic material containing racial comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated, and which is aimed at degrading individuals or members of protected classes;
- a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race or color;
- other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by race or color.

D. Harassment based upon National Origin or Ethnicity.

Ethnic or national origin harassment of a student consists of verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's ethnicity or country of origin or the country of origin of the individual's parents, family members or ancestors when:

- the harassing conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment;
- the harassing conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
- the harassing conduct otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment because of national origin or ethnicity include, but are not limited to:

- graffiti containing offensive language which is derogatory to others because of their national origin or ethnicity;
- threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's national origin or ethnicity;
- jokes, name calling, or rumors based upon an individual's national origin or ethnicity;
- ethnic slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's national origin or ethnicity;
- written or graphic material containing ethnic comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated, and which is aimed at degrading individuals or members of protected classes
- a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, ethnicity or national origin;
- other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by national origin or ethnicity.

E. Harassment based on Disability.

Disability harassment includes harassment based on a student's or an employee's disabling mental or physical impairment and includes any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition when:

- the harassing conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's or employee's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment;
- the harassing conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
- the harassing conduct otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

Examples of conduct which may constitute harassment because of disability include, but are limited to:

- graffiti containing offensive language which is derogatory to others because of their physical or mental disability;
- threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's physical or mental disability;
- jokes, rumors or name calling based upon an individual's physical or mental disability;
- slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's physical or mental disability;
- graphic material containing comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading individuals or members of protected classes;
- a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, an individual's physical or mental disability;
- other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by an individual's physical or mental disability.

Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the federal Rehabilitation Act require the school network to ensure that no individual will be discriminated against based upon a disability. Under

federal law, qualified students with disabilities may be entitled to certain services or accommodations related to their school programming. Parents who believe their child has been discriminated against should follow the procedures outlined in this Handbook.

Transgender Children

Great Lakes Academy is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students and fully complies with Title IX. Under Title IX, schools cannot “exclude, separate, deny benefits to, or otherwise treat differently on the basis of sex any person in its educational programs or activities unless expressly authorized to do so under Title IX or its implementing regulations.”

Schools’ obligations to treat a student according to the student’s gender identity begins when a student or the student’s parent or guardian notifies the school administration that the student is asserting a gender identity different from what the student previously represented. From that date forward, schools must treat the student according to the student’s gender identity. Schools may not require medical documentation or official documentation regarding the student’s gender identity as a precondition to recognizing the student’s gender identity.

Reporting Procedures for Violations of Non-Discrimination, Harassment

Students or their parent(s)/guardian(s), employees, or community members should notify the Executive Director if they believe that the Great Lakes Academy Board, its employees, or agents or another student has violated the Non-Discrimination Policy, Harassment Policy, or has violated their rights guaranteed by the Illinois or U.S. Constitution or Illinois or federal statute, including:

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Claims of sexual harassment under the Illinois Human Rights Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

A. Reporting

Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, sex or age or other protected basis by a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of Great Lakes Academy, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities, including sporting events and other extracurricular activities, under the auspices of Great Lakes Academy, is encouraged to immediately report the alleged acts to the Executive Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, or a Dean. Students may choose to report to a person of the student’s same sex.

Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Any teacher, administrator, or other school official who has or receives notice that a student has or may have been the victim of sexual harassment or harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, sex or age by a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of Great Lakes Academy, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities, including extra-curricular or enrichment activities, under the auspices of Great Lakes Academy is required to immediately report the alleged acts to the Executive Director, Principal, or Assistant Principal or school designee of this policy.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment directly to the Executive Director of Great Lakes Academy.

Any other person with knowledge or belief that a student has or may have been the victim of sexual harassment or harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age as set forth above, is encouraged to immediately report the alleged acts to the Executive Director, Principal, or Assistant Principal or school designee of this policy.

B. Designees.

The Board designates below the Great Lakes Academy individuals with responsibility to identify, prevent, and remedy harassment. The designee shall:

- receive reports or complaints of sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, and other basis as identified by this policy;
- oversee the investigative process of harassment complaints;
- be responsible for assessing the training needs of Great Lakes Academy's staff and students in connection with the dissemination, comprehension, and compliance with this policy;
- arrange for necessary training required for compliance with this policy; and insure that any investigation is conducted by an impartial investigator who has been trained in the requirements of equal educational opportunity, including harassment, and who is able to apply procedural and substantive standards which are necessary and applicable to identify unlawful harassment, recommend appropriate discipline and remedies when harassment is found, and take other appropriate action to rectify the damaging effects of any prohibited discrimination, including interim protection of the victim during the course of the investigation.

If any complaint involves the Complaint Manager, the complaint shall be filed with the Executive Director. If any complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint shall be filed with the Great Lakes Academy Board.

