Graham Elementary & Middle School
Student & Family Handbook
2026-2027

GEMS

Graham Elementary and Middle School

Dear Students and Families:

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year at Graham Elementary & Middle School (GEMS). The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are intended to make our learning environment a safe, effective, and healthy one. Please take time to read all of the enclosed information. We encourage you to discuss school policies and procedures as a family.

It is our intention to provide students with an exciting learning process of discovery and experience through expeditionary learning. All of our policies and procedures focus on respect for individuals, as well as for the community to which we all belong. We have a great interest in the safety and health of our students, staff, families, and visitors, and adherence to the laws of our city, state, and nation.

We appreciate your active participation in our school, and your support of the work that we will accomplish as an entire school community.

Sincerely,

GEMS Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Nondiscrimination Policy:
Graham Elementary & Middle School continue their policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, color, national origin, handicap or disability, as applicable in its educational program, activities and employment policies. This policy is in compliance with Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all other applicable state, federal and local laws and ordinances.

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The Graham Family of Schools

Mission

The mission of The Graham Family of Schools is to help all our students grow in their academic and social and emotional learning, ongoing. Our aim is to continuously advance students' skills and demonstration of: critical analysis and problem solving; collaborative teamwork; thoughtful reflection on experiences; and sharing in responsibility for academic success and a safe learning community for all.

Enacting the Mission

All our efforts are toward preparing students to be successful in achieving this mission as they work toward full readiness for the next grade level and ultimately college and careers. At our schools, we will:

- Maintain and promote a growth-mindset toward all students and staff such that everyone has an expectation to grow in their intelligence and its display.
- Foster in students a commitment to: self-direction in their learning; and, the school and wider community in which they live.
- Teach at all grade levels with sensitivity to brain development in children, including course and class lessons that focus on human brain development and its relation to learning and growth academically, socially and emotionally.
- Utilize the community outside the school doors as a resource to advance experiential learning for our students.
- Treat all students and staff with compassion, honesty and respect.
- View academic achievement as a reflection of both student and teacher jointly teaming for success.
- Create, state and display the norms for how people are expected to act at school regarding academic work and behavioral interactions.
- Design an operational strategy at each TGFS school for advancing our work in academic achievement, social and emotional learning, grade advancement, and college and career readiness.

Our Schools

The Graham Family of Schools (TGFS) is a group of public charter schools located in Columbus, Ohio, begun in the 2000-01 school year and focused on bringing experiential education to urban students. It now has three schools: Graham Elementary and Middle School (GEMS), a K-8 school near The Ohio State University; The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University (TCS), an Early College high school, on Brentnell Avenue near ODU; and The Graham School (TGS), a high school, on Indianola Avenue in Clintonville.

TGFS believes the Columbus community is a vital resource for our students to learn in and with, and partners widely with businesses and organizations in Central Ohio and beyond. Students and staff at our schools interact with these partners for a variety of educational experiences that enhance our academic mission.

GEMS and TGS are formally affiliated with EL Education, a national organization bringing expeditionary learning and best practices to K-12 schools nationwide. TCS partners with Ohio Dominican University, Columbus State Community College, and the Middle College National Consortium in New York City to support its work as an early college high school. Both high schools are partnering with the University of Chicago on a program focused on ninth grade success.

Administrators, teachers and staff at our schools are highly qualified in their teaching or support areas, and serve our students with challenging and caring academic work and social and emotional support. The Boards governing our schools are engaged community leaders, deeply committed to the mission of our schools. The schools are authorized and sponsored by the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio, and all our work is overseen by the Ohio Department of Education and the state's Board of Education.

Graham Elementary & Middle School

Mission

As a member of The Graham Family of Schools and partner with EL Education, Graham Elementary & Middle School's (GEMS) mission is to provide a rigorous and engaging education while developing a strong sense of character and community among a diverse group of learners.

Vision

All GEMS students are change agents who contribute to a better world by embodying responsibility, teamwork, quality, perseverance, and thoughtfulness.

Purpose

The Graham Elementary & Middle School (GEMS) is a K-8 school serving students from central Ohio. GEMS was initiated and planned by the team that started The Graham School (TGS) and The Charles School at Ohio Dominican University (TCS) which form a group of schools known as The Graham Family of Schools (TGFS). GEMS is grounded in the principles of experiential, real-world learning, self-direction, and connection to community developed and proven effective at TGS. It is supported and enriched by technology in all aspects of teaching and learning, as implemented at TGS and TCS. GEMS is also committed to its partnership with EL Education and its three dimensions of student achievement: Mastery of knowledge and skills, character, and high-quality student work. We address the important learning arc that provides the transition from elementary school to success in middle school, and on to success in high school, not only academically but in terms of character development and understanding of the communities in which students live. Key features of the curriculum are that the educational expeditions integrate content across the curriculum, engage real-world issues, engage students with professionals in the field, and develop high-quality work through the process.

GEMS is committed to the ongoing social and emotional growth of all of our students. Research shows that there is a significant connection between academic learning and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Studies over the past 30 years also connect trauma, including the stressful environment of continuous, pervasive poverty, as a significant factor in many children's school struggles. Therefore, our entire staff is being trained in trauma sensitivity. Our SEL focus incorporates work in the development of daily, small group community advising, the use of Restorative Practices, and the use of mindfulness to equip our students with strategies, skills, experiences and mindsets to enable success both in the classroom and in their lives beyond school.

Program Goals

- Offer engaging academic expeditions including fieldwork and service-learning in which students are challenged to take on new roles and complete significant tasks with real impact in the community, emphasizing learning-by-doing with reflection in order for students to become leaders of their own learning.
- Provide a unique and nurturing environment for students and staff to thrive in their educational and interpersonal development.
- Construct small, interdisciplinary learning environments in which GEMS students apply academics to solve problems encountered in their real world experiences, expeditions, and traditional classes. Through purposeful activity, students make the connection between the abstract and the concrete that is essential to true education.
- Provide guidance and support to students as they transition from childhood to adolescence and in preparation for their transition into high school and beyond, providing a clear path for success between middle school and high school.

Exit Goals

GEMS is committed to providing all students with an excellent, high-quality education and meeting the following overall student goals:

- Learn how to transfer knowledge, make connections and therefore improve knowledge retention.
- Learn how to analyze, explain and apply knowledge.
- Learn how to make decisions and to work cooperatively with others.
- Grow in individuality and diversity.
- Become involved with the community as the learning environment.
- Learn to increasingly take control of their own learning.

- Demonstrate to others how the arts, humanities, math, social sciences and physical sciences are interdependent and enriching.
- Demonstrate how technology supports learning and living.
- Demonstrates how Habits of Learning contribute to academic success

Graham Elementary & Middle School

School Hours, 8:30am – 3:15pm

GEMS | 2026-2027 CALENDAR

AUGUST 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

27: Back to School Night

SEPTEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

2: First Day of School
7: Labor Day

OCTOBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

1 & 2: PD Days
20: College & Career Access Night & Int'l Dinner @ TCS
22: Picture Day
28: Last Day of Q1
29 & 30: PD Days

NOVEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

2: No School - Fall Break
19: Picture Retake Day
23 & 24: Student Led Conferences
25-27: Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

21-1: Winter Break

JANUARY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1: Winter Break
4: PD Day
14: COL and Last Day of Q2
15: PD Day
18: No School - MLK Jr Day
19: PD Day

FEBRUARY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

11: PD Day
12-16: Mid Winter Break

MARCH 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

5: PD Day
18: Last Day of Q3
19: PD Day
26-2: Spring Break

APRIL 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

1-2: Spring Break
29-30: PD Day

MAY 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

7: COL - Better World Day
20-21: Student Led Conferences
28: Last Day of School

KEY
PD Day, No School
Holiday/Break - School is Closed
Last Day of the Quarter
School Event

GEMS Staff Contact Information
140 E. 16th Ave
Columbus, OH 43201
P: 614.253.4000
F: 614.643.5146

Name	Position /Content Area	
Marta Ackley	Intervention Specialist	
Debbie Addison	Executive Director of Advancement	
Alen Auguste	Dean of Students (6-8)	
Mary Balderaz	3rd Grade Teacher	
Cathy Baney	Executive Director of Business & Personnel Services	
Kevin Beery	School Counselor (K-5)	
Samantha Brantley	6th Grade Math & Science Teacher	
Robin Butts	Front Desk Associate	
Loren Collins	MTSS Coordinator	
Christina Conrad	Dean of Academics (K-5)	
Emma Creech	Occupational Therapist	
Miles Cummings	1st Grade Teacher	
Karli Deal	4th Grade Teacher	
Angelic Dean	Dean of Students (K-5)/ Building Principal	
Allison Delmonico	5th Grade Teacher	
Max Dubois	Building Sub	
Hannah Eppler	Building Sub	
Carissa Ferguson	Art Teacher	
Colleen Flowers	Intervention Specialist	
Ebony Harris	Behavior Specialist	
Kaylee Hensley	School Counselor (6-8)	
Ed Ingman	Superintendent	
Ally Keegan	Intervention Specialist	
Samantha Keldsen	7th Grade Humanities	

Allie Konet	Director of Counseling and Social and Emotional Learning	
Cheryl Long	Executive Director of Operations	
Karly Manley	Kindergarten Teacher	
Diana Marcil	Reading Specialist	
Shayla McDonald	Intervention Specialist	
Mindy McFann	Restorative Practice Coach	
Angela Meabon	Intervention Specialist	
Nyungnee Miller	Paraprofessional	
Claire Mitchell	Intervention Specialist	
Cassie Muller	Dean of Academics (6-8)	
Cassidy Neff	Front Office Associate	
Linda Nini	Physical Education Teacher	
Dottie Peck	Registrar	
Jon Pierce	7th and 8th Grade Science Teacher	
Eileen O'Sullivan	Enrichment Teacher/CTE (6-8)	
Sarah Pfirman	Instructional Coach & RTI Coordinator	
Devon Rambo	7th and 8th Grade Math Teacher	
Shay Rentmeester	Intervention Specialist	
Evan Rulong	Director of Career Pathways	
Amy Simeral	School Psychologist	
Audrey Snyder	Intervention Specialist	
Chris Spackman	ESL Coordinator	
Sarah Solley	Reading Specialist	
Zach Steinberger	IT Specialist	
Alexis Taylor	2nd Grade Teacher	
Emily Troyer	Intervention Specialist	
Kearston Tufford	8th Grade Humanities	

Jeff Wiseman	IT Specialist	

Section I: GEMS Learning Community

WHAT IS EL EDUCATION?

EL Education is a nationally reputable organization that utilizes a data-driven, research-based design for comprehensive school improvement. Our partnership with EL Education (EL) has allowed us to design a rigorous curriculum that prepares our children for the 21st century. In an EL school, curriculum, instruction, assessment, school culture, and shared leadership are combined to produce more engaging learning experiences and higher quality student work. EL schools "break the mold" in three fundamental ways:

1. High expectations for students' academic achievement rooted in and tied to standards, are evident in rigorous demonstrations of student work to audiences that go beyond the classroom and beyond the school. There is a culture of revision in which many drafts are the norm and nothing less than best work is expected. Students keep portfolios of their work showing not only final products but also the stages along the way. Portfolios are a major assessment strategy.
2. Teaching and learning are much more active and adventurous; school is more exciting and more demanding. There are well-observed protocols for fieldwork and classroom safety making the school physically and emotionally safe for learning.
3. EL is based on the idea that we learn best when we are actively involved and have hands-on experiences that help us make connections between various academic subjects. Therefore, the courses at our school are designed as real-world "learning expeditions" that give students opportunities to explore a single topic or issue in great depth. Learning expeditions can last from six weeks to a trimester, and may involve several different subject areas (*language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, technology, etc.*). In every learning expedition, students do several projects that let them apply, refine, and demonstrate what they know and are able to do. In addition to more typical tests and quizzes, students are formally assessed through projects and through exhibitions of their work to families and community members.

EL EDUCATION'S 10 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design principles express the philosophy of education and core values of EL. Drawn from the work of Outward Bound's founder, Kurt Hahn, and other educational leaders, they shape school culture and provide a foundation for the moral purpose of schools.

1. THE PRIMACY OF SELF-DISCOVERY

Learning happens best with emotion, challenge and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. In Expeditionary Learning schools, students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.

2. THE HAVING OF WONDERFUL IDEAS

Teaching in EL schools fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.

3. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEARNING

Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of an EL school encourages both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.

4. EMPATHY AND CARING

Learning is fostered best in communities where students' and teachers' ideas are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small in EL schools, with a caring adult looking after the progress and acting as an advocate for each child. Older students mentor younger ones, and students feel physically and emotionally safe.

5. SUCCESS AND FAILURE
All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.

6. COLLABORATION AND COMPETITION
Individual development and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Students are encouraged to compete not against each other, but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.

7. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. In Expeditionary Learning schools, students investigate and value their different histories and talents as well as those of other communities and cultures. Schools and learning groups are heterogeneous.

8. THE NATURAL WORLD
A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the earth and of future generations.

9. SOLITUDE AND REFLECTION
Students and teachers need time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections, and create their own ideas. They also need time to exchange their reflections with other students and with adults.

10. SERVICE AND COMPASSION
We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and one of an Expeditionary Learning school's primary functions is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service.

LEARNING EXPEDITIONS

At GEMS, classes and instruction are focused around learning expeditions, which are "*journeys of learning*" where students study science and social studies topics that are local and relevant to students' lives. Learning expeditions use state and district standards in all subject areas to focus instruction and involve students in real-world projects, fieldwork, and opportunities to learn from experts in the community. GEMS classrooms integrate all of the subject areas, as students work as readers and authors, use math to explore their physical and social worlds, and make meaning through play, imagination and the arts. It is our goal that GEMS students develop a deep love of the world while gaining in-depth knowledge and the skills of historians and scientists as they learn how to be responsible, active, and engaged learners.

FIELDWORK

We cannot learn everything we need to know by staying within the school's walls. An important part of any academic study takes learners out into the world. GEMS is committed to taking advantage of our community's rich learning resources and heritage. Your child will be learning both in the classroom and at multiple field sites in our community. Fieldwork is a privilege for all students, but if a student misbehaves or fails to exhibit safe behaviors, fieldwork may be temporarily suspended until improvement is shown.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

The foundation of a successful EL school is a community that brings out the best in students, families, and the staff. The school climate is characterized by safety, kindness, joy in learning, and positive leadership by staff and students. The school's mission encompasses academic success and compassionate character. The school celebrates both student academic growth and character development. Teachers and school leaders communicate clear expectations for student character and model those values in their own practice. Policies and practices encourage students to take responsibility for learning, to demonstrate empathy and caring, and to be stewards of the school.

WE ARE CREW, NOT PASSENGERS

An EL school culture is planned for, developed, and sustained through practices that bring the community together, promote shared understandings, and encourage all community members to become "crew, not passengers". Students at GEMS will be known well and supported by the adults that surround them. In grades K-8, each morning students come together for a morning meeting, known as crew. Crew allows students to build positive connections with their peers and teachers.

In addition, we will hold regular community meetings to celebrate learning and to foster character. As we mature as a school community, our students will play an active role in establishing and maintaining traditions, and acting as leaders (i.e., being ambassadors for visitors, leading meetings, maintaining the building, mentoring younger children, leading morning announcements). GEMS is committed to maintaining a learning environment where everyone can reach his/her full potential. The school community is based upon mutual respect and a shared set of values about the importance of education.

HABITS OF LEARNING

The foundation of our learning and behavior policies stem from our school's belief that all of our community members are committed to:

- Perseverance
- Responsibility
- Thoughtfulness
- Teamwork
- Quality

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone is expected to fulfill the following responsibilities, and to respect the rights of others.

A. Student Rights

- **Learning:** Every student has the right to expect high-quality learning experiences at GEMS. Every student has the right to expect faculty, staff, and administration to be prepared to guide high-quality learning experiences each day. To ensure this, the following aspects of our school should be expected:
    - High standards for academics, fieldwork, and personal character
    - Small school environments where students know their peers and teachers well and are able to establish positive relationships with both as the year progresses

    - A learning environment where students are active participants in learning, not passive recipients of learning
    - Consistent opportunities for cooperative working situations with peers and staff
    - Opportunities to extend learning outside of the classroom, including hands on experiences that enrich academic and personal lives
    - Relevant projects that will seek to address real needs in our community, and that will be shared with authentic audiences that include more than teaching staff
- **Safety:** Every student has the right to be safe and protected during all GEMS endeavors and experiences.
- **Respect:** Every student has the right to expect GEMS faculty, staff and administration to treat him/ her with respect and courtesy at all times.
- **Planning:** Every student has the right to assist in the development and implementation of his/her education. It is expected that students grow in and take responsibility for their learning.

B. Student Responsibilities

- **Attendance:** Every student is responsible for attending school and all required school functions every day unless the student is justifiably excused. Furthermore, students are responsible for arriving at school on time. This is essential to meet our goal of 96% attendance for the school year.
- **Preparation:** Every student is responsible for coming to school and to class each day prepared to contribute and participate in his/her learning environment to the fullest extent of his/her capabilities. Students are expected to come to class with the necessary materials to be an active part in their learning environment.
- **Participation:** Every student is responsible for participating in classes and all other school related functions to the best of his/her ability every day. Students are encouraged to participate in class discussions, projects, programs and activities, and to ask for help when something is unclear.
- **Self-Direction:** Much is expected from each student at GEMS. At the core level, we expect each student at GEMS to be willing to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for his/her education. How this manifests itself within each student is unique.
- **Compliance:** GEMS has adopted policies, procedures and a Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of, to understand and to abide by these simple, fair and common sense rules.
- **School-Wide Expectations:** In addition to following all school policies, procedures, and the Code of Conduct, every student is expected to consistently follow GEMS' five school-wide expectations. These expectations create a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment for all students. Students are expected to:

1. Walk at all times while inside the building.
2. Keep hands, feet, body, and objects to themselves.
3. Stay where they are supposed to be at all times.
4. Keep cell phones and personal electronic devices put away during the school day. GEMS is a cell phone-free building from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
5. Communicate using school-appropriate and respectful language.

Students who consistently demonstrate these expectations help foster a positive school culture where everyone can learn, grow, and succeed. Failure to follow these expectations may result in restorative interventions, disciplinary consequences, or other actions outlined in this handbook.

C. Family Rights

(For the purposes of this handbook, we use the word "Family" to refer to both Parent(s) and Legal Guardian(s))

- GEMS will create a learning environment that is safe, nurturing and academically challenging for their child.
- Families have the right to expect high-quality learning experiences for their children at GEMS.
- Families have the right to be informed of their child's academic progress at appropriate times during the school year, including regular contact with their child's teacher.
- Families have the right to be informed of issues regarding their child's behavior at school, and to be informed of all serious disciplinary actions concerning their child; Families may exercise their right to appeal suspensions and expulsions.
- Families are welcomed into the classroom for planned events. Please see the school calendar for those events.

D. Family Responsibilities

- **Attendance:** Families are responsible for making sure that their child gets to school on time every day. In the event that their child is justifiably excused, it is the responsibility of the Families to notify the school office by

phone or email no later than 8:45 a.m. of the absence. Additionally, should your child need to leave school for a medical appointment or other justified reason, it is the family's responsibility to notify the office of this need in writing prior to taking your child from school. This is essential for us to achieve our goal of 96% attendance rate for the school year. **Students are not to be taken from school between 8:45a.m. – 9:30 a.m. or 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., with the only exceptions being medical or family emergencies.**

- **Preparation:** Families are responsible for ensuring that their child is prepared to take advantage of the learning opportunities that are available at GEMS and throughout our learning community. This means that families should ensure that their child comes to school with the proper materials with which to actively participate in their education, and that their child is rested, safe, and healthy.
- **Communication:** Families are responsible for participating in effective communication with faculty and staff, particularly in matters of a child's mental and physical health that could impact learning. Families are responsible for communicating with the school on issues regarding illness, medical appointments and any other factors that may result in their child either being absent or unprepared on any given school day. Please provide the office with two working phone numbers, current mailing address, and an email address (if applicable).
- **Support:** Families are responsible for supporting GEMS's efforts to establish a safe and healthy community by being aware of, understanding, and reinforcing our Student & Family Handbook.
- **Respect:** Families are essential partners in creating a positive, safe, and welcoming school community. We ask all families to model the same respect, kindness, and responsibility that we expect from our students. This includes communicating with school staff in a courteous and professional manner, even during times of disagreement; treating all students, families, staff, and visitors with dignity and respect; following school procedures; and working collaboratively to resolve concerns in a constructive way. Families are encouraged to model positive problem-solving, patience, and respectful communication, recognizing that children learn by watching the adults in their lives. GEMS is committed to partnering with families to support every child's success. Disrespectful, threatening, intimidating, or abusive behavior toward staff, students, volunteers, or other families will not be tolerated and may result in restrictions on campus access, a no-trespass order, or involvement of law enforcement when necessary to ensure the safety of our school community.

Families are responsible for reporting to the office any changes in a student's address or telephone number as soon as possible, so that the school database is accurate and the parent can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Process for Addressing Concerns of Families

Families may contact the school at any time by calling 614.253.4000. In order to respect the smooth functioning of the school, families may request to speak with a specific staff member by appointment only. Other concerns such as the student's behavior, grades, or classroom-specific items are best addressed through direct contact with the student's teacher. If concerns of families are not resolved at this initial level, they are encouraged to make an appointment to meet with an administrator. Social media outlets are not an appropriate forum for addressing concerns as school administrators are often not directly connected to them nor do they allow for productive conversation.

Families may bring further concerns or any other matter to the attention of the GEMS Board President, either through individual contact with a member of the Board, or by addressing the full Board at its monthly public meeting. Concerns brought before the Board at public meetings will receive formal notice of grievance disposition by U.S. Mail.

We support Families by communicating with them through the following measures:

- Families and students are provided access to the Student & Family Handbook at the beginning of each school year (or upon enrollment).
- Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities are communicated to all families through the school's newsletters and during parent meetings.
- Emergency or vital information is sent home in student communication folders or via direct phone call. Communication is also maintained through phone calls, email, direct mail, media and social media outlets.
- Families are given opportunities to meet and share ideas at parent meetings or at special events.
- Families are provided information on techniques, strategies, and skills to use at home to improve their children's academic success in school directly through the student's teacher.
- Families are informed each trimester by teachers through the mailing of academic report cards of their children.
- Teacher and staff email addresses are found in this handbook or online through the GEMS website.
- Classroom teachers also provide regular communication to families through classroom newsletters, homework assignments, emails, or notes sent home via the student's communication folder.

GEMS is committed to the development of an effective collaboration between the parent/guardian and the child's classroom teacher or Crew teacher. The parent and teacher provide a synergy that only enhances the quality of the child's educational experience.

VISITING OUR SCHOOL

Families that visit GEMS are asked to follow school policies, procedures, and rules and conduct themselves appropriately, following the directions of posted signage, administrators, and/or staff. Families are asked to sign-in and wear an office-provided badge while on school property to be in compliance with the school's emergency/safety policies.

We welcome families who wish to observe or visit in a classroom. As our first priority is student learning – and visits can interrupt the learning – so scheduling observations or classroom visits is required. Families can either contact the front office to schedule in advance or speak directly with the student's teacher in advance of the observation or visit.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN OUR SCHOOL

Our Classroom Space Is Used Flexibly

GEMS classrooms and work areas are arranged to help students collaborate in small groups. This requires group tables or clusters of desks as opposed to rows of individual desks. A section in each classroom is set aside for whole group meetings, which is essential to building a supportive community of learners.

Our Classrooms Have Ongoing Conversations and Are Full of Movement

Student conversation is the center of much of our learning. We believe that deep learning takes place when children challenge one another, ask questions, share ideas, and build on one another's knowledge through verbal interactions – not just teacher instruction. At certain times during the day, children are getting out of their seats to gather materials, consult with one another, and look at information on the walls.

We Use Primary Sources As Much As Possible

We believe in providing students with authentic resources and materials. Classrooms are filled with nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, articles, newspapers and computers for research opportunities. Conducting interviews and having conversations with experts is a frequent practice of our students.

Revising Work Is a Habit

Students at GEMS are not finished with a piece of work until they complete multiple drafts. This expectation reaches across grades and disciplines. Improving on work again and again is common practice in an EL school. Teachers guide students from draft to draft. Students collaborate to assess the work of their peers. Rubrics set high standards for finished pieces and guide students as they strive to get their work to meet these high standards.

Learning Is Public and Collaborative

Students read their writing aloud, solicit comments, and present project drafts for formal peer critiques. We do public work just like in the adult/ professional world. Having an authentic audience helps hold us accountable, supporting quality work with high standards. It is common to see work, including scores, posted on walls as a way to share the hard work we do at GEMS.

Service and Character Development Are Part of Our Curriculum

We focus on habits of learning and service as well as academics. Quality academic work is mirrored by the quality of the ways in which we treat one another, our community, and our environment. Students are encouraged to be honest, respectful, determined, creative, and responsible. Morning Meetings or Crew are a place to check-in on how the class is doing in terms of our habits of learning and academic progress, and how well individuals are doing. If there are problems with courtesy, behavior, tolerance, or responsibility in the group, those problems are often addressed in this setting. Crew also provides an opportunity to help students define what it means to be an EL school (i.e., commitment to positive character, exploration of the design principles, the concept of "crew, not passengers").

We Need Families to Support Their Children with Their Homework

We invite families to be aware and supportive of their child's efforts with homework. GEMS students will usually bring home homework nightly, as we believe that practicing at home what is happening in the classroom makes learning "stick." We invite families to ask questions and share with teachers if a student is struggling with the completion of

homework. We expect that all students complete and turn in homework on time. Homework and the completion of homework are a part of our habits of learning.

Community Meetings

One of the community-building structures at GEMS is our Community Meeting. Community Meetings are a time when students and faculty members are together, and serves as an important opportunity for communication and celebration. Families are invited to join us for these meetings.

Family Participation

At GEMS, we believe families are essential partners in the education and success of our students. We are committed to creating a welcoming environment where families feel seen, valued, and actively involved in the life of the school. Through consistent communication and meaningful opportunities for involvement, we aim to strengthen the home-school connection and support every child's learning and growth.

One way families can get involved is through Family Crew, a family-led group that collaborates closely with school leadership to support GEMS' mission. Family Crew provides opportunities for families to connect, build community, have fun, and serve together in ways that positively impact our school community.

Section II: The Academic Program at GEMS

EARNING ACADEMIC CREDIT

Evaluations

GEMS does not give traditional A-B-C-D-F grades, nor do we utilize traditional report cards. Instead, we use narratives and other methods designed to evaluate whether a student has mastered the core concepts of our curriculum. Students are not compared against each other. Instead, over time, a student's work is measured against his/ her previous work in order to evaluate individual progress within essential skill areas and across disciplines, including the habits of learning.

GEMS issues a standards-based report card at the end of each trimester. These evaluations are reported in two parts; a student's progress based on a scale of expectations, and through a narrative describing what and how the student is performing overall. Our evaluative structure measures expectations based on the following scale:

EE (Exceeds Expectations): The student produces/demonstrates outstanding work, participation, and mastery of subject matter, going above and beyond what is required. This evaluation indicates that a student has exceeded the expectations that were established for this student by the classroom teacher.
ME (Meets Expectations): The student produces/demonstrates consistent work and participation, meeting all class requirements, demonstrating full understanding of subject matter. This evaluation indicates that a student has met the expectations that were established for this student by the classroom teacher.
AE (Approaches Expectations): The student produces/demonstrates inconsistent work and participation. Student is failing to demonstrate adequate understanding of the material in all areas. This evaluation indicates that a student has made strides toward meeting the expectations that were established for this student by the classroom teacher. The student is on the way toward meeting expectations but is not there yet.
JB (Just Beginning): The student is so inconsistent with producing/ demonstrating work or participation that adequate understanding is not established.

Final Comments on Standards-Based Report Cards at GEMS

Our evaluations are not grades in the traditional sense, because they do much more than sort and rank students. Instead, our evaluation system describes what work looks like when it approaches, meets, or exceeds our expectations. Moreover, our evaluations are presented in narrative form so that the student, the family, and other interested parties will have a greater understanding of the totality of the student's performance in a variety of identified essential skills, academic objectives, and experiential abilities. These evaluations are transferable to other schools.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

GEMS administers the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment each fall, winter and spring to help determine the student's ability in the areas of math and reading. Students entering kindergarten also take the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) within the first three days of school. The data gathered from these assessments are used by the staff and administration to help focus the writing of instruction. Additional assessments may be required for students identified as potentially at risk. Attendance on each of these assessment days is required unless a parent or doctor's note is received stating that the student is unable to attend that day. It is understood that the missed assessment(s) are made up as soon as possible within the evaluation window. Families should make sure that their student is well-rested on the day of each assessment and has had a healthy breakfast to ensure that the student has the best possible chance of doing well on each assessment.

State Mandated Assessments

Students take the required Ohio assessments for math and reading in grades 3-8 and science in grades 5 & 8. GEMS understands that if it, like any community and other public school, does not meet all the requirements, the school must work to show improvement in the passing rates in alignment with the goals of the Ohio Department of Education.

Third Grade Reading Guarantee

All students entering the third grade must demonstrate a certain level of competency in reading before advancing to the fourth grade unless the student meets one of the criteria as noted in ORC 3313.608(A)(2).

An English language arts (ELA) diagnostic assessment will be given by September 30 of each year for students in kindergarten through Grade 3 (ORC 3313.608(B)(1)). If the diagnostic assessment shows that the student is not on-track to be reading at grade level by the end of the year, schools must provide the parents, in writing (ORC 3313.608(B)(2)(a)):

- Notice that the school has identified a reading deficiency with their child;

- A description of current services provided to the student;
- A description of proposed supplemental instruction services;
- Notice that the Ohio Achievement Assessment for third-grade reading is not the only measure of reading competency; and
- Notice that unless the student attains the appropriate level of reading competency by the end of Grade 3, the student will be retained.

For each student shown to be not on-track, schools must:

- Begin reading intervention immediately using research-based reading strategies targeted at the student's identified reading deficiencies (ORC 3313.608(B)(2)(b));
- Develop a reading improvement and monitoring plan within 60 days of learning of the reading deficiency (ORC 3313.608(C)); and
- Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, provide a teacher who has either passed a reading instruction test or has a reading endorsement on his/ her teacher's license (ORC 3313.608(C)(6)).

Assessment Materials Security

All non-electronic assessment materials are kept in an assessment administrator's office in a locked cabinet while not in use. During the evaluation periods, no assessments will be given out to students prior to the start of the evaluation time periods. At the end of each assessment day, all assessments that have been used are inventoried to ensure that all have been returned, and then they will be locked in the administrator's cabinet. At the end of the evaluation period, all assessment materials are again inventoried to ensure that all assessments that were received are being returned to the assessment company that is overseeing the process.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

(from http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/what/whatisrti)

Multi -Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. MTSS is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.

For MTSS implementation to work well, the following essential components must be implemented with fidelity and in a rigorous manner:

- High-quality, scientifically based classroom instruction. All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the general education classroom.
- Ongoing student assessment. Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with the peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the MTSS process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.
- Tiered instruction. A multi-tier approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.
- Parent involvement. Schools implementing MTSS provide parents information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction, and the academic or behavioral goals for their child.

Tier 1: High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions

Within Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, scientifically based instruction provided by qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction. All students are screened on a periodic basis to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. Students identified as being "at risk" through universal screenings and/or results on state- or districtwide tests receive supplemental

instruction during the school day in the regular classroom. During that time, student progress is closely monitored using a validated screening system. At the end of this period, students showing significant progress are generally returned to the regular classroom program. Students not showing adequate progress are moved to Tier 2.

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions
Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom in Tier 1 are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress. In the early grades (kindergarten through 5th grade), interventions are usually delivered in small group settings by reading specialists. In grades 6-8 at GEMS, we use a structure during 9th period called "Intensives." As an EL Education school, we define success as having three dimensions: "Knowledge and Skills," "Character," and "High Quality Work." Our intensives have been focusing not only on the academic support for our students but also on the social-emotional learning depending on a student's needs. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful. Students who continue to show too little progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation
At this level, students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the students' skill deficits. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included and used to make the eligibility decision.

To monitor student progress throughout the MTSS process, we use the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment, the Star Reading and Math assessments, student academic interim grade reports, and student self-assessments to place students in appropriate interventions.

Behavior Multi-Tiered System of Supports (Behavior MTSS)

At GEMS, we believe that behavior, like academics, can be taught, practiced, and strengthened through intentional support. Our Behavior Multi-Tiered System of Supports (Behavior MTSS) provides a framework for promoting positive behavior, identifying students who may need additional support, and implementing interventions that help students be successful in school.

Tier 1: School-Wide Prevention and Support
All students receive proactive support through clear school-wide expectations, social-emotional learning opportunities, restorative practices, positive behavior recognition, and consistent behavior instruction. Students are taught and expected to follow GEMS' five school-wide expectations. Behavior data is regularly reviewed to identify trends and determine whether additional support is needed.

Tier 2: Targeted Behavioral Interventions
Students who need additional support may participate in targeted interventions designed to address specific behavioral, social, emotional, or attendance concerns. These supports may include check-in/check-out systems, social skills groups, mentoring, behavior contracts, restorative circles, counseling supports, attendance interventions, or other evidence-based strategies. Progress is monitored regularly to determine the effectiveness of interventions.

Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Supports
Students with significant or ongoing behavioral needs may receive individualized interventions based on their unique circumstances. These supports may include Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), individualized counseling services, wraparound supports, community partnerships, and collaboration with families and outside service providers. The goal of Tier 3 supports is to address underlying needs and help students develop the skills necessary for long-term success.

Family Partnership
Families play a critical role in Behavior MTSS. GEMS is committed to partnering with families to support student growth by maintaining open communication, sharing progress, collaborating on intervention plans, and celebrating

student success. Together, we can help students develop the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed to thrive in school and beyond.

Section III: GEMS Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook have been carefully prepared and presented so that this handbook is of value in helping you understand the philosophy of our school's management plan, and to become an integral part of it. The ultimate purpose of education is to help each student become an effective citizen in our community. To develop and accept the responsibilities and obligations of good citizenship will help us to participate successfully in the world of tomorrow. Families, students, and staff working collaboratively make for a dynamic team.

ABSENCES

Please call the GEMS office (614.253.4000) or e-mail office@gemsschool.org, whenever your child is going to be absent. To ensure your child's safety, we call you at home or at your place of business if your child is not in class and we have not heard from you. Non-reported absences are marked as unexcused. Excessive absences are reviewed. Written excuses (parent or doctor) should be turned in to the office no more than two days after the student has returned from their absence. ***Students who are sick and may be contagious should not come to school.*** Students are expected to have excellent attendance. When a student is absent, the parent must call the school by **8:45 a.m.** If families fail to report an absence, the student's absence is considered unexcused. It is a courteous gesture to contact the student's teacher also to inform him/her of the student's absence.

GEMS recognizes that the loss of a loved one is a significant and challenging experience for students and families. Students may receive up to **three (3) excused bereavement days** to grieve and attend to family needs following the death of an immediate family member or significant loved one. Families should notify the GEMS office as soon as possible when a student will be absent due to bereavement.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE

It is the policy of GEMS that all student medication, both prescriptive and over-the-counter, should be administered at home. Under exceptional circumstances and subject to a written agreement between a legal guardian and the administration of GEMS, a student's medication may be administered during the school day. In the absence of our school nurse, our trained administrator or office staff will administer medication. Interested families should contact the front desk to learn more.

APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS AND/OR ADMINISTRATORS

At GEMS, we value strong partnerships between families, teachers, and school leaders. We encourage families to communicate with teachers and administrators whenever questions, concerns, or celebrations arise regarding their child's education and experience at school.

To protect instructional time and ensure that teachers and administrators can give each student and family their full attention, please schedule appointments in advance whenever possible. Families are encouraged to make appointments during after-school hours, scheduled professional development days, or vacation days. Meetings during the school day may be accommodated when necessary, but must be scheduled ahead of time.

Please do not visit classrooms or interrupt instruction without prior approval from the school office. This allows our teachers to remain focused on providing high-quality learning experiences for students while ensuring that family concerns are addressed in a timely and productive manner.

We appreciate families partnering with us by respecting instructional time, following school procedures, and working collaboratively to support student success.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

The staff is not responsible for supervising students before 8:00am or after 3:45pm. For the safety of our school, families who drive to school are encouraged to drop their students off at school after 8:00am and pick them up before 3:45pm. There is staff supervision in the gym from 8:00am until 8:15am every morning. If a family should need their child supervised outside of these times, please make other arrangements on your own to ensure your child's safety. If

staff is unable to reach a parent or guardian, or if a child is routinely left at the school outside of school hours without supervision, the school may contact Franklin County Children's Services.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR ABSENT STUDENTS

If a student is absent for any number of days, a family should call the office (614.253.4000) or contact the student's teacher directly to arrange a time and/or method to obtain any schoolwork that is available to be sent home.

ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS

Chronic Absenteeism is defined by the Every Child Succeeds Act as missing **10 percent or more (~18 days, or 92 hours) of the school year** for any reason. It includes **excused and unexcused** absences. This includes "***excessive absences***" in which a child is absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse or absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse. GEMS will work with our community partners to help any chronically absent children get to school every day. Early intervention can keep chronic absenteeism from becoming truancy.

Habitual Truancy, according to Ohio House Bill 410, is reflected by any child of compulsory school age **who is absent without legitimate excuse** from his or her public school for **30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month** or **72 or more hours in a school year**. This includes "***excessive absences***" in which a child is absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse or absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse.

Truancy counts only absences without a legitimate excuse. When a child is habitually truant, the law requires the school to follow several administrative procedures and legal solutions to make sure the child attends school regularly.

Ohio House Bill 410: Every student should be in school every day. Even if an absence is excused, it still results in loss of important instruction time for the student. Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.04 and Ohio Administrative Code 3301-69-02 set forth situations in which an absence can be excused.

Habitual Truancy Protocol: When a child is identified as habitually truant, GEMS will place the child on an attendance intervention team, create an attendance intervention plan for the child, and make three meaningful attempts to secure the participation of the child's parent or legal guardian on the attendance intervention team. If the child does not make progress on the attendance intervention plan within 61 days or continues to be excessively absent, GEMS will then file a complaint with the juvenile court.

Legitimate Excuses: GEMS will request documentation of a legitimate excuse for any absence. Any absence without appropriate documentation will be considered unexcused. Documentation must be received within 7 days of the student's absence date. If not received within 7 days, then the absence(s) will be considered unexcused.

Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.04 and Ohio Administrative Code 3301-69-02 set forth situations in which an absence can be excused. These include:

1. A personal illness or injury (medical note required from physician/hospital)
2. A family illness (medical note required from physician/hospital)
3. The quarantine of the home (note required from state agency)
4. The death of a relative
5. A religious holiday (Absences must be arranged in advance and be approved by a Dean)
6. Emergencies (Absences to be considered by a Dean as good and sufficient cause for the absence from school)

Automatic Withdrawal: A student will be automatically withdrawn from GEMS if they have missed, without a legitimate excuse, 72 consecutive hours.

Absence Notifications: The family of the student should contact the school by 8:45am with advance notice of their child's pending absence on a given day.

Additional Notes: School begins promptly at 8:30am. Children who are not with their teacher by 8:30am are considered unexcused without a legitimate excuse. A child who is unexcused will be signed in at the front office by a parent and/or legal guardian along with appropriate documentation for the child's absence; and then escorted to his or

her classroom by a GEMS staff member. Further, GEMS expects all to be in their appropriate class when the bell rings, and prepared for instruction. Attendance is an extremely high priority at GEMS and Ohio law; 96% is our school wide goal for the year.

BIRTHDAYS

We would like to recognize each student's birthday. The following guidelines are the same for the school community:

- Birthday celebration plans should be arranged with the child's homeroom teacher at least one week prior to the celebration. The student's teacher will work with the family to decide the day and time that will be best for the celebration.

BUILDING HOURS

The GEMS office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Families are welcome to contact or visit the office during these hours. For the safety and security of our students and staff, visitors are not permitted in other areas of the building without authorization, a scheduled appointment, or participation in an approved school event, and must follow all visitor procedures outlined in this handbook.

The GEMS office is closed daily from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. to support a safe and efficient dismissal process. During this time, office staff are focused on coordinating dismissal procedures, supporting student transitions, and ensuring that all students are safely reunited with their families or transportation providers. During this dismissal window, the office cannot accommodate student checkouts, visitor requests, or non-emergency business.

Families needing assistance, making changes to dismissal plans, or arranging student pickups should contact the office before 1:15 p.m. The office will reopen at 3:30 p.m. and remain available until 4:00 p.m.

CAFETERIA/LUNCH

We expect our students to:

- Follow the school rules
- Model the habits of learning
- Use good manners
- Follow adult directions
- Clean up after themselves

All students eat for free for both breakfast and lunch. Students will receive one free meal for breakfast and one free meal for lunch. Students may purchase a second meal at full price if so desired. There is no charging allowed for the 24-25 school year when purchasing a second meal. Students must have cash on hand or money on the students account in order to purchase a second meal. Money left on a student's lunch account can be refunded at any time with permission from the parent/guardian.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TRANSFER

Please inform the office and your classroom teacher if you have a change of address or phone number. This is very important so that the school can notify Families of school activities and/or in emergency situations. Please notify the teacher and the office as soon as possible if you are moving and will not be attending GEMS any longer.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Families of a student with a communicable or contagious illness or parasite (other than the common cold) are asked to contact the office as soon as possible so that the families of other students who may have been exposed can be informed. These illnesses/ diseases/ parasites include: COVID-19, flu, chickenpox, head lice, mumps, measles, whooping cough, meningitis, staph infection, strep infection, TB, hepatitis A, B, C, pink eye, ringworm, MRSA, and any other communicable or contagious diseases your doctor has informed your family that your student at our school has. Should a student come to school with a communicable disease, the student will be kept in the office, and a parent or legal guardian will be asked to pick him/ her up immediately. Below are some guidelines for when students will be excluded from school:

- acute illness -- fever > 100, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- flu or respiratory symptoms -- chills, severe headache, difficulty breathing
- sore throat, strep throat -- stay home until on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school

- pink eye -- inflammation of eye, swelling, redness, draining
- rashes -- open sores that are uncovered, undiagnosed, untreated (need physician direction on return to school and treatment)
- nuisance diseases -- live lice found on student's head (see district policy on head lice below)
- chicken pox -- can return when physician okay's, or when sores are scabbed over and not draining

Please note that if a student vomits while at school, they will need to be picked up and will not be able to return for 24 hours.

The Graham Family of School's Policy on Head Lice:
When a student is suspected to have head lice, either by self or other reporting, follow the below procedure:

1. Isolate the student until they can be checked for lice by the school nurse, or other trained staff.
2. If, upon examination, it has been determined that the student does have head lice and/or nits, the student's emergency contact will be called to have them dismissed to home for the day.
3. The student must remain out of school for a full 24 hours to ensure sufficient treatment time.
4. The student may not return to school until they are lice and nit free.
5. Once the student has returned to school, the student will be re-examined by the school nurse or other trained staff to make sure the student has been treated and the presence of lice and/or nits is gone.
6. If lice and/or nits are present the student will again be dismissed to home for the day to be retreated, and will need to remain out for another 24 hours.
7. The process in number 5 & 6 will be repeated until the student is lice AND nit free.

This policy is in accordance with the practices recommended by the Columbus Health Department and the National Pediculosis Association. Educational information about head lice and effective practices of treatment and removal are available upon request.

COMMUNICATION
GEMS uses a variety of communication methods to engage families in the life of the school. Please allow 24 hours for a response to your communication. At all times, communication should be thoughtful and considerate of others.

- *Kickboard:* Regular positive behavior tracking tied to the school's Habits of Learning.
- *Email and Phone:* traditional methods for communicating with school staff between 8:00am and 4:00pm.
- *Constant Contact and Autodialer:* Automated emails and phone messages sent by the school office with announcements and emergency notifications. Middle school grade level teams also send weekly announcements to families. To receive these, be sure to keep your phone number and email updated in your child's official records. If you have trouble receiving these, please contact the GEMS main office.
- *Website and GEMS Facebook page:* Announcements and calendar events, as well as contact information for school personnel.
- *Remind:* An app used by classroom and crew teachers for short reminder messages. Also has a messaging platform allowing for instant messages between family and teacher within working hours. Please do not send messages to your child's teacher after 5:00pm or before 8:00am.

COMPLAINTS & APPEALS
Students and families who wish to formally file a complaint with GEMS, its staff, administration or The Board of Directors are advised to contact the Office of the school to obtain procedural guidelines that will assist in the preparation and filing of a formal complaint. Any party interested in filing a formal appeal of a staff, administrative or board decision can also contact the office to obtain procedural guidelines that will assist in the preparation and filing of a formal appeal.

DRESS CODE
Dress Code Philosophy

Graham Elementary and Middle School's student dress code supports equitable educational access and is written in a manner that does not reinforce stereotypes. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex,sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Our values are:

- All students should be able to dress comfortably for school and engage in the educational environment without fear of or actual unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students and staff should understand that they are responsible for managing their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self expression.
- Student dress code enforcement should not result in unnecessary barriers to school attendance.
- School staff should be trained and able to use student/body-positive language to explain the code and to address code violations.
- Teachers should focus on teaching without the additional and often uncomfortable burden of dress code enforcement.
- Reasons for conflict and inconsistent and/or inequitable discipline should be minimized whenever possible.

Our student dress code is designed to accomplish several goals:

- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes/experiences where particular clothing is needed, such as PE (athletic attire/shoes) or fieldwork.
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, or pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that denote, suggest, display or reference alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that will interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, invade the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that reasonably can be construed as being or including content that is racist, lewd, vulgar or obscene, or that reasonably can be construed as containing fighting words, speech that incites others to imminent lawless action, defamatory speech, or threats to others.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Dress Code

Graham Elementary and Middle School expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the School's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The School is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, breasts, midriff, and upper thighs are fully covered with opaque fabric. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

2. Students Must Wear*, while following the basic principle of Section 1 above:

- A Shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
- Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
- Shoes.

**Fieldwork experiences may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular way or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example, athletic shoes for PE).*

3. Students May Wear, as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:

- Religious headwear
- Hoodie sweatshirts
- Head scarves/wraps (face and ears must be visible to school staff, do-rags/wave caps are considered a head scarf).
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans"
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear, buttocks, and legs above mid-thigh are not exposed.
- Shorts, no shorter than approximately mid-thigh in length
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops
- Athletic attire

- Visible waistbands on undergarments or visible straps on undergarments worn under other clothing (as long as this is done in a way that does not violate Section 1 above).
- Hats

4. Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language or images, including gang identifiers.
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity).
- Images or language depicting hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands and visible straps are allowed)
- Swimsuits (except as required for a field trip).
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance or masks as a virus spreading precaution).
- Earbuds or headphones.

5. Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 1 and 4 above. Students in violation of Section 1 and/or 4 will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day:
    - Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
    - Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
    - If necessary, a student's parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- Students should not be shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. "Shaming" includes, but is not limited to:
    - kneeling or bending over to check attire fit;
    - measuring straps or skirt length;
    - asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or in hallways in front of others;
    - accusing students of "distracting" other students with their clothing.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances and fieldwork.

Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the Dean.

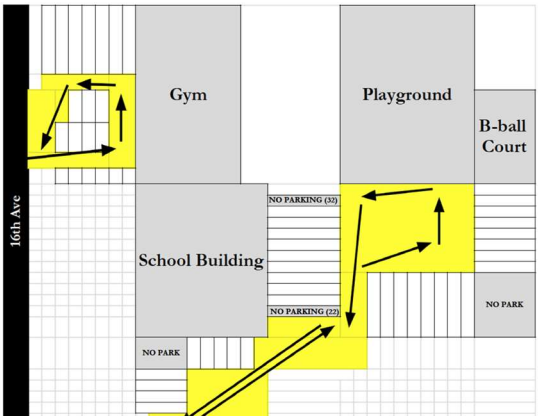
**Inspired in part by Oregon NOW Model Dress Code and Evanston Township High School Student Dress Code.*

DROP OFF & PICK UP

Families and other responsible adults who are planning to either drop off or pick up students at GEMS must abide by the city street regulations, traffic flows, and staff directions. No student will be released to someone who is not on the *Dismissal Information Form* (no exceptions; please complete and submit a new form as authorization preferences change); these are available in the office and on the school website. Adults picking up a student should be prepared with/expect to have a state issued piece of identification with them to present, as staff members may frequently ask to see one before releasing a student. Families with students in grades K-4 pick up their students in the back of the building accessible from Indianola Ave. Families with students in grades 5-8 pick up their students in the front of the building accessible from 16th Ave - see diagram below.

*5th - 8th grade students are to be dropped off and pick up in the front parking lot.

*Any younger siblings of a 5th - 8th grade student will also be picked up in the front parking lot.



EARLY DISMISSAL
If your student is to leave early, please have him/ her present a note to the teacher before school starts indicating the time and reason for departure. Students cannot be dismissed after 2:30pm in order to ensure the safety and order of dismissal. Prior to a 2:30 dismissal, families will need to come to the office to sign their student out, and then wait in the office area until the student has been dismissed to the office.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES & CELL PHONES
Use or display of cell phones, electronic games, cameras, earbuds/headphones, and other electronic devices are prohibited during school hours. No student shall use or display any electronic devices while in the school building. If any of these devices is used during school hours, it may be confiscated, and will be available to the student at the end of the school day. The second time one of these items is confiscated, the device will remain in the custody of the front office or dean until the family retrieves it. This is now an Ohio law. Refer to Appendix H for the Graham Family of Schools Cell Phone Policy.

Families are asked to call the school office if contact with their children during school hours if necessary. As the use of cellphones in school is prohibited, the office will alert the student to the parent's call.

EMERGENCY DRILLS & PROCEDURES
Fire drills are held at least once a month. When a Fire Drill is announced, students should follow the directions of their teacher or staff member present. Directions and maps indicating the safe locations in the building are always posted.

Tornado warning drills are conducted twice a year, during spring months. Instructions are posted in each room. When a Tornado Warning Drill is announced, students should follow the directions of their teacher or staff member present. Directions/ maps indicating the safe locations in the building are always posted.

Our school has in place a procedure for locking down the school should events or issues warrant such an action. Those actions include, but are not limited to: Someone armed and outside of the building, someone armed and within the building, someone at large in the community that poses a threat to our school, or directions by law enforcement agencies alerting us to undergo lockdown. Lockdown Drills happen two times per year.

FIELDWORK
During the school year we go on many fieldwork outings together as an integral component of our curriculum. Families can expect to be notified by their student's teacher of what the upcoming fieldwork is within two-weeks of the experience.

Fieldwork is a privilege, not a right. Positive behavior is a requirement for participation in fieldwork up to, and including, the day of departure. While participating with fieldwork, students are representing our school and all school rules and dress codes apply. Students who exhibit inappropriate behavior are sent home.

In order to make the fieldwork a positive experience for everyone, we want to share a few guidelines:

1. All fieldwork starts and ends at the school. It is vital that everyone, including volunteers, arrive on time in order to stay on schedule.
2. Everyone (including family members) must follow directions and remain with the group at all times.
3. Dress appropriately for all school related activities.

HALLS
Students, faculty and staff, and visitors are asked to be courteous at all times and to keep to the right when moving in the halls. Running and shouting in the halls are never permitted.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
GEMS follows the Columbus City Schools closing announcements with respect to snow and inclement weather days. A decision by the Columbus City Schools to suspend classes on a given day due to inclement weather would mean that GEMS would also suspend classes on that day. Should the decision to close school be made, students and their families will find notification on local TV stations, our website, and our message on the school's phone line (614-253-4000).

INJURIES & ACCIDENTS
During School hours, any accidents or injuries, even minor ones, need to be reported to a staff member immediately. The staff member will assess the severity and determine the next action that is required, which could include one or

more of the following: informing the school administrator, contacting the school nurse, contacting the family of the student(s) needing attention, and calling emergency medical personnel. Regardless of the actions taken, an incident report will be written and kept on record. All school staff receive training on common first aid issues, and first aid supplies are always available in the office.

LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY & MANDATORY REPORTING

It is important that students and their Families understand the limits of confidentiality within the school setting. Teachers, administrators, counselors, psychologists, social workers, and many other select licensed persons who work with the public, are considered by Ohio Revised Code, Mandatory Reporters. As such, those persons are mandated by law to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Those suspicions may be directly observed, expressed by students or families in conversation, or may be inferred through observation of mood, physical appearance, etc. They may also be physical, emotional, or psychological in nature. If a situation arises that would prompt a suspicion of abuse or neglect, the school employee will be compelled to make such a report to Children's Services. No GEMS employee may hold confidential information of that nature. Students and Families should be aware that students sometimes share information in a confidential manner with teachers or advisors. As employees of GEMS, there are times that those conversations may be confidentially shared with supervisors or administrators as necessary.

LOST & FOUND

Any items found in and around the school should be brought to the office. These items will be kept in a safe location, and will be held for about 60 days; any unclaimed items beyond this point will be donated.

LUNCH

Students will eat in classrooms or the cafeteria, supervised and supported by GEMS staff. Students will not have access to microwaves or refrigerators, so lunches packed at home should take this into consideration.

MONEY

Students should not bring to school more money than they might need to purchase lunch, at any time. The school will not be responsible for lost money.

NUTRITION

"High quality food service supports improvements in academic performance and behavior. Nutrition affects students' physical well-being, growth and development, readiness to learn and risk of disease. Children tend to develop unhealthy eating habits early in life and then maintain those habits as they age. . . . Improvements in nutrition positively affect academic performance and improve students' behavior. . . . Inadequate nutrition is a major cause of impaired cognitive development and is associated with increased educational failure among children." (www.ebasedprevention.org/school _climate)

The links between nutrition, physical activity and learning are well documented. GEMS supports the health and wellness of all its students. Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, requires school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program to develop a local wellness policy that addresses student wellness and childhood obesity by the first day of the 2017-2018 school year.

Good nutrition and fitness improves academic performance:

1. Reduces apathy
2. Reduces absences
3. Improves participation
4. Improves test scores
5. Improves academic achievement

Good nutrition and physical activity enhances positive behavior:

1. Reduces irritability
2. Reduces anxiety
3. Reduces depression
4. Improves attendance
5. Improves energy levels

GEMS promotes and encourages students to make healthy food choices and does not allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food choices. Food served at GEMS meets or exceeds nutrition requirements established by local, state,

and federal regulations. Snack and other a-la-carte food sales are limited to areas of the school separate from the lunchroom. Snack sales are not to be in direct competition with the school lunch program. Drinking fountains are available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day. Foods and beverages served at school-sponsored parties, celebrations and social events will follow the school nutrition standards.

GEMS considers students' needs in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment. We ask for student input and feedback, and listen to what they have to say. The opportunity for a free or reduced meal plan is available to every student who qualifies. We use an accounting system that protects the identity of students who eat free and reduced price school meals. Information about other food sources such as WIC, Food Stamp Program and Second Harvest is available for families through contact with the Dean. GEMS encourages families to provide a variety of nutritious foods if students bring meals or snacks from home. Again, sugary foods or drinks are strongly discouraged.

School staff do not use food as a reward or punishment for students. For example: we don't give coupons for fast food meals as a reward for an "EE" on a class project or withhold snacks as punishment for misbehaving. Health/ nutrition education is offered as part of the health and wellness class required of all students prior to graduation. The health class meets federal standards for health education and provides students with knowledge and skills necessary to make positive life choices. Students participate in a variety of rigorous and lifelong physical education activities including, but not limited to team sports, cardiovascular exercises, and running. Additional opportunities will be added as student interests increase.

Students receive positive, motivating messages about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school setting. Administration supports the development of healthy lifestyles for students, and establishes and enforces policies that improve the school's nutritional environment. They address issues such as the kinds of foods available on the school campus; mealtime schedules; dining space and atmosphere; nutrition education; and physical activity.

School staff, students, and families are a part of the policy-making process and support a healthy school nutrition environment. Menus are planned with input from students and include local, cultural and ethnic favorites of the students. GEMS provides a positive dining environment that encourages a pleasant eating experience. The school encourages socialization among students and between students and adults. Adults properly supervise dining rooms and serve as role models to students. GEMS also provides a clean and attractive environment with access to and education about hand washing and other sanitation methods.

PERSONAL SEARCH

A student's personal belongings/space (i.e. backpack, cubby) may be searched, with an adult staff member witness present, whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

PETS/ ANIMALS

For health and safety reasons, please do not bring pets or animals of any kind in the school building unannounced. There may be times during the school year where special exceptions are made, but these would need to be approved by GEMS Administration, and with at least one week's notice.

RECESS

Students in grades 5-8 receive recess at lunchtime for about 15 minutes. Students in grades K-4 receive recess at lunchtime for about 20 minutes and also usually have one additional recess block during the school day. Students must refrain from rough play including tackling, wrestling, pushing, and any other physical aggression in all games and activities during the recess period. Games involving weapons are not condoned. Students are expected to line up in an orderly fashion prior to re-entering the building. Students will use the fenced space on the north side of the school grounds for recess time on days where the weather is not a factor. On days with inclement weather, recess will be held in the classroom with a teacher.

RECESS CLOTHING

Appropriate attire and footwear is requested daily for recess to avoid accidents and injuries. Students are requested to dress warmly during the cold months. Coats, gloves or mittens, and caps are expected to be worn while outside. During recess days with snow cover, all students are strongly encouraged to wear some type of winter boots that can be put on when they go outside and then taken off in the building. GEMS may not always have a change of clothes or additional warm clothing for students who do not dress appropriately. The school does not have alternative recess locations for students unless requested by a doctor with an explanatory note.

RECESS - COLD WEATHER
Usually, if the temperature is 10 degrees or higher recesses are held outdoors. However, if the wind chill is in the danger category, the students stay in the building regardless of the outside air temperature. Administration will make the decision as to whether the children are indoors or outdoors at any particular recess.

SCHOOL SAFETY
At GEMS, we are building a learning community based upon respectful relationships between one another. GEMS administration and staff thrive because of the relationships we build and nurture.

While this aspect of GEMS may distinguish us from other schools, we anticipate some of the usual behavioral problems that are an aspect of all American elementary schools. Our efforts aim to respond to behavioral problems in a manner consistent with the school's vision, mission and philosophy. Our objective is to respond to behavioral problems in a preventive rather than punitive manner. The misconduct described below includes misconduct occurring on school property, a school bus, or at a school-related function and in addition and regardless of where it occurs, misconduct that is directed at another student, school employee or school official or school property.

Therefore, teachers will first address behavioral problems on an individual basis. If problems are not resolved at the level of teacher-student, the problem will be referred to the administration of the school where more serious consequences will be considered, up to and including suspension and expulsion. Families will be informed of any persistent behavioral problems of their child's that detract from the school's learning environment. Our actions depend on the specific person, their willingness to solve the problem and the situation in consideration.

GEMS considers the safety of all of its students and staff extremely important and a high priority of our work. In case of emergencies, families will be contacted in multiple methods; letters home, our texting communication service - Remind 101, mass emails, through website posts, and/or from an off-campus phone location at The Graham School (614.262.1111). In the case that the school needs to relocate the staff and students for any reason, we will be relocating to The Ohio State University Student Union (1739 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43210). Arrangements for student pick-up will be communicated through the same methods listed above.

SCHOOL BOOKS
All books, unless otherwise arranged by the teacher and/or school, are on loan to students for their use during the school year. These borrowed books are to be kept clean and handled carefully.

SNOWBALL AND ROCK THROWING
Due to the inherent danger of injuring another student or a staff member, throwing or kicking snowballs or rocks is strictly prohibited on school grounds.

SPECIAL EDUCATION
Special education services and adaptations to the general education program are provided for students who are eligible for special education. People with questions concerning these services and eligibility issues should contact the student's teacher directly first.

TECHNOLOGY USE
GEMS is pleased to offer members of its learning community access to our computer network. This network includes use of the Internet. This access provides immense, diverse and valuable resources to our learning community. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Access to the Internet will allow learners to explore thousands of databases and libraries, as well as communicate with Internet users worldwide. Some material accessible from the Internet may contain information that has no educational value and in some cases is inappropriate and even illegal. Misuse of GEMS technology of any kind may result in a student losing any or all privileges with regards to our technology. A complete copy of the school's Acceptable Use Agreement is available for review in the school office.

GEMS reserves the right to limit student access to the network or technological resources for any reason and may result in suspension or revocation of computer privileges and disciplinary action, including, but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion from school. These reasons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Logging on with another person's user ID.
- Plagiarism or violating copyright law.
- Logging onto Facebook, Kik, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or other social media or texting sites are inappropriate during the school day.
- Accessing or posting material that is sexual, inappropriate, violent or annoying.
- Vandalizing the computers or the network or other technology, i.e. camera, network, or computer

TOYS

Occasionally, some students like to bring toys to the classroom or for recess. However, that can cause problems in the classroom. We ask toys to remain at home, unless otherwise notified by the student's teacher.

TRANSPORTATION & BUSING

To and From GEMS: Columbus City Schools Transportation Department routes our students and deems their eligibility. All other students must arrange their own transportation. Questions on this matter should be directed either to the school office (614.253.4000) or to the CCS Transportation Department (614-365-5074).

VISITORS

Visitors must report first to the front desk to sign to receive a visitor's badge. Families may visit classrooms by appointment. Staff is available to meet with families during reserved meeting times, conference periods, and professional work days, subject to individual staff schedules.

VOLUNTEERS

We welcome volunteers and feel that they are a vital part of our program. Families assist teachers in the classroom as well as at home. If you are interested in volunteering in the school, please contact the office. If you are interested in volunteering in a classroom, please contact your child's teacher directly. ***Please check in at the office before entering the hall(s) and classroom(s)***. To ensure the safety of our students, volunteers are asked to wear a volunteer sticker while in the building. These are only available in the office. After volunteering please also be sure to sign out at the front office.

Section IV: Behavior & Discipline

Maintaining Positive School Culture

Part of maintaining a culture of quality is taking the time as a school community (staff, families, students, and the greater community) to build and sustain structures, traditions, and rituals that ensure our school environment remains positive. There are no shortcuts to building and maintaining a school community rooted in courtesy, kindness, integrity, and responsibility.

Being clear and consistent about expectations for character, behavior, and our physical environment is essential; however, rules alone do not create a strong school culture. While expectations and structures help maintain order, they do not guarantee that students will treat one another with respect or feel a sense of belonging. A strong school community requires that we not only hold students to high expectations for character but also model those values through our words, actions, routines, and daily practices.

At GEMS, building a positive school culture is a primary commitment and priority. This work is intentionally embedded throughout the school day through relationships, instruction, restorative practices, and opportunities for students to develop the skills needed to be responsible members of our community.

When a student does not behave in a manner that aligns with GEMS' behavior expectations, every effort will be made to provide the student with opportunities for reflection, growth, and improvement. Administrators, teachers, families, and community members share the responsibility of supporting students as they develop the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed for success.

If a student's behavior is such that remaining in the classroom is no longer a safe or productive option, the student may be temporarily relocated from the classroom. After reviewing the circumstances and the student's response to support, administration will determine the most appropriate next step, which may include:

- **The student may return to the classroom:** When appropriate, the student may return to the classroom after receiving support, reflecting on the behavior, and demonstrating readiness to re-engage in learning.
- **Reset Room (Grades 6-8):** The Reset Room is a structured middle school behavioral intervention designed to provide students with an opportunity to pause, reflect, and reset. Students assigned to the Reset Room will remain outside of their regular classroom setting for the assigned period of time while being supervised by a GEMS staff member. During this time, students will complete assigned classwork, engage in reflection activities, participate in restorative conversations, and develop strategies to successfully return to the classroom and learning community. The purpose of the Reset Room is to support accountability, repair harm when needed, and help students build the skills necessary for positive decision-making.
- **Out-of-School Suspension (Grades K-8):** In situations where a student's behavior requires a more significant consequence, presents a safety concern, or demonstrates a need for removal from the school environment, the student may be assigned an out-of-school suspension. Out-of-school suspension may be assigned to students at any grade level, including students in grades K-5. During an out-of-school suspension, the student will remain out of school for the designated period and will be provided with classroom assignments, reading, and other learning materials to complete while away from school. When appropriate, students may participate in a re-entry process with school staff to support a successful return to the learning environment.
- **Behavior Support Plan:** The student and family may be asked to work collaboratively with GEMS administration and staff to develop a behavior support plan. This plan will identify strategies, supports, and goals to help the student experience success in the classroom, with peers, and throughout the school community.

Violation of GEMS' school-wide expectations, policies, or the Student & Family Handbook may result in restorative interventions and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to marks in Behavior Support (formally Kickboard Grades 6-8) or the RCA App (K-5), loss of privileges (such as recess or choice of lunch seat/location), targeted behavior supports, Reset Room assignment (Grades 6-8), out-of-school suspension (Grades K-8), and/or expulsion from school. Consequences will be determined based on the severity, frequency, and impact of the behavior, as well as the student's age, developmental needs, and behavioral history. If a student is assigned an out-of-school suspension during a snow day or school closure, the student will be expected to serve the consequence on the next scheduled school day.

At no time will any form of corporal punishment be used by any adult employed by the school.

Abuse, Violence, Assault, and Harassment
Students are prohibited from engaging in violent, aggressive or abusive behavior, physically abusing an individual, or harassment of an individual, including sexual harassment through conduct or communications. A situation involving any type of abusive behavior will be dealt with immediately and individually. Where appropriate, GEMS will provide information to the Columbus Police Department and will support prosecution of individuals engaging in illegal activity including harassment and abuse. Behaviors associated with this category may result in suspension or expulsion from GEMS. A student shall not behave in such a way that could threaten to cause physical injury to another person. A student shall not assemble to observe or encourage an assault nor inhibit school personnel from intervening when an assault occurs. A student shall not engage in violent behavior against a fellow student, teacher, GEMS employee or against anyone who is on GEMS property.

Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Anti-Bullying Policy
Students are prohibited from engaging in unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying in violation of the **GEMS Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy set forth in Appendix B**.
A student shall not harass, intimidate, disparage, incite, provoke, stalk, or threaten any individual on school premises or otherwise disrupt the school environment. For this purpose, harassment or intimidation includes: slurs; profanity; written information; degrading remarks or actions; obscene gestures; the wearing or display on insignia, signs, buttons, clothing, or apparel; or other verbal or physical conduct including, but not limited to, those based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, citizenship, religion, handicap, age or sex that have the purpose or effect of (1) causing or intending to cause any other student or school employee to be reasonably placed in fear of his or her personal safety; (2) causing or intending to cause a hostile, intimidating, or offensive educational environment for any other student or school employee; (3) causing or intending to cause material disruption of the educational process; (4) unreasonably interfering with a student's curricular, co-curricular or extracurricular performance; or (5) otherwise unreasonably having an impact on a student's educational opportunities.

Hazing activities of any kind are prohibited at all times. Hazing is defined as doing any act of coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of mental or physical harm to any person or living creature.

Bomb Threat
A student shall not make a bomb threat.

Inappropriate and/or Disruptive Classroom Behavior
GEMS teachers have worked together to establish classroom expectations that are consistent and intentional so that the best learning environment for all students can be maintained. However, each teacher creates their own unique classroom environment that supports the mission of GEMS and recognizes the rules and expectations of all GEMS students. Teachers understand that reminders are used to help students remember the expectations of classroom behavior and are designed to be helpful and equally fair for all students, and to preserve the dignity of each student when needed to maintain the least amount of disruption to the learning environment.

Non-negotiable Behaviors
Non-negotiable infractions will result in immediate office referral without a complimentary reminder.

1. Physical aggression of any kind including, but not limited to, pushing, hitting, and kicking. This includes inside and outside the classroom, at school or in the community during school activities, on the bus during transportation to or from school.
2. Bullying, harassing, threatening or teasing directed towards another member of the GEMS community.
3. Physical contact or communication (i.e. verbally or through gestures) that might be considered sexual in any way. Physical displays of affection including kissing are prohibited.
4. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment, including, but not limited to, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures or jokes or pressure to engage in sexual activity.
5. Stealing or invading other people's personal property.
6. Possession of unlawful materials including but not limited to tobacco products, drugs, alcohol and associated paraphernalia, lighters, knives, weapons of any kind, or any item that replicates or imitates such items.

7. Leaving school property and/or leaving a designated classroom without staff permission.
8. Lying to a staff member.
9. Acts of defiance in which a student refuses to follow a teacher's request or instruction or which go against school rules and policies.

*Other offenses may result in office referrals without reminders dependent on the situation.

For all students referred to the office for a non-negotiable infraction, families/guardians will be contacted, and consequential actions will be taken.

From EL Education Core Practice 21: "The EL Education model fosters and celebrates students' academic growth and character development as inseparable. Members of the school community live up to the spirit of EL Education's Design Principles on a daily basis and create a school climate characterized by physical and emotional safety, joy in learning, kindness, and positive leadership. All adults in the school communicate clear expectations for student character based on the school's Habits of Character and model those values in their own practice and interactions. Policies and practices encourage students to become effective learners and ethical people who contribute to a better world. This means leaders, teachers, and students value diversity and work to create a community that is equitable, inclusive, and committed to social justice."

When problem behaviors do occur at GEMS, we use a range and combination of responses defined below, taking into consideration the developmental stage of the child. We approach problem behaviors as an opportunity to learn, take responsibility, and repair harm.

Stage 1 Problem behavior occurs		
	Restorative Response	Punitive Response
Stage 2 The problem is easily resolvable.	Affective/I-message statement	Directive
Stage 3 The problem is repetitive within a class period or disruptive to learning.	Restorative Conversation between teacher and student	Phone Call Home
Stage 3 The problem continues…	Reflection space (Staff Member)	Recess reset (spend recess reflecting to problem solve)
Stage 4 Problems continue (once a student has more than 3 recess resets) or the problem has damaged relationships.	Restorative Circle with Culture Coordinator/Restorative Practice Coordinator Service or action to "make things right"	In-School Suspension Non-participation in fieldwork on a case-to-case basis
Stage 5 The problem continues after Stage 4 response or severity warrants moving directly to stage 5.	Formal Conference with family, Dean, and other stakeholders	Out-of-School Suspension
Stage 6		Expulsion

Vandalism and other Damage to School and Personal Property

Vandalism and damage to school property and personal property of students, faculty and staff is inconsistent with the objectives of the GEMS learning community and, in most instances, a violation of the law.

Smoking and Tobacco Use
Smoking or any other method of tobacco use by a student at GEMS, on school property, or on a school bus is prohibited.

Dishonesty
Students shall not engage in any dishonest behavior, including, but not necessarily limited to, providing false information, forging a parent or teacher signature on school forms, attendance notes, or any other document, and shall not impersonate a parent or a teacher. Cheating on academic work and plagiarism of any kind is inconsistent with the objectives of the GEMS learning community and, in some instances, plagiarism is a violation of the law.

GEMS defines plagiarism broadly to include the stealing and/or passing off of the ideas, words and works of another as one's own. Plagiarism can take many forms including, but not limited to: The words or ideas of another taken from a variety of sources including, books, magazines, the Internet, newspapers, interviews, television programs and other sources combined with the attempt to use these words or ideas in any format without documenting their source. Whenever in doubt about the origin of thoughts, ideas, words, phrases, or work, students should cite the source for the material rather than run the risk of engaging in plagiarism.

Students who are caught cheating on evaluative tools may be deemed to have earned no credit for the specific piece of work and will forfeit the right to an alternative evaluation. Consequences for students who engage in plagiarism can range from earning no credit on the specific academic assignment to earning no academic credit for the class in which the plagiarism took place. The determination of the sanction for an act of plagiarism begins with the classroom teacher and progresses to the discretion of the Administration when the behavior is chronic or credit for the course is in question. Behaviors associated with this category may result in suspension or expulsion from GEMS. The ability for a student to be reassessed for the learning targets associated with the assignment that was plagiarized is up to the discretion of the teacher and administration.

Use of Profanity/Disobedient/Insubordinate/Disruptive Behavior
A student shall not refuse to comply with the reasonable requests of his/her teacher, an administrator, coach, extracurricular activity advisor, staff employees, or adult volunteers. In the case of extracurricular activities, "insubordination" shall also include the failure to comply with the rules or requirements established by the coach or advisor for that particular activity. A student shall not use profane, vulgar, or other improper language, or gestures/actions spoken, written, or sent electronically.

Other misconduct
Any other misconduct, which interferes with the educational process, is prohibited.

Possible School Responses to Behaviors:

1. Missed recess or other activity
2. Restorative Practices/Conversations/Apology
3. Parent/Family conference
4. Behavior plan
5. Reset Room (RR) or In-School Suspension (ISS)
6. Work assignment
7. Alternative learning environment
8. Loss of bus-riding privileges/bus suspension
9. Emergency removal (ER)
10. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
11. Restorative Community Action (i.e., service hours to help in the restoration process)
12. Expulsion

RULE 1. **Use/Possession (including: buy, apply, possess, use, transmit, conceal, be under the influence) of narcotics, alcoholic beverages, drugs, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit controlled substances, or mood altering chemicals of any kind:** A student shall not knowingly buy, sell, supply, apply, possess, use, transmit, conceal, be under the influence of the aforementioned items, assist and/or facilitate in the sale of the aforementioned items, or otherwise violate regulations "Counterfeit Controlled Substances" or "Substance Misuse."

- "*Possession*" includes, without limitation, retention on the student person or in purses, wallets, lockers, desks, or automobiles parked on school property.
- "*Under the Influence*" is defined as manifesting signs of chemical misuse, such as restlessness, staggering, odor of chemicals, memory loss, abusive language or behavior, falling asleep in class, or any other behavior not normal for the particular student.
- "*Mood Altering Chemical*" includes, without limitation: narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, counterfeit controlled substances, marijuana, alcohol, and prescription drugs, nonprescription medications which are taken for unauthorized or abusive purposes or in doses above the recommended dosage on the packaging, unless authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container, which container shall state the student's name and the directions for proper use.
- *"Instrument or paraphernalia"* shall include, but not be limited to, equipment or apparatus designed or used for the purpose of measuring, packaging, distributing, or facilitating the use of drugs, pipes, roach clips, syringes and hypodermic needles, cocaine spoons, rolling papers, and drug kits

1st Offense:
Minimum and Maximum: Emergency Removal, 5 day OSS (out of school suspension). The suspension may be reduced with the agreement of the student and parent/guardian to complete the school approved alcohol, tobacco and drug use education program. If the student and family do not complete the program, the student will be assigned any remaining days **-AND-** any additional penalties as outlined.

2nd Offense:
Minimum and Maximum: Emergency Removal, 10 day OSS (out of school suspension) with a recommendation to the superintendent the student be expelled from school **-OR-**
Minimum and Maximum: 10 day OSS (out of school suspension) and the student will complete assessment/evaluation by a school approved counselor to evaluate the substance use. The student/family must comply with all recommendations of the assessment/evaluation **-AND-** any additional penalties as outlined

3rd Offense:
Minimum and Maximum: Emergency Removal, 10 day OSS (out of school suspension) with a recommendation to the superintendent the student be expelled from school **-AND-** any additional penalties as outlined

RULE 2. **Possession, Use or Transmission of Firearms, Knives, Other Weapons:** No students shall possess, use or transmit any kind of firearm, look-alike firearm, knife, razor, mace, pepper spray, lighters or any item that can be considered a weapon or used as a weapon, including, but not limited to chains, handcuffs, brass knuckles, explosive devices, ice picks, swords, tasers, or box cutters.

- A "knife" is defined as any device that has a pointed or sharp edge and that can be used for cutting, slicing, or stabbing.
- A "firearm" is defined as and shall include, but not be limited to: any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an

explosive or other propellant; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device.

- The definition of "destructive device" includes, but is not limited to:
    - any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas, including, but not limited to, a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,
    - missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or
    - a device similar to any of the devices described herein and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

Minimum and Maximum: 10 day OSS, possible recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion* and possible referral to police, juvenile justice system*.
*If the violation involves bringing a firearm to school, or possessing a firearm at school, it shall be mandatory to make a recommendation to the Superintendent for a 1-year expulsion. Under federal law and Ohio law, it is also mandatory to make a referral to law enforcement for bringing a firearm to school.

RULE 3. **Bomb Threat*:*** A student shall not threaten to bomb, use explosives, or burn the school building or anyone in it.
Minimum & Maximum: 1-year expulsion

RULE 4. **Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying:** Students are prohibited from engaging in unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying in violation of the school's anti-discrimination, anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies set forth in attached Appendix B.
Minimum: Restorative Conversation and/or Missed recess or other activity
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 5. **Assault, Participation and/or Observation:** A student shall not behave in such a way that could threaten to cause physical injury to another person. A student shall not assemble to observe, document, or encourage an assault nor inhibit school personnel from intervening when an assault occurs.
Minimum: Restorative Conversation and/or Missed recess or other activity
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 6. **Assault and/or Fighting:** A student shall not knowingly act or behave in such a way as could cause or attempt to cause physical injury to other students, any school employee, or other persons.
Minimum: 1 day RR.
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 7. **Threatening a Person:** Students shall not threaten others with the purpose of obtaining any valuables or valuable benefit nor should students threaten physical injury to other students, any school employee, or other persons.
Minimum: 1 day Reset Room
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 8. **Sexual Conduct and Sexual Harassment:** A student shall not make sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment, including, but not limited to, pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures or jokes or pressure to engage in sexual activity. Physical displays of affection between students are prohibited. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Sexual activity of any nature is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
Minimum: Restorative Conversation
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 9. **Possession of Pornography:** Possessing sexually explicit material is prohibited, including on electronic devices.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR
Maximum: 10 day OSS

RULE 10. **Disruption to School**: A student shall not by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, noise, passive resistance, false alarm (including fire and bomb threats), or other disorderly conduct cause or attempt to cause material disruption or obstruction to the normal school operations.
Minimum: Restorative Conversation and/or Missed recess or other activity
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

Technology Use: We are pleased to offer members of our learning community access to our computer network. This network includes use of the Internet and the World Wide Web. This access provides immense, diverse and valuable resources to our learning community. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Access to the Internet will allow learners to explore thousands of databases and libraries, as well as communicate with Internet users worldwide. Some material accessible from the Internet may contain information that has no educational value and in some cases is inappropriate and even illegal. Such misuse of technology can result in a student losing any or all privileges on computers. Our intent is to make the Internet available to further educational goals and objectives. The positive resources and benefits derived from use of the Internet overwhelmingly outweigh any negative aspects. This section constitutes the school's Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology.

Access to the school's Learning Management System and/or Electronic Portfolio system - Students may periodically be asked to create accounts for other online resources consistent with the agreements of those particular services. The Charles School reserves the right to pursue reasonable disciplinary actions or limit student access to the network or technological resources for any reason. These reasons include, but are not limited to the following:

a. Logging on with another person's user ID.
b. Obtaining unauthorized access to any school or public system,
c. Plagiarism or violating copyright law, including downloading or storing "pirated" copyrighted materials including music, videos, and software.
d. Logging on to Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter, YouTube, Vine, or other social media sites are inappropriate for use during the school day and are considered distractions to students' learning.
e. Vandalizing or breaking technology, i.e. camera, network, or computer
f. Attempting to circumvent the school's proxy server, use to filter inappropriate websites for students
g. Accessing or posting material that is sexual, inappropriate, violent or annoying. 8. Using the network to harass others.
h. Vandalizing the computers or the network.

RULE 11. **Education Technology Use and Safety Policy:** A student shall not violate the "Student Education Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy".
Minimum: Administrative warning
Maximum: 5 days OSS. Discipline may also include loss of Internet privileges and computer usage.

RULE 12. **Misuse of Communication Devices, (i.e. cell phones, smart watches, and all other electronic devices):** Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices are prohibited during the school day, unless otherwise stated by the classroom teacher.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR, behavior plan
Maximum: OSS

RULE 13. **Inappropriate and/or unwelcome posting or sharing on social media, texting, email, or other forms of correspondence.** A student shall not post or share inappropriate and/or unwelcomed information on social media, testing, email, or other forms of correspondence including images and videos of fights.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR
Maximum: 10 day OSS

RULE 14. **Dishonesty:** Students shall not engage in any dishonest behavior, including, but not necessarily limited to, providing false information, forging a parent or teacher signature on school forms, attendance notes, or any other document, and shall not impersonate a parent or a teacher.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR
Maximum: 10 day OSS

RULE 15. **Dress Code.** A student shall not violate the school dress code.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR
Maximum: Emergency Removal, OSS

RULE 16. **Excessive Tardiness, Skipping Class, Leaving the building:** Students are prohibited from being tardy on an excessive basis. Students are prohibited from being absent from class without excuse for more than 10 minutes. Absences beyond 10 minutes are defined as skipping. Students are not permitted to leave the school building during school hours without staff supervision, unless granted prior permission by an authorized adult. A student leaving the building during school hours with permission is required to sign out in the main office.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, RR
Maximum: OSS

RULE 17. **Damage to School Property:** A student shall not willfully or maliciously damage or attempt to damage any school property. This will include buildings, equipment, lockers, signs posted in a building, and vehicles. Parent(s), guardian(s), or custodian(s) will be held financially responsible for any property damage by their child under Ohio Revised Code 3109.09 and 2307.70.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 18. **Damage to Private Property:** A student shall not damage or attempt to damage private property of another. Parent(s), guardian(s), or custodian(s) will be held financially responsible for any property damage by their child under Ohio Revised Code 3109.09 and 2307.70.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 19. **Theft or Possessing Stolen Property:** Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Administrators may exercise their prerogative of reporting thefts, attempted thefts, or possession of stolen property without making an attempt to return the same to local police.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation for expulsion.

RULE 20. **Manifest Disrespect:** A student shall not demonstrate manifest disrespect toward any other individual. Actions may include verbal or nonverbal disrespect, psychological or material abuse.
Minimum: 1-day Reset Room, Miss of Recess, Restorative Practice
Maximum: 10 day OSS

RULE 21. **Libel or Slander:** No student shall commit libel or slander. Libel is defamation expressed by print, writing, pictures, or signs while slander is defamation by speaking.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 3 day OSS.

RULE 22. **Academic Dishonesty:** A student shall not engage in academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 1 day Reset Room

RULE 23. **Felony, Misdemeanor and Violation of Ordinances:** A student shall not commit any act not listed herein as a violation of the Student Code of Conduct that constitutes a felony, misdemeanor or violation of an ordinance.
Minimum and Maximum: Administrative discretion including possible recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion.

RULE 24. **Use of Obscene Language, Gestures, and Possession of Inappropriate Materials**: A student shall not use obscene or vulgar language, gestures, signs, or possess inappropriate materials.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 1 day OSS

RULE 25. **Smoking, Tobacco and Similar Substances:** Smoking or any other method of tobacco use by a student on school property, or on a school bus is prohibited. No student shall use, possess, transmit, or sell any tobacco product on school property, during any school activity, or on a school bus. Tobacco products include but are not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, electronic, "vapor" or other substitute forms of cigarettes. The school will not discern between vaping non-tobacco fluids and tobacco fluids. All forms of vaping and possession of vaping devices and paraphernalia are prohibited.
Minimum: 1 day RR
Maximum: 3 days OSS.

RULE 26. **Forgery and Falsification**: A student shall not falsely represent or attempt to falsely represent any information given to school officials or pertinent to school activities or use the name or identity of another person.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 1 day OSS.

RULE 27. **Conduct on Buses:** A student shall not violate "Bus Misconduct and Bus Regulations."

Bus Discipline Ladder:

1st referral to Administration	Warning from Administration, Family Notification
2nd referral to Administration	1-3 day bus suspension
3rd referral to Administration	5 day bus suspension
4th referral to Administration	10 day bus suspension

More than 4 referrals: Repeat 10 day bus suspension and possible recommendation to superintendent of permanent removal from the bus.

*Interventions prior to school referral include driver to Student and driver to Parent

*All school rules are in force on the bus and Code violations may be addressed by the administration in addition to the bus discipline ladder.

RULE 28. **Public Display of Affection:** A student shall not engage in inappropriate public displays of affection.
Minimum: Administrative warning, Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action.
Maximum: 1 day Reset Room.

RULE 29. **Gambling:** A student shall not engage in any form of gambling.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action.
Maximum: 1 day Reset Room.

RULE 30. **Use of inappropriate language, blatant disobedience, blatant insubordination, disruptive behavior:** All students have a right to learn in a classroom environment that is free from disruptive behavior of other students. A student shall not refuse to comply with the reasonable requests of his/her teacher, an administrator, coach, extracurricular activity advisor, staff employees, or adult volunteers. In the case of extracurricular activities, "insubordination" shall also include the failure to comply with the rules or requirements established by the coach or advisor for that particular activity. A student shall not use profane, vulgar, or other improper language, or gestures/actions spoken, written, or sent electronically.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action, possible progressive consequences
Maximum: 5 day OSS.

RULE 31. **Harassment:** A student shall not harass, intimidate, disparage, incite, provoke, stalk or threaten any individual on school premises or otherwise disrupt the school environment. For this purpose harassment including slurs, profanity; written information; denigrating remarks or actions; obscene gestures; the wearing or display of insignia, signs, buttons, clothing, or apparel; or other verbal or physical conduct including, but not limited to, those based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, religion, handicap, age or sex, that have the purpose or the effect of (1) causing or intending to cause any other student or school employee to be reasonably placed in fear of his or her personal safety; (2) causing or intending to cause an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; (3) causing or intending to cause material disruption of the educational process; (4) unreasonably interfering with a student's curricular, co-curricular or extracurricular performance; or (5) otherwise unreasonably having an impact upon a student's educational opportunities (see Harassment).

Minimum: 1 day Reset Room.
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

RULE 32. **Hazing:** A student shall not haze (harass by exacting unnecessary or disagreeable work, ridicule, or playing abusive or humiliating tricks by way of initiation) another student, a school employee or persons that are guests of the school or persons conducting business for the school or otherwise violate other persons.
Minimum: Restorative Practice/Restorative Community Action
Maximum: 5 day OSS.

RULE 33. **Unauthorized Use of Fire/Possession of Fire Starting Device:** A student shall not be in possession of matches, lighters, etc. while on school grounds.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Restorative Community Action, Administrative warning
Maximum: Suspension

RULE 34. **Loitering, Trespassing, or Unauthorized Entry:**
Students shall not be willfully present in a school building, locker room, restricted area of the school building or any part of the school grounds at an unauthorized time or without specific permission from a staff member. Students shall not attempt to enter a locker, classroom, closed and/or restricted area without proper authorization.
Minimum: Restorative Practice, Administrative warning
Maximum: Suspension

RULE 35. **Non-school Promotion/ Selling:** Students are not permitted to advertise, solicit, recruit, or promote non-TGFS agencies or organizations without administration approval. This includes, but is not limited to, the selling of food or merchandise for fundraising purposes.
Minimum: Administrative warning
Maximum: Suspension

Rule 36. Perfume Policy: In order to provide for a healthy air environment, the school will not allow any heavily scented item to be dispersed in public areas during school hours. This may include but is not limited to perfumes, body sprays, or lotions. Students who have violated this policy may have the offending items confiscated and kept in the office until the end of the day. If the student has perfume, body spray and/or cologne and they are found to be spraying it at or on other students, the spray will be confiscated and the student will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the deans. If the student is repeatedly noted to have violated this policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the deans. This policy is in accordance with the American Lunch Association best practices for community members with sensitivities, asthma, or allergies.
Minimum: Administrative warning
Maximum: Suspension

RULE 37. **General Misconduct:** The General Misconduct shall apply to conduct not specifically set forth herein which substantially and materially disrupts or interferes with the good order, discipline, operation, academic or educational process taking place in the school or which substantially and materially is or poses a threat to persons or property (Refer to Disruptive Items).
Minimum: Administrative warning
Maximum: Suspension, administrative discretion

RULE 38. **Repeated or Flagrant Violations of the Student Code of Conduct:**
Such violations shall be dealt with in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
Minimum: 1 day Reset Room
Maximum: 10 day OSS with possible recommendation of expulsion to superintendent.

Application of Code Consequences
The conduct codes apply to all students on school premises; to all phases of school operations, including but not limited to curricular and extracurricular activities, while being transported on a school bus or authorized transportation and at any school sponsored activity; and to any other circumstance such that the conduct in question has an effect of disrupting school operations or otherwise depriving any student of educational interests or opportunities, such as, After School Detention, Alternative Learning Center, etc. Furthermore, students may be disciplined for misconduct that occurs off of property owned or controlled by the school but that is connected to activities or incidents that have

occurred on property owned or controlled by that school and for misconduct regardless of where it occurs that is directed at a school official or employee, or the property of such official or employee.

Each case referred to the administration will be handled on an individual basis. Appropriate consequences to the individual student will be based on the number and seriousness of the conduct violation, the circumstances of the violation, and the student's behavior history and may include the following:

- Parent/Family conference
- Behavior plan
- Reset room
- Work assignment
- Alternative learning environment
- Bus riding privilege suspension
- Suspension from school
- Emergency removal from school
- Expulsion from school

Reset Room Grades 6-8 (RR)

The Reset Room (RR) is a disciplinary assignment given by the administration to those students who have violated The Graham Family of Schools Code of Conduct. The RR is supervised by a certified teacher at the student's school. Students assigned to a RR are provided with work by their teachers. Students assigned to a RR shall receive both academic and attendance credit for the day in which they are assigned.

- Students will be assigned to be present in a designated classroom
- Students are to report to the RR as assigned.
- When a student is absent from the RR assignment, they will make it up on their next day at school.
- If a student is tardy to the RR, an additional day or part of a day may be added to the RR assignment.
- Students are responsible for bringing all needed textbooks and classroom materials to the RR.
- Students receive credit for assigned work and attendance. All the student's teachers will submit the student's assignments to the supervising teacher prior to being in the RR.
- Restroom breaks will be provided for students assigned to the RR.
- In addition to the rules of the RR, all school rules and policies will apply to students in the RR.
- Students who are disruptive in the RR or who do not follow the prescribed rules may be suspended out of school and must complete all remaining days of the original RR assignment upon their return to school.
- RR assignments are not appealable.

Appendix A: Suspension and Expulsion From GEMS

(A) The superintendent or the Dean (who has, pursuant to board policy has been given the authority that a principal has for purposes of suspensions) may suspend a student from school for up to but not more than ten school days. If at the time a suspension is imposed there are fewer than ten school days remaining in the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the suspension takes place, the superintendent may apply any remaining part or all of the period of the suspension to the following school year. Except in the case of a student given an in-school suspension, no student shall be suspended unless prior to the suspension the superintendent or Dean does both of the following:

(1) The Dean or superintendent shall provide the student with written notice of the intention to suspend the student and the reasons for the intended suspension and, if the proposed suspension is based on a violation listed in division (A) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code and if the student is sixteen years of age or older, the notice shall contain a statement that the superintendent may seek to permanently exclude the student if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation;

(2) The student shall have an opportunity to appear at an informal hearing before the Dean, superintendent, or superintendent's designee and challenge the reason for the intended suspension or otherwise to explain the student's actions.

(B)(1) Except as provided for below, the superintendent may expel a student from school for a period up to, but not greater than, eighty school days or the number of school days remaining in the semester or term in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place, unless the expulsion is extended as provided for in paragraph (F) below. If at the time an expulsion is imposed there are fewer than eighty school days remaining in the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place, the superintendent may apply any remaining part or all of the period of the expulsion to the following year.

(a) Unless a student is permanently excluded pursuant to section 3313.662 of the Revised Code, the superintendent shall expel a student from school for a period of one year for bringing or possessing a firearm to GEMS or onto any other property owned or controlled by the board, except that the superintendent may reduce this requirement on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy adopted by the board under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code.

(b) The superintendent may expel a student from school for a period of up to one year for bringing a firearm to an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity that is not located at GEMS or on property that is owned or controlled by GEMS. The superintendent may reduce this disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy adopted by the board under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code.

(c) The superintendent may expel a student from school for a period of up to one year for bringing a knife to a school by the board, onto any other property owned or controlled by the board, or to an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other program or activity sponsored by the school district or in which the district is a participant, or for possessing a firearm or knife at a school, on any other property owned or controlled by the board, or at an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity, which firearm or knife was initially brought onto school board property by another person. The superintendent may reduce this disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy adopted by the board under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code.

(d) The superintendent may expel a student from school for a period up to one year for committing an act that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult and that results in serious physical harm to persons as defined in division (A)(5) of section 2901.01 of the Revised Code or serious physical harm to property as defined in division (A)(6) of section 2901.01 of the Revised Code while the student is at school, on any other property owned or controlled by the board, or at an interscholastic competition, an extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity. The superintendent may reduce this disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy adopted by the board under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code.

(e) The superintendent may expel a student from school for a period up to one year for making a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat. The superintendent may reduce this disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy adopted by the board under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code.

(f) Any expulsion provided for above shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place. As used above, "firearm" has the same meaning as provided pursuant to the "Gun-Free Schools Act," 115 Stat. 1762, 7151.

(B)(2) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the superintendent may reduce the requirement set forth in paragraph B(1)(a) above and the actions in paragraphs B(1)(b), (c), (d) and (e) on a case-by-case basis by taking into consideration the following factors:

(a) The academic record of the student and a record of any extracurricular activities in which the student previously was involved;

(b) The disciplinary record of the student and any available records of the student's prior behavioral problems other than the behavioral problems contained in the disciplinary record;

(c) The social history of the student;

(d) The student's response to the imposition of prior discipline and sanctions imposed for behavioral problems;

(e) Evidence regarding the seriousness of and any aggravating factors related to the offense that is the basis of the resolution seeking permanent exclusion;

(f) Any mitigating circumstances surrounding the offense that gave rise to the request for permanent exclusion;

(g) Evidence regarding the probable danger posed to the health and safety of other students or of school employees by the continued presence of the student in a public school setting;

(h) Evidence regarding the probable disruption of the teaching of any school district's graded course of study by the continued presence of the student in a public school setting;

(i) Evidence regarding the availability of alternative sanctions of a less serious nature than permanent exclusion that would enable the student to remain in a public school setting without posing a significant danger to the health and safety of other students or of school employees and without posing a threat of the disruption of the teaching of any district's graded course of study.

(C) No student shall be expelled unless, prior to the student's expulsion, the superintendent does both of the following:

(1) Gives the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian written notice of the intention to expel the student;

(2) Provides the student and the student's parent, guardian, custodian, or representative an opportunity to appear in person before the superintendent or the superintendent's designee to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the student's actions. The notice required in this division shall include the reasons for the intended expulsion, notification of the opportunity of the student and the student's parent, guardian, custodian, or representative to appear before the superintendent or the superintendent's designee to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion or otherwise to explain the student's action, and notification of the time and place to appear. The time to appear shall not be earlier than three nor later than five school days after the notice is given, unless the superintendent grants an extension of time at the request of the student or the student's parent, guardian, custodian, or representative. If an extension is granted after giving the original notice, the superintendent shall notify the student and the student's parent, guardian, custodian, or representative of the new time and place to appear. If the proposed expulsion is based on a violation listed in division (A) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code and if the student is sixteen years of age or older, the notice shall include a statement that the superintendent may seek to permanently exclude the student if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation.

(D) The superintendent shall initiate expulsion proceedings with respect to any student who has committed an act warranting expulsion under GEMS policy regarding expulsion even if the student has withdrawn from school for any reason after the incident that gives rise to the hearing but prior to the hearing or decision to impose the expulsion. If, following the hearing, the student would have been expelled for a period of time had the student still been enrolled in

the school, the expulsion shall be imposed for the same length of time as on a student who has not withdrawn from the school.

(E) If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process taking place either within a classroom or elsewhere on the school premises, the superintendent or Dean may remove a student from curricular activities or from the school premises, and a teacher may remove a student from curricular activities under the teacher's supervision, without the notice and hearing requirements set forth above. As soon as practicable after making such a removal, the teacher shall submit in writing to the Dean the reasons for such removal. If a student is removed under this division from a curricular activity or from the school premises, written notice of the hearing and of the reason for the removal shall be given to the student as soon as practicable prior to the hearing, which shall be held within three school days from the time the initial removal is ordered. The hearing shall be held in accordance with the above unless it is probable that the student may be subject to expulsion, in which case a hearing in accordance with division (B) of this section shall be held, except that the hearing shall be held within three school days of the initial removal. The individual who ordered, caused, or requested the removal to be made shall be present at the hearing. If the superintendent or the Dean reinstates a student in a curricular activity under the teacher's supervision prior to the hearing following a removal under this division, the teacher, upon request, shall be given in writing the reasons for such reinstatement.

(F) The superintendent or principal, within one school day after the time of a student's expulsion or suspension, shall notify in writing the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student and the treasurer of the board of education of the expulsion or suspension. The notice shall include the reasons for the expulsion or suspension, notification of the right of the student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal the expulsion or suspension to the board or to its designee, to be represented in all appeal proceedings, to be granted a hearing before the board or its designee in order to be heard against the suspension or expulsion, and to request that the hearing be held in executive session, notification that the expulsion may be subject to extension pursuant to division (F) of this section if the student is sixteen years of age or older, and notification that the superintendent may seek the student's permanent exclusion if the suspension or expulsion was based on a violation listed in division (A) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code that was committed when the child was sixteen years of age of older and if the student is convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for that violation. In accordance with the policy adopted by the board of education under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code, the notice provided under this division shall specify the manner and date by which the student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian shall notify the board of the student's, parent's, guardian's, or custodian's intent to appeal the expulsion or suspension to the board or its designee. Any superintendent expelling a student under this section for more than twenty school days or for any period of time if the expulsion will extend into the following semester or school year shall, in the notice required under this division, provide the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian with information about services or programs offered by public and private agencies that work toward improving those aspects of the student's attitudes and behavior that contributed to the incident that gave rise to the student's expulsion. The information shall include the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the appropriate public and private agencies.

(G) A student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian may appeal the student's expulsion by the superintendent or suspension by the Dean to the board or its designee. If the student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian intends to appeal the expulsion or suspension to the board or its designee, the student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian shall notify the board in the manner and by the date specified in the notice provided for above. The student or the student's parent, guardian, or custodian may be represented in all appeal proceedings and shall be granted a hearing before the board or its designee in order to be heard against the suspension or expulsion. At the request of the student or of the student's parent, guardian, custodian, or attorney, the board or its designee, may affirm the order of suspension or expulsion, reinstate the student, or otherwise reverse, vacate, or modify the order of suspension or expulsion. The board or its designee shall make a verbatim record of hearings held under this division (E). The decisions of the board or its designee may be appealed under Chapter 2506 of the Revised Code. This section shall not be construed to require notice and hearing in accordance with the above in the case of normal disciplinary procedures in which a student is removed from a curricular activity for a period of less than one school day and is not subject to suspension or expulsion.

(H)(1) If a student is expelled for committing any violation listed in division (A) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code and the student was sixteen years of age or older at the time of committing the violation, if a complaint, indictment, or information is filed alleging that the student is a delinquent child based upon the commission of the violation or the student is prosecuted as an adult for the commission of the violation, and if the resultant juvenile court or criminal

proceeding is pending at the time that the expulsion terminates, the superintendent of schools that expelled the student may file a motion with the court in which the proceeding is pending requesting an order extending the expulsion for the lesser of an additional eighty days or the number of school days remaining in the school year. Upon the filing of the motion, the court immediately shall schedule a hearing and give written notice of the time, date, and location of the hearing to the superintendent and to the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian. At the hearing, the court shall determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the student committed the alleged violation that is the basis of the expulsion and, upon determining that reasonable cause to believe the student committed the violation does exist, shall grant the required extension.

(2) If a student has been convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child for a violation listed in division (A) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code for an act that was committed when the child was sixteen years of age or older, if the student has been expelled pursuant to division (B) of this section for that violation, and if the board of education of the school district of the school from which the student was expelled has adopted a resolution seeking the student's permanent exclusion, the superintendent may file a motion with the court that convicted the student or adjudicated the student a delinquent child requesting an order to extend the expulsion until an adjudication order or other determination regarding permanent exclusion is issued by the superintendent of public instruction pursuant to section 3301.121 and division (D) of section 3313.662 of the Revised Code. Upon the filing of the motion, the court immediately shall schedule a hearing and give written notice of the time, date, and location of the hearing to the superintendent of the school district, the student, and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian. At the hearing, the court shall determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe the student's continued attendance in the public school system may endanger the health and safety of other students or school employees and, upon making that determination, shall grant the requested extension.

(I) The failure of the superintendent or the board of education to provide the information regarding the possibility of permanent exclusion in the notice required above is not jurisdictional, and the failure shall not affect the validity of any suspension or expulsion procedure that is conducted in accordance with this section or the validity of a permanent exclusion procedure that is conducted in accordance with sections 3301.121 and 3313.662 of the Revised Code.

(J) With regard to suspensions and expulsions provided for above, the above shall apply to any student, whether or not the student is enrolled in the district, attending or otherwise participating in any curricular program provided in a school operated by the board or provided on any other property owned or controlled by the board.

(K) Whenever a student is expelled under this section, the expulsion shall result in removal of the student from the student's regular school setting. However, during the period of the expulsion, the board of education of the school district that expelled the student or any board of education admitting the student during that expulsion period may provide educational services to the student in an alternative setting.

(L)(1) Notwithstanding sections 3109.51 to 3109.80, 3313.64, and 3313.65 of the Revised Code, after offering an opportunity for a hearing, may temporarily deny admittance to any student if one of the following applies:

(a) The student has been suspended from the schools of another district and the period of suspension has not expired;

(b) The student has been expelled from the schools of another district and the period of the expulsion has not expired. If a student is temporarily denied admission, the student shall be admitted to school in accordance with sections 3109.51 to 3109.80, 3313.64, or 3313.65 of the Revised Code no later than upon expiration of the suspension or expulsion period, as applicable.

(2) Notwithstanding sections 3109.51 to 3109.80, 3313.64, and 3313.65 of the Revised Code, after offering an opportunity for a hearing, may temporarily deny admittance to any student if the student has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired. If a student is temporarily denied admission, the student shall be admitted to school in accordance with sections 3109.51 to 3109.80, 3313.64, or 3313.65 of the Revised Code no later than the earlier of the following:

(a) Upon expiration of the expulsion or removal period imposed by the out-of-state school;

(b) Upon expiration of a period established by the district, beginning with the date of expulsion or removal from the out-of-state school, that is no greater than the period of expulsion that the student would have received under the policy

adopted by the district under section 3313.661 of the Revised Code had the offense that gave rise to the expulsion or removal by the out-of-state school been committed while the student was enrolled in the district.

Permanent Exclusion Pursuant to Section 3313.662 of the Revised Code

(A) The superintendent of public instruction, pursuant to section 3313.662 and the adjudication procedures of section 3301.121 of the Revised Code, may issue an adjudication order that permanently excludes a student from attending any of the public schools of this state if the student is convicted of, or adjudicated a delinquent child for, committing, when the student was sixteen years of age or older, an act that would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult and if the act is any of the following:

(1) A violation of section 2923.122 of the Revised Code;

(2) A violation of section 2923.12 of the Revised Code, of a substantially similar municipal ordinance, or of section 2925.03 of the Revised Code that was committed on property owned or controlled by, or at an activity held under the auspices of the board;

(3) A violation of section 2925.11 of the Revised Code, other than a violation of that section that would be a minor drug possession offense, that was committed on property owned or controlled by, or at an activity held under the auspices of the board;

(4) A violation of section 2903.01, 2903.02, 2903.03, 2903.04, 2903.11, 2903.12, 2907.02, or 2907.05 or of former section 2907.12 of the Revised Code that was committed on property owned or controlled by, or at an activity held under the auspices of the board, if the victim at the time of the commission of the act was an employee of the board;

(5) Complicity in any violation described in division (A)(1), (2), (3), or (4) of this section that was alleged to have been committed in the manner described in division (A)(1), (2), (3), or (4) of this section, regardless of whether the act of complicity was committed on property owned or controlled by, or at an activity held under the auspices of the board.

(B) A student may be suspended or expelled in accordance with section 3313.66 of the Revised Code prior to being permanently excluded from public school attendance under this section and section 3301.121 of the Revised Code.

(C)(1) If the superintendent obtains or receives proof that the student has been convicted of committing when the student was sixteen years of age or older a violation listed above or adjudicated a delinquent child for the commission when the student was sixteen years of age or older of a violation listed above, the superintendent may issue to the board a request that the student be permanently excluded from public school attendance, if both of the following apply:

(a) After obtaining or receiving proof of the conviction or adjudication, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee determines that the student's continued attendance in school may endanger the health and safety of other students or school employees and gives the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian written notice that the superintendent intends to recommend to the board that the board adopt a resolution requesting the superintendent of public instruction to permanently exclude the student from public school attendance.

(b) The superintendent or the superintendent's designee forwards to the board the superintendent's written recommendation that includes the determinations the superintendent or designee made and a copy of the proof the superintendent received showing that the student has been convicted of or adjudicated a delinquent child from a violation listed above that was committed when the student was sixteen years of age or older.

(2) Within fourteen days after receipt of a recommendation from the superintendent a student be permanently excluded from public school attendance, the board, after review and consideration of all of the following available information, may adopt a resolution requesting the superintendent of public instruction to permanently exclude the student who is the subject of the recommendation from public school attendance:

(a) The academic record of the student and a record of any extracurricular activities in which the student previously was involved;

(b) The disciplinary record of the student and any available records of the student's prior behavioral problems other than the behavioral problems contained in the disciplinary record;

(c) The social history of the student;

(d) The student's response to the imposition of prior discipline and sanctions imposed for behavioral problems;

(e) Evidence regarding the seriousness of and any aggravating factors related to the offense that is the basis of the resolution seeking permanent exclusion;

(f) Any mitigating circumstances surrounding the offense that gave rise to the request for permanent exclusion;

(g) Evidence regarding the probable danger posed to the health and safety of other students or of school employees by the continued presence of the student in a public school setting;

(h) Evidence regarding the probable disruption of the teaching of any school district's graded course of study by the continued presence of the student in a public school setting;

(i) Evidence regarding the availability of alternative sanctions of a less serious nature than permanent exclusion that would enable the student to remain in a public school setting without posing a significant danger to the health and safety of other students or of school employees and without posing a threat of the disruption of the teaching of any district's graded course of study.

Community Service
Notwithstanding the foregoing, and except for an expulsion imposed pursuant to paragraph (B)(1)(a) above, the superintendent may require a student to perform community service in conjunction with a suspension or expulsion, except for an expulsion and may impose a community service requirement beyond the end of the school year in lieu of applying the suspension or expulsion into the following year.

Appendix B: Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-bullying Policy

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE POLICY

The Graham Elementary & Middle School is committed to providing students with a safe, secure and supportive classroom and school environment, conducive to academic learning, experiential learning, and the development of healthy human relationships. It is the policy of the School to maintain a safe and supportive learning and working environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including bullying, and physical or emotional harm. This policy specifically includes discrimination, harassment, or bullying. No school personnel of the school shall be subjected to discrimination or harassment. This policy applies to conduct during or relating to school or school-sponsored activities, on or off school property, on any Columbus City School bus or any bus utilized on behalf of the school's academic or experiential program and to conduct that occurs away from school that has the effect of interfering with a safe and secure school environment conducive to academic learning, experiential learning, and/or the development of healthy human relationships. This policy does not preclude the application of any provisions of State law that apply to student and teacher behavior; nor does this policy apply to speech that is otherwise protected under the state or federal constitution.

1. Within his/her area of supervision, each administrator is responsible for promoting understanding, acceptance, and assuring compliance with State and Federal laws, Board policy, and procedures governing discrimination, harassment and/or bullying.
2. The School acts to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or non-verbal, of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying; and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or those whose actions have the effect of interfering with a safe and secure school environment.
3. Under the School policy, any student or staff member may bring a complaint against any member of the school community, a customer, vendor or contractor believed to have violated the policy.
4. The School will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against (or attempts to retaliate against) any person who reports alleged discrimination, harassment, bullying, or violence; files a complaint of harassment, testifies, assists or participates in any investigation, hearing or proceeding related to such discrimination, harassment, bullying or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of threat, intimidation, reprisal or discrimination.

Notice and Training

Notice of this policy will be circulated to all departments of the School and incorporated in staff and student handbooks and be available in the school office. All school staff, including any others who, at the school request have responsibility for students, will be provided yearly training to recognize and respond
to discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying incidents.

Procedures

Any person who alleges discrimination, harassment and/or bullying by a staff member or student in the School may use the procedure detailed in the School's Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying Complaint Procedure. Filing a complaint or otherwise reporting discrimination, harassment and/or bullying will not reflect upon the individual's status, nor will it affect future employment, grades or work
assignments. The right of confidentiality, for both the accuser and the accused, will be respected consistent with the School's legal obligations; with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct; and with the necessity to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

Consequences

A substantiated charge against a student in the School shall subject that student to disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, which may include suspension or expulsion. A substantiated charge against a staff member in the School shall subject that staff member to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. A first time offense of discrimination or harassment may be a
dischargeable offense. Allegations of criminal misconduct will be reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse will be reported to Child Protection Services. Any supervisor or employee who violates this policy by allowing the conduct to go unaddressed will be disciplined. Such discipline may include reprimands, suspensions and/or removal.

DEFINITIONS:

Nondiscrimination

The School, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap or age in any of its policies, procedures or practices; nor does the School discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, religion or limited English skills. This nondiscrimination policy covers student access to courses and programs, student policies and their application, and participation in and benefits of any activity in the School. The School will take any measures necessary to effectuate the requirements of these acts.

Anti-Harassment
It is a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or those in a school building or attending a school function to harass a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through conduct or communication verbally or in writing by any medium**.** Harassment can be of a sexual nature, or regarding race, color, national origin, limited English skills, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, or having the effect of intentionally to hurt, frighten, threaten, or intimidate. A single incident may be sufficient for disciplinary action.

Harassment:
1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic or work environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic or employment opportunities.

Racial or Color Harassment:
Racial or color harassment can include unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on manner of speaking and negative references to racial customs.

National Origin and Limited English Skills Harassment:
Harassment on the basis of national origin is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin and/or limited English skills, such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language or ethnic slurs.

Sexual Harassment:
Any unwelcome sexual attention or behavior. Sexual harassment is determined by the effect on the receiver, not the intent of the harasser. Sexual harassment occurs when:
1. an individual is subject to unwelcome sexual behavior or advances and submission is made a term or condition of a person's employment or advancement or of a student's participation or advancement in school programs or activities;
2. decisions affecting employees or students are based on submission to or rejection of such sexual behavior or,
3. a hostile, intimidating, uncomfortable, offensive or nonproductive work or learning environment is created by any type of unwelcome sexual behavior.
4. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to the following:
    a. verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature
    b. pressure for sexual activity
    c. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
    d. unwelcome touching
    e. sexual jokes
    f. sexual materials, posters, etc.
    g. sexually suggestive gestures or looks
    h. name-calling of a sexual nature
    i. sexual rumors
    j. sexual assault
5. Sexual harassment may occur
    a. student to student
    b. staff to student
    c. student to staff
    d. staff to staff
    e. male to male

f. female to female
g. male to female
h. female to male

Disability Harassment:
Disabled person means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Disability harassment includes harassment based on a person's disabling mental or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as imitating manner of speech or movement or interference with necessary equipment.

Age Harassment:
Harassment on the basis of age is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's age, such as name calling.

Sexual Orientation Harassment:
Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's sexual orientation, such as negative name calling and imitating mannerisms.

Religious Harassment:
Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion.

Bullying:
Bullying may occur when a student or group of students intentionally keeps hurting, frightening, threatening or excluding another student, or participates in organizing others to do so. Bullying may be verbal, written by any medium, relational, or be a physical behavior over some duration. Bullying impacts in the following ways:

1. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic or school environment;
2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or school performance;
3. has the effect of damaging an individual's emotional or social wellbeing; or
4. otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic or schooling opportunities.

Bullying incidents may include but are not limited to the following:

1. physical violence or assaults (hitting, kicking, pushing)
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions
4. sexual (unwanted physical contact, attention, comments, images)
5. homophobic (focusing on sexuality or sexual preference)
6. name-calling and/or put-downs
7. spreading rumors or gossip, or purposefully reporting false information
8. using electronic devices to circulate gossip and rumors, sending abusive, harassing or threatening email, instant messages or other cyber-bullying.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying also includes violence within a dating relationship.

Complaint Procedure
Complaints filed pursuant to this policy shall receive prompt and equitable resolution. Documentation of follow-through and resolution in all circumstances will be maintained.

Complaints alleging a student as offender

1. A student's parent/guardian may file a complaint on the student's behalf. A complaint, filed in good faith, alleging a violation of the School's Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy against a student may be brought to the following officials:
    a. any staff member that the student, or parent of the student chooses,
    b. school Dean, or
    c. Superintendent

2. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment or bullying. A staff member either receiving a complaint, observing a violation, or substantiating a complaint of violation of the Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy must intervene, and must document the complaint on the appropriate incident report. The report is forwarded within one school day to the building administrator who will investigate in a timely manner as required by law. Victims have the right to representation at their own expense.
3. Communication with parents, subject to state and federal student records laws, of both the victim and perpetrator will occur. Continued reports on a particular student may involve parents in the development of further interventions or actions. A substantiated charge against a student in the School shall subject that student to disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, which may include suspension or expulsion. Participation in interventions does not supersede the possibility of disciplinary action.
4. Any employee who violates this policy by allowing the conduct to go unaddressed will be disciplined. Such discipline may include reprimands, suspensions and/or removal.
5. Semiannually a written summary of verified incidents will be provided to the Board of Education, and will be posted on the School web page.

Complaint alleging school personnel as offender

1. A complaint filed in good faith alleging discrimination or harassment perpetrated by school personnel may be brought to any of the following officials:
    a. A building dean or supervisor;
    b. Superintendent or Executive CEO of Academics and Administration
2. The official to whom the complaint is originally brought will make the dean or supervisor, and the Superintendent and Executive CEO of Academics and Administration aware of the allegations.
3. Available Options - A person bringing a complaint is appraised of all options under policy by the official taking the complaint. These options are described below:
    a. Informal resolution of the complaint
        i. with the assistance of the building dean or supervisor,
        ii. with the assistance of the Superintendent or Executive CEO of Academics and Administration.
    b. Formal resolution of the complaint
        i. filed with the building dean or supervisor,
        ii. filed with the Superintendent or Executive CEO of Academics and Administration.
4. Procedures for Intake of Complaints - The official to whom the complaint is initially brought discusses with the complainant the following relevant considerations:
    a. The complainant should be informed that:
        i. A decision to proceed informally does not preclude the filing of a formal complaint at some later time.
        ii. The filing of an informal complaint is not a prerequisite to a formal complaint.
        iii. Action on the complaint is necessary. Such action normally will not be taken without informing the complainant in advance of such action.
    b. The behavior that prompted the complaint.
    c. The complaint process, including the available options.
    d. The issues involved in the complaint.
    e. The necessity of an investigation.
    f. Possible resolutions of the complaint.
    g. Protection of the complainant's interests (e.g., confidentiality consistent with the School's legal obligations, truthfulness by both parties; communication of steps taken during the process; protection of complainant and witnesses against retaliatory action).
    h. Protection of the interests of the alleged offender (e.g. confidentiality consistent with the School's legal obligations; truthfulness by both parties; communication of any formal complaint or informal complaint; opportunity to respond to the complainant's allegations).
    i. The complainant and the alleged offender are given a copy of the Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy and these Complaint Procedures. Once all of the above information has been discussed, the complainant determines which option to use to resolve the complaint.
5. Matters to be investigated include:

a. Whether the specific conduct alleged constitutes a form of discrimination or harassment as defined in the Policy, including the type(s) of alleged conduct; frequency of alleged occurrence; date(s) or time period over which the alleged conduct occurred; location of alleged occurrence(s); whether similar complaints have been made by others; and all factual circumstances upon which the complaint is based.
b. The specific relationship of the alleged offender to the complainant.
c. The effect of the alleged offender's conduct on the complainant, including any consequences that may be attributed to the conduct.
d. Whether the alleged offender was aware of the complainant's concern regarding the behavior.
e. Whether a building dean, supervisor, Superintendent or Executive CEO of Academics and Administration was aware of the complainant's concern, and if so, how he/she became aware of the concern.
f. Whether any prior steps were taken to resolve the complaint.

6. Possible outcomes of investigation:
    a. a finding that there is sufficient evidence supporting the alleged violation and corrective action, which could include discipline, will occur;
    b. a finding that there is insufficient evidence supporting the alleged violation; or
    c. a negotiated settlement of the complaint. A negotiated settlement of the complaint may be entered at any time during this process. A negotiated settlement must be approved by both parties and by the Superintendent.
    d. Time period for investigation complaints: Investigations of formal complaints should be concluded within 30 calendar days after they are made. When it is not reasonably possible to conclude the investigation within that amount of time, the Superintendent will notify the complainant and the alleged offender in writing of the delay and reasons for the delay.
    e. Notice to parties. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Superintendent promptly informs both the complainant and the alleged offender of the outcome and the factual findings.
    f. Written report of findings. Upon conclusion of the investigation of a formal complaint, the Superintendent prepares a written summary of the findings. If the investigation results in a finding of any discrimination or harassment as defined in the Anti- Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Anti-Bullying Policy, recommendations are made to take prompt and effective action, consistent with the severity of the offense. This report is provided to the appropriate administrative official for implementation.
    g. A finding may be appealed to the Superintendent, then to the Board. Such appeal will be based on the record and any new information which could not have been previously provided with reasonable diligence.
    h. Sanctions. A substantiated charge against a staff member shall subject that staff member to disciplinary action which may include reprimands, suspensions with or without pay and/or termination.

Presence of Support Persons
The complainant and/or alleged offender may be accompanied at any interview by a friend, family member, legal representation and/or other individuals of the complainant's or alleged offender's choice.

Confidentiality
To the extent possible, the Superintendent treats as confidential all information received in connection with the filing, investigation, and resolution of complaints except to the extent it is necessary to disclose particulars in the course of the investigation. Parties to a complaint should observe the same standard of discretion and respect for the reputation of all parties involved in the process.

Record Keeping
Any person conducting a formal investigation shall maintain a written record of all witness interviews, consent provided, evidence gathered and the outcomes of the investigation. A common form for record keeping will be developed and used across all schools under the TGFS name. Records of investigation will not be maintained in personnel files or student files unless part of formal corrective action. Investigatory records are maintained by the Superintendent in accordance with record retention schedules. Copies of the final report are given to the complainant and the alleged offender.

LEGAL REFS: Civil Rights Act, Title VI; 42 USC 2000d et seq., Civil Rights Act, (Amended 1972), Title VII; 42 USC 2000e et seq., Education Amendments of 1972, Title IX; 20 USC 1681, Executive Order 11246, as amended by, Executive Order 11375, Equal Pay Act; 29 USC 206, Rehabilitation Act; 29 USC 794, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; 20 USC 1401 et seq., Age Discrimination in Employment Act; 29 USC 623, Immigration Reform and Control Act; 42 USC 1324a et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act; 42 USC 12112 et seq., Ohio Const. Art. I, Section 2, ORC 3323.01, ORC 3313.666; 3301.22; 3319.321, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1 974, 88 Stat.571.20, U.S.C. 1232g, as amended, Chapter 4112, OAC 3301-35-02(A) (1); 3301-35-03(A)

CROSS REFS: ACA, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender, ACAA, Sexual Harassment, ACB, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability, GBA, Equal Opportunity Employment, GBO, Verification of Employment Eligibility, IGAB, Human Relations Education, IGBA, Programs for Students with Disabilities, IGBAA, 504 Procedural Safeguards, IGBl, English as a Second Language (Limited English Proficiency), IGBJ, Title I Programs, JB, Equal Educational Opportunities, JFC, Student Conduct (Zero Tolerance), JFCF, Anti-Hazing, Staff Handbooks, Student Handbooks

Appendix C: Technology and Information Protection Measures

Per the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act of 2008, Congress has required all schools to:

- Include a technology protection measure, with specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access
- Allows for the monitoring of online activity by minor
- Protects against access by adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors, except in the case of adults engaged in legitimate research
- The Graham Family of Schools has implemented and will here describe the following measures:
- Individually assigned, password-protected network accounts for typing online activity and technology use (and abuse) to specific individuals
- (Microsoft Active Directory and Apple Open Directory LDAP services)
- Password-protected individual network storage locations for personal information, as well as shared network storage resources restricted by group-specific permissions and policies for the storage of sensitive student information
- (Microsoft Active Directory and Apple Open Directory group policy management)
- Software installed on all end-user terminals utilizing the VNC protocol to allow for the remote monitoring and control of machines on the individual level
- TightVNC, iTalc, Apple Remote Desktop Client- Anti-virus software deployed to every end-user terminal for the detection and isolation of malicious software o Thirty-Seven Four Anti-virus
- Web-filtering technology for allowing or denying web traffic based on individual or group permissions (students vs. staff), and targeting categories of traffic (pornography, gambling, obscene/explicit language), specific addresses and domains, as well as application-specific traffic (Pandora, YouTube, Limewire), for the control of which web applications can and cannot be accessed and are or are not allowed to tie up network bandwidth, as well as allowing for enforcement of separate policies between authenticated and guest users, with traffic logging tied to specific user accounts
- Barracuda Networks Web Filter- Next generation firewall technology for each school site, monitoring and allowing for the restriction of harmful or malicious traffic passing between the internal networks (LANs) and the public Internet (WAN), as well as access logging to the machine and user-level, with active intrusion detection capabilities
- Barracuda Networks NG Firewall
- Beginning with the elementary school, enterprise-class managed wireless networks, separating hidden wireless signals with full LAN access from open wireless signals with access restricted to external Internet traffic for student and guest devices, as well as machine-specific traffic logging
- AeroHive Networks HiveManager and Hive Apps

Additionally, the IT Department of the Graham Family of Schools has enacted the following data protection policies for the security of student and organizational data:

Password guidelines:

- Passwords should be different for each service/system
- Passwords for users' school accounts should be kept distinct from personal accounts to isolate the staff in the event that a password is compromised

Personal data guidelines:

- Student data, i.e. personal and/or identifying sensitive data of students, should never leave school servers or service provider systems unless specifically requested by the student or the student's legal guardians, or in the course of legitimate educational transfer procedures (transfers, college transcript requests
- In the event that student data is stored on school laptops or personal storage devices, data should be encrypted or password protected in such a way as to prevent exposure in the event of the device's theft

Distribution of passwords:

- Staff and student account password will not be e-mailed under any circumstances

TGFS Information and Communication Technologies Acceptable Use Policy and Guidelines

To help ensure our students become proficient in the information and communication technologies (ICT) competencies essential for success in a 21st century learning environment and beyond, The Graham Family of Schools provides a

variety of resources in support of our instructional and administrative programs. Students and staff may also, at times, use personal information and communication technologies for educational purposes. It is therefore incumbent upon all members of the school community to use technology responsibly, ethically, and with respect for the work of others.

Access to schools' ICT resources is a privilege and not a right. To ensure these resources remain available and in working order, the Graham Family of Schools has established this **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** which defines the procedures and parameters under which these resources may be used by staff, students, and volunteers. To accommodate future needs and circumstances, the policy and guidelines related to ICT resources will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

So that all users remain informed of our expectations for appropriate usage of ICT resources, TGFS will: 1) ensure all new students and staff receive access credentials to age-appropriate ICT resources during the enrollment or hiring process, as well as on-going training in their safe, responsible, and effective use; and 2) provide orientation annually for students and staff on ICT resources and the district AUP.

In order to initiate and maintain access to ICT resources, all users must submit annually a signed ***Acceptable Use Agreement*** (detailed below), non-adherence of which may result in loss of non- course related access and/or appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action. Violations of the AUP are deemed violations of school behavioral expectations and codes.

Internet Use and ICT Access

Internet access is available at The Graham Family of Schools for the purposes of educational communication and research and for administrative purposes. The following represent acceptable uses of technology at The Graham Family of Schools:

- Classroom assignments and projects, homework assignments
- Independent learning projects and school activities such as yearbook or newspaper
- Research and curriculum development
- School or district administration Communications via ICT resources are often public in nature and general school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will at all times comply with district standards and will act in a responsible and legal manner, in accordance with said standards, as well as with state and federal laws. Professional development opportunities to enhance the technology skills of district personnel will be provided and rules related to the Internet will be included in each school's student and faculty handbooks. The Graham Family of Schools promotes a learning environment that protects the rights to respect, dignity, safety, and a sense of wellbeing for all members of the community. The expectation of compliance with these principles by community members includes digital communications, such as email, chat sessions, publication of websites and other electronic documents as follows:
    - Use appropriate language in expressing thoughts and perspectives, and refrain from use of language that is obscene, hurtful, threatening, or offensive
    - No posting of information that could disrupt community activities or well being
    - No harassment of others with annoying or hurtful expressions, particularly those discriminating based on characteristics including but not limited to race, sex, religion, or sexual orientation
    - No sending of chain letters or SPAM messages as these are unsolicited, disruptive, and frequently if inadvertently contain viruses or other malware.
    - The Administration will take measures to assure the safety and security of students when using email, chat services, and other forms of direct electronic communications; prohibit unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online; prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information of students; and to restrict students' access to online materials deemed harmful to minors.
    - Users are prohibited from attaching personal devices to TGFS hardware (excluding portable memory media such as USB drives) or installing software on any district hardware without prior permission of the IT Department. Users will refrain from downloading large files (constituting files over 4 MB in size) without authorization from a teacher or administrator, and will request the assistance of the helpdesk when authorized.

Monitoring and Privacy

To provide ready access for all users, age-appropriate material, an Internet environment that is safe and appropriate for the maturity level and need of student users, and to proactively secure and maintain increasingly complex ICT systems the district, **as the owner of those resources, reserves the right to monitor and review the use of these ICT resources** and will do so as needed to ensure the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes and to maximize utilization of the systems for such. Therefore, all users and families must be aware that *users are waiving and should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these ICT resources for their communications or transmission and storage of data. Personal information, however, is not publicly accessible outside of the school network*. Password and encryption systems implemented by the district are designed solely to provide system security from unauthorized users, not to provide privacy to the individual user. This provision applies to all users of the district's ICT resources, including any incidental personal use permitted in accordance with these regulations. Consequently, all files residing on a Graham Family of Schools network, including personal files, are the property of the district's governing Board and are subject to random search at any time without the need for reasonable suspicion or evidence of a violation of criminal statutes or school rules.

Limitation of Liability
The Graham Family of Schools makes no guarantee that the function of, or services provided through, its network of ICT resources will be error-free or without defect. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the system from sources outside the schools. Neither the district, its operators, nor its administrators are responsible for financial obligations or damages arising through the use, authorized or unauthorized, of its ICT network.

Publishing Guidelines
The premise that all individuals are authors and distributors of content is an underlying basis of 21st century learning. District and school use of ICT resources to distribute intellectual property, images, videos, and information shall be related to school curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, and other information relating to school and district goals. It is our intent that such broadcasts and publications be educationally relevant to the goals of the school district while providing for the safety and security of all students and staff.

- All distributed content shall follow the standards for ethical behavior in regard to information and communication technologies by showing respect for the principles of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights, and the responsible use of the information and communication technologies.
- While certain educational circumstances may allow for the use of copyrighted materials through Fair Use policies, no copyrighted material shall be *distributed* without the express written permission of the copyright owner. In particular, the un-purchased download and sharing of copyrighted music and video files are considered infringement of copyright. Any and all use of copyrighted materials must be properly credited, and plagiarism, as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook, is prohibited.
- It is understood that all distributed content may be accessible beyond The Graham Family of Schools community and viewed by a global audience. No content shall reveal students identifying information. Content may include names of individuals; however further identifying information, such as names of family members, email addresses, home addresses and phone numbers will remain private.
- Content shall not contain objectionable material or point to objectionable material. The determination of what constitutes objectionable material shall be made on a case- by-case basis, as determined by school administrators. The distribution of content shall follow Copyright Law and Fair Use Guidelines.
- All content representing the school district shall follow district policies and state/federal laws pertaining to content standards, students records, copyright, and technical standards.

Anyone who is aware of problems with, or misuse of ICT resources, or has a question regarding the proper use of resources, should see a teacher or administrator immediately. Most importantly, the Board and the Administration urge any person who receives any harassing, threatening, intimidating, or other improper message through ICT resources to report it immediately.

For more information about the use of technology in The Graham Family of Schools, contact the Director of Information Technology at 614-262-1111.

Appendix D: Academic Acceleration, Compulsory and Early Kindergarten Admissions, and Early High School Graduation.

Compulsory Kindergarten and First Grade Admissions:
In order to attend kindergarten or first grade, a child must be 5 or 6 years old respectively by the first day of school of the year of admission, unless the child has been recommended for admittance in accordance with the School's acceleration policy.
Academic Acceleration:
The School believes that students often require access to advanced curriculum in order to realize their potential.

This policy describes the process that shall be used for evaluating students for possible accelerated placement and identifying students who should be granted early admission to kindergarten, accelerated in one or more individual subject areas, promoted to a higher grade level than their same-age peers, and granted early graduation from high school.

1. Referrals and Evaluation
    a. Any student may be referred by a teacher, administrator, gifted education specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist, or a parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his or her school for an evaluation for possible accelerated placement. A student may refer himself or herself or a peer through a School member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities.
    b. Copies of this policy and referral forms for evaluation for possible early entrance, whole-grade acceleration, individual subject acceleration, and early high school graduation are available in the School's office. The Principal (or his or her designee) shall accept referrals of students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement annually, and ensure that all staff he or she supervises is aware of procedures for referring students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement.
    c. The Principal (or his or her designee) of the referred student's school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement and once consent is received, evaluate the student.
    d. Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement sixty or more days prior to the start of the school year shall be evaluated in advance of the start of the school year so that the child may be placed in the accelerated placement on the first day of school. Children who are referred for possible accelerated placement sixty or more days prior to the start of the second semester shall be evaluated for possible accelerated placement at the start of the second semester. In all other cases, evaluations of a referred child shall be scheduled at the Principal's discretion and placed in the accelerated setting(s) at the time recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee or if approved by the committee.
2. Early Admittance: Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance into kindergarten year by the first day of school which admissions is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by the child's parent(s), an educator employed by the School, a preschool educator who knows the child or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.
    a. A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal. The notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.
    b. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the governing authority within thirty (30) days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Chief Executive Officer of the educational service provider or his/her designee, shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal. That decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.
3. Acceleration or Early Admissions Evaluation Committee
    a. Composition
        i. The Principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student committee comprised of the following:
            1. The Principal or Assistant Principal;
            2. A current teacher of the referred student (with the exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);

3. A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated (with the exception of students referred for possible early graduation from high school);
4. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by the parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
5. A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist. If a gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist is not available in the School, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.

ii. The acceleration evaluation committee shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Conduct fair and thorough evaluation of the student.
    a. Students considered for whole-grade acceleration and early admissions shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Dept. of Education.
    b. Students considered for individual subject acceleration shall be evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement based on state academic content standards (in subjects for which the state had approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement.
    c. Students referred for possible early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, and successful completion of state mandated graduation requirements.

In all of the above, (a-c), the committee shall consider the student's own thoughts or possible acceleration.

2. Issue a written decision to the Principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student will be determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.
3. Develop a written acceleration plan for students who will be admitted early to kindergarten, whole-grade accelerated, or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written plan shall specify:
    a. Placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
    b. Strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
    c. Requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and,
    d. An appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual content areas. At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement, and the Principal shall remove the student without any repercussions. At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. and the Principal shall direct the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the request. If the student will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

4. For students the accelerated evaluation committee recommends for early high school graduation, the committee shall develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. This may include the provision of educational options, waiving School prerequisite requirements for enrolling in advanced courses, waiving School graduation requirements that exceed those required by the state, and early promotion to sophomore (or higher) status to allow the student to take the Ohio Graduation Test.
5. The acceleration evaluation committee shall designate a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting.

The board of education of each city, exempted village, and local school district shall by resolution adopt a procedure for notifying the parent, guardian, or custodian of each student enrolled in a high school operated by the district or enrolled in a school operated by the joint vocational school district to which the city, exempted village, or local district belongs of the requirements prescribed in division (C) of section 3313.603 of the Revised Code and that one consequence of not completing that curriculum is ineligibility to enroll in most state universities in Ohio without further coursework.

Appendix E:Title IX Compliance and Grievance Procedure

Title IX Compliance and Grievance Procedure

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 provides:

> No persons in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving financial assistance.

Title IX Compliance

The School shall comply with this law and accompanying regulations at all times and does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity) in its education programs, activities, or employment. To ensure compliance and resolve any complaints, the Governing Authority has designated the following individual as the School's Title IX Coordinator:

GEMS School Counselor, Kevin Beery (Grades K-5) - kbeery.1@gemsschool.org
GEMS School School Counselor Kaylee Hensley(Grades 6-8) - khensley.001@gemsschool.org
140 E. 16th Ave. Columbus, OH 43201
614-253-4000

Inquiries relating to Title IX may be referred to the School's Title IX coordinator of the federal Office for Civil Rights, or both.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator above, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.

The Title IX Coordinator shall have full authority to coordinate compliance with the law, including responding to inquiries, investigating any alleged violations, and implementing the School's Grievance Procedure.

Definitions

"Sexual harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the School conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the School on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the School's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault," "dating violence," "domestic violence," or "stalking" as each term is defined in federal law:
    a. "Sexual assault" means any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Sexual assault includes rape, fondling, incest, and statutory rape.
        i. *Rape* is penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.
        ii. *Fondling* is the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.
        iii. *Incest* is sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
        iv. *Statutory Rape* is sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.
    b. "Domestic violence" includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by:

- A current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;
- A person with whom the victim shares a child in common;
- A person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
- A person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred; or
- Any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred.

c. "Dating violence" means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

d. "Stalking" means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (1) fear for the person's safety or the safety of others or (2) suffer substantial emotional distress.

"Unwelcome conduct" may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal (e.g., slurs, jokes, name-calling) or physical harassment of a sexual nature. It can also include offensive remarks about a person's sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity).

"Complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

"Respondent" means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

"Formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the School investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint with the School, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the School's education program or activity. "Document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by electronic mail or through an online portal that the School provides for this purpose) that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or otherwise a party to the formal complaint and must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

"Supportive measures" means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the School's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures. Supportive measures may include:

(1) counseling;
(2) extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments;
(3) modifications of work or class schedules;
(4) campus escort services;
(5) mutual restrictions on contact between the parties;
(6) changes in work locations;
(7) leaves of absence;

(8) increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus; and
(9) other similar measures.

"Education Program or Activity" includes locations, events, and circumstances over which the Governing Authority exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs. It includes admission/enrollment.

"Eligible Student" means a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

"Day(s)," unless expressly stated otherwise, means business day(s) (i.e., a day that the Governing Authority's office is open, and employees are working).

"Actual Knowledge" means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator, any School official who has authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the School, or any employee of the Governing Authority. The mere ability or obligation to report sexual harassment or to inform a student about how to report sexual harassment, or having been trained to do so, does not qualify an individual as one who has authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the School. "Notice" includes, but is not limited to, a report of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. This standard is not met when the only School official with actual knowledge is the respondent.

Emergency Removal
Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, the School may remove a respondent from an education program or activity on an emergency basis, if, following the completion of an individualized safety and risk analysis, the School determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

The School's right to impose an emergency removal under these circumstances may not modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Training
The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process shall receive training on:

1. the definition of sexual harassment under federal Title IX regulations;

2. the scope of the School's education program or activity;

3. how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable; and

4. how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

Decision makers at any stage of the grievance process must receive training on any technology to be used at a live hearing (if conducted) and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.

Anyone conducting investigations under Title IX must also receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

Any materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment.

Training materials will be posted on the School's website and maintained by the School for seven years after they were presented.

Records

For a period of seven years, the School shall retain the following records: (1) each sexual harassment investigation, including any determination regarding responsibility and any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript required (if a hearing is conducted), any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and any remedies provided to the complainant; (2) any appeal and the result; (c) any informal resolution and the result; and (4) all materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process.

The School shall both create and maintain for a period of seven years, records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment. In each instance, the School must document the basis for its conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent to the report or formal complaint, and document that it has taken measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity. If the School does not provide a complainant with supportive measures, the School will document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Confidentiality

Any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent will be kept confidential, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the School to provide supportive measures.

The School will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by FERPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or related regulations, 34 CFR part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising from the hearing. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedures in Title IX Grievance Procedure.

Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual for exercising Title IX rights will not be tolerated. The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under policy does not constitute retaliation, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

Title IX Grievance Procedure

The School is committed to complying with Title IX. The School's response to allegations of sexual harassment will treat complainants and respondents equitably, including providing supportive measures to the complainant and respondent, as appropriate, and following this Grievance Process before imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against the respondent. The Title IX Coordinator, along with any investigator, decision maker, or any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution, shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

The following procedures have been developed to handle complaints dealing with Title IX programs, services, and staff members.

Step 1: Reporting Sexual Discrimination/Harassment
Any person who has a complaint of alleged sex discrimination shall attempt promptly to resolve the complaint by discussion with the Title IX Coordinator, either in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the Title IX Coordinator's contact information listed above, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.
Governing Authority employees are required, and Governing Authority members, students, parents, community members, and third parties are encouraged, to report allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment promptly to the/a Title IX Coordinator or to any School employee, who in turn will promptly notify the/a Title IX Coordinator.

Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours), by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address listed, for the Title IX Coordinator.

The Complainant shall describe the alleged discrimination in as much detail as possible. The Title IX Coordinator shall investigate the alleged discrimination and discuss the results of the investigation with the student or employee.

A student may file criminal charges simultaneously with filing a Title IX complaint. A student does not need to wait until the Title IX investigation is completed before filing a criminal complaint. Likewise, questions or complaints relating to Title IX may be filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights at any time.

Because the School is considered to have actual knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment if any School employee has such knowledge, and because the School must take specific actions when it has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment, a School employee who has independent knowledge of or receives a report involving allegations of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment must notify the/a Title IX Coordinator within two (2) days of receiving the report. The School employee must also comply with his/her mandatory reporting responsibilities pursuant to R.C. 2151.412, if applicable. If the School employee's knowledge is based on another individual bringing the information to the School employee's attention and the reporting individual submitted a written complaint to the School employee, the employee must provide the written complaint to the Title IX Coordinator.

When a report of sexual harassment is made, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly (i.e., within two (2) days of the Title IX Coordinator's receipt of the report of sexual harassment) contact the complainant (including his/her parent/guardian if the complainant is under 18 years of age or under guardianship) to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator shall provide the complainant with an emailed or hard copy of this Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures. Any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent shall be maintained as confidential, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality will not impair the ability of the School to provide the supportive measures.

Step 2: Filing a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment
The Complainant can submit a formal written complaint to the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth above.

The written complaint shall state when the grievance occurred, the factual details of the grievance, and the relief sought. If the Complainant is a student, the Title IX Coordinator shall assist the student in writing the complaint and assuring that it is submitted in time.

When the Title IX Coordinator receives a formal complaint or signs a formal complaint, the School will follow its Grievance Process and Procedures, as set forth herein. Specifically, the School will undertake an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and provide that credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

The complainant(s), the respondent(s), and any witnesses are prohibited from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

The respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

The School will seek to conclude the grievance process, including resolving any appeals, within sixty (60) days of receipt of the formal complaint. If the Title IX Coordinator offers informal resolution processes, the informal resolution processes may not be used by the complainant or respondent to unduly delay the investigation and determination of responsibility. This timeframe, however, may be subject to a temporary delay of the grievance process or a limited extension for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action.

Within 2 days of receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the following to the parties who are known:

1. Notice of the School's grievance process, including any informal resolution process;
2. Notice of the allegations of misconduct that potentially constitutes sexual harassment as defined in this policy, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident(s), if known. The written notice must:
    a. include a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
    b. inform the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence.
    c. inform the parties of any provision in the School's code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

If, in the course of an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator decides to investigate allegations about the complainant or respondent that are not included in the original notice provided to the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

A complainant's wishes with respect to whether the school investigates allegations of sexual harassment should be respected unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

<u>Step 3 Informal Resolution</u>
Under no circumstances shall a complainant be required as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, to waive his/her right to an investigation and adjudication of a formal complaint of sexual harassment. Similarly, no party shall be required to participate in an informal resolution process.

If a formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator may offer to the parties an informal resolution process. If the parties mutually agree to participate in the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall designate a trained individual to facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full

investigation and adjudication. The informal resolution process may be used at any time prior to the decision maker(s) reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

If the Title IX Coordinator is going to propose an informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide to the parties a written notice disclosing:

1. the allegations;
2. the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations; and
3. any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

Any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.
Before commencing the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall obtain from the parties their voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

In conducting the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility is on the School, not the parties.

In making the determination of responsibility, the decision maker(s) is(are) directed to use the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Pursuant to law, the School is not permitted to access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the party provides the School with voluntary, written consent to do so; if a party is not an eligible student, the School must obtain the voluntary, written consent of a parent.

Similarly, the investigator(s) and decision maker(s) may not require, allow, rely upon or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

As part of the investigation, the parties have the right to:

1. present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence; and
2. have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney. The School may not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding.

Neither party shall be restricted in their ability to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

The School will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all hearings, investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate. The investigator(s) and decision maker(s) must provide a minimum of 4 days' notice with respect to hearings and 2 days' notice with respect to investigative interviews and other meetings

Both parties shall have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the School does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation.

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the Title IX Coordinator will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties will have at least ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response that the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, for their review and written response. The investigator will send the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the decision maker(s) issuing a determination regarding responsibility.

Determination of Responsibility: The Title IX Coordinator shall appoint a decision maker(s) to issue a determination of responsibility. The decision maker(s) cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator(s) or the investigator(s).

After the investigator sends the investigative report to the parties and the decision maker(s), and before the decision maker(s) reaches a determination regarding responsibility, the decision maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The decision maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

Determination regarding responsibility: The decision maker(s) will issue a written determination regarding responsibility. To reach this determination, the decision maker(s) must apply the preponderance of the evidence standard.

The written determination will include the following content:

1. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment pursuant to this policy;
2. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, [and] methods used to gather other evidence,
3. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
4. Conclusions regarding the application of the applicable code of conduct to the facts;
5. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the decision maker(s) is recommending that the School impose on the respondent(s), and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity will be provided by the School to the complainant(s); and
6. The procedures and permissible bases for the complainant(s) and respondent(s) to appeal.

If the decision maker(s) determines the respondent is responsible for violating this policy, the decision maker(s) written determination should include steps to end the sex discrimination/sexual harassment, eliminate the hostile environment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. In addition to imposing disciplinary

sanctions/consequences on the respondent, the decision maker may also order further supportive measures along with following individual and global remedies, on a case-by-case basis:

1. Provide medical, counseling, and academic support services to the complainant and/or respondent;
2. Re-arranging schedules at the complainant's request;
3. Afford the complainant extra time to complete or retake classes without academic penalty;
4. Review any disciplinary proceedings against the complainant;
5. Train or re-train employees;
6. Develop materials on sexual harassment;
7. Conduct sexual harassment prevention programs; and/or
8. Conduct climate checks.

Disciplinary sanctions/consequences imposed on a student may include suspension, expulsion, and any other sanction authorized by the student code of conduct. If the decision maker(s) makes a determination of responsibility and recommends the suspension and/or expulsion of the respondent, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the Head Administrator so the applicable due process procedures of Suspension and Expulsion can be implemented. Discipline of a student must comply with the applicable provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972, and their respective implementing regulations.

Disciplinary sanctions/consequences imposed on an employee may include written reprimands, unpaid suspension, termination, and any other sanction authorized by any applicable codes of conduct or collective bargaining agreement. If the decision maker(s) makes a determination of responsibility and recommends the imposition of disciplinary action, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the Head Administrator so applicable due process procedures, whether statutory or contractual, can be implemented.

Discipline of an employee must be implemented in accordance with Federal and State law, Governing Authority policy, and applicable provisions of relevant collective bargaining agreements.

The decision maker(s) will provide the written determination to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously.

The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that the Title IX Coordinator provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or, if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.

Appeals

Both parties may appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, or from a dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases: (1) a procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter; (2) newly discovered evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made that could affect the outcome of the matter; and/or (3) the Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

The decision maker(s) hearing the appeal may not be the same person(s) as the decision maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator(s). The decision maker(s) for the appeal