Conflict of Interest: If prior to making a report of harassment or during the investigation and/or hearing process any individual has reason to believe a conflict of interest exists, the individual should report the conflict of interest to the Complaint Manager. If the conflict of interest involves the Complaint Manager, the individual may report the conflict to the Executive Director or the Board.

A. Publication.

Great Lakes Academy shall post this policy against harassment and violence in a place accessible to students, faculty, administrators, employees, parents and members of the public.

B. Training.

Great Lakes Academy will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees. Training on the requirements of non-discrimination and the appropriate responses to issues of harassment will be provided to all school personnel on an annual basis.

C. Annual Review.

This policy shall be reviewed at least annually for compliance with state and federal law and will assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy.

D. Privacy.

Great Lakes Academy will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individuals against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

Interim Measures

Upon notice of the complaint/report, Great Lakes Academy will put into place interim measures before the final outcome of the investigation (e.g., no contact order; increased supervision, check-in with both parties to a designee; change classes; change path to classes; provide different bus transportation (if applicable); counseling; health and mental services; escort services; or academic support.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment consistent with policy, the Complaint Manager shall immediately notify the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and the school principal or designee, without screening or investigating the report. The Complaint Manager shall then also immediately undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by other Great Lakes Academy officials or by a third party designated by Great Lakes Academy.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual against whom the complaint is filed, and others who have knowledge of the alleged incident or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of the evaluation of any other information or documents which may be relevant to the particular allegations. In determining whether the conduct constitutes a violation of a school policy, Great Lakes Academy shall consider:

- the nature of the behavior;
- how often the conduct occurred;
- whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
- the relationship between the parties involved;
- the race, color, national origin, disability, sex, age or other status of the victim;
- the identity of the perpetrator, including whether the perpetrator was in a position of power over the student allegedly subjected to harassment;
- the number of alleged harassers;
- the age of the harasser;
- where the harassment occurred;
- whether there have been other incidents in the school involving the same or other students;
- whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment or the employee's work environment;
- the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
- Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

Additionally, in a manner that is consistent with Federal and State laws governing student privacy rights, information about the investigation will be shared with the parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation. Parents/guardians will also have the opportunity to meet with a school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident.

Criminal Complaint

With regard to allegations of sexual assault, Great Lakes Academy will inform the complainant of the right to proceed with a criminal investigation and a Title IX complaint simultaneously. Great Lakes Academy is obligated to conduct its investigation whether or not there is a criminal investigation pending addressing the same or similar allegations or such investigation has concluded.

Great Lakes Academy administrators are required to notify the Chicago Police Department if they are made aware of a criminal act of sexual assault or misconduct and may consult with counsel or the CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX at (773) 535-4400 to assist in assessing whether police notification will be required. In addition, when made aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct, Great Lakes Academy administrators will be required to follow their mandatory reporter obligations and report to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Confidentiality

Great Lakes Academy will take steps to investigate and respond to complaints, consistent with a complainant's requests for confidentiality. The privacy of the parties involved and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

However, if a complaint requests anonymity and does not agree to release of information, Great Lakes Academy may be limited in its ability to respond to the complaint (including pursuing discipline against the accused) or must override a request for confidentiality to address the complaint. Great Lakes Academy will evaluate a request for confidentiality in the context of its responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students, and may weigh the request for confidentiality against the following factors: the seriousness of the alleged harassment; the complainant's age; whether there have been other harassment complaints about the same individual; and the alleged harasser's rights to receive information about the allegations if the information is maintained by the school as an "education record" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.15. The Complaint Manager is responsible for evaluating requests for confidentiality.

Retaliation

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of sexual harassment, or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or other basis consistent with this policy will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment or work assignments. Great Lakes Academy will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against a person who reports, testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

It is unlawful to retaliate against students, employees or applicants for:

- Filing or being witness in an Equal Employment Opportunity charge, complaint, investigation, or lawsuit
- Communicating with a supervisor or manager about employment discrimination including harassment

- Answering questions during an investigation of alleged harassment
- Refusing to follow orders which could result in discrimination
- Resisting sexual advances, or intervening to protect others
- Requesting accommodation of disability or religious practice

Participating in a complaint process is protected from retaliation under all circumstances. Other acts to oppose discrimination are protected as long as the individual was acting on a reasonable belief something at Great Lakes Academy may violate Equal Employment Opportunity laws, even if he/she did not use legal terminology to describe it.

Procedures for Addressing Violations of Non-Discrimination, Harassment Policy

Upon receipt of a report that a violation has occurred, Great Lakes Academy will take prompt, appropriate formal or informal action to address, and where appropriate, remediate the violation within seven (7) calendar days of the report of the violation. Appropriate actions may include but are not limited to counseling, awareness training, parent-teacher conferences, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, remediation, termination, discharge or other recourse.

Any action taken by Great Lakes Academy for violation of the Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy shall be consistent with the requirements of state and federal law and Great Lakes Academy policies for violations of a similar nature or similar degree of severity. In addition to applying the Student Code of Conduct where appropriate, in determining what is an appropriate response to a finding that violation of any one of these policies has occurred, Great Lakes Academy shall consider:

- what response is most likely to end any ongoing harassment;
- whether a particular response is likely to deter similar future conduct by the harasser or others;
- the amount and kind of harm suffered by the victim of the harassment;
- the identity of the party who engaged in the harassing conduct; and,
- whether the harassment was engaged in by school personnel, and if so, Great Lakes Academy will also consider how it can best remediate the effects of the harassment.

Great Lakes Academy will provide the parties written notice of a range of potential remedies and sanctions (apology; written warning; written reprimand; prohibition from holding office or participating in student activities, including sports; recommended counseling; required training; termination or other remedies). This may include services separate from or in addition to interim measures offered at the time the Complainant reported the harassment even if originally declined.

In the event that the evidence suggests that the harassment at issue is also a crime that violates criminal law, Great Lakes Academy will apply the Student Code of Conduct and rules for police notification and mandatory reporting.

To the extent Great Lakes Academy can do so while respecting the privacy rights of the individuals involved, including the duty of confidentiality under FERPA and/or the Illinois School Student Records Act, the Complaint Manager shall inform the parties of any action taken in response to the complaint.

If the results of Great Lakes Academy's evaluation of a complaint of harassment results in a conclusion that an individual has engaged in unlawful harassment in violation of this policy, or

that school personnel have failed to report harassment as required herein, that individual may appeal this determination by use of established Board procedures for appealing other adverse personnel and/or education related actions.

A written appeal to the Board may be requested by either party within three (3) days from receipt of the written report. If an appeal reaches the Board, a hearing officer shall conduct a hearing within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal and make a written report to the Board summarizing the evidence heard at the hearing within ten (10) days of the hearing. If the procedures allow the parties access to information used at a hearing, Great Lakes Academy will provide similar and timely access to both parties. With respect to the hearing, Great Lakes Academy will provide equal opportunity to both parties and apply equal restrictions to ability of lawyers/representatives to speak or otherwise participate (or equally permitting 3rd party expert testimony); equal cross examination on witnesses; equally present for the entirety of a hearing).

With respect to hearings pertaining to sexual assault: Great Lakes Academy must not require a complainant to be present at the hearing as prerequisite to proceed. Great Lakes Academy does not allow parties to personally question or cross-examine each other during a hearing. However, the complainant and accused will have equal opportunity to present relevant witnesses and other evidence. The complainant and the accused will have similar and timely access to any information that will be used in a hearing. The complainant and the accused shall have the right to present witnesses, subject to the right of cross examination by the hearing officer. Great Lakes Academy does not allow evidence of past relationships with anyone other than the alleged perpetrator.

Upon receipt of the written report from the hearing officer, the Board may take action, as it finds appropriate. The Great Lakes Academy Board will take action within thirty (30) days of receipt of the hearing officer's report.

Copies of all complaints of harassment and the investigations conducted pursuant to them shall be maintained by the Network for at least five (5) years.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of harassment will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment or work assignments. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

Great Lakes Academy Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement & Understanding of School Policies

As a Great Lakes Academy Charter School Parent/Guardian, and in consideration for my student's attendance at Great Lakes Academy, I agree to:

1. Adhere to the parent conduct policy, including adhering to all school rules and policies including the parent conduct policy, and treating all staff with respect.
2. Make the school a safe and achievement-oriented environment by supporting the school as it enforces the school's Code of Conduct.
3. Ensure that my child arrives at school on-time daily and attends school daily. I have read the attendance policy in the student handbook and understand the school's policy regarding tardiness, excused, and unexcused absences. I understand that 3 tardy arrivals or early dismissals will be counted as 1 absence toward attendance incentives. I understand arrival after 8:00 is tardy for K-4 students and 5th-8th students are tardy if they are not in their classroom by the 8:00 bell.
4. Ensure that my child wears the appropriate school uniform daily.
5. Communicate regularly with my child's teachers regarding my child's academic and behavioral performance and attend the following events at the school: summer orientation, a fall open house, parent-teacher conferences, and any specifically requested conferences.
6. Uphold a positive and constructive working relationship with my child's teacher, school staff and administrators, comply with all policies and procedures of the school, and abide by GLA's parent comportment clause.
7. Ensure my child is picked up at **1:50 pm on Fridays, and at 3:20 pm on Monday-Thursday.**
8. Check any nightly or weekly reports sent by the school.
9. Support my child to the fullest in success with the GLA Code of Conduct.
10. Follow and abide by all policies contained in this Great Lakes Academy Family Handbook, and uphold the mission, values and philosophies of the school.

By signing below and returning this page or by [completing this form](#), I acknowledge and agree to the policies in the Family Handbook, as well as the Code of Conduct, and I will support my child with meeting the school's expectations.

Parent's name

Parent's signature

Date

Child's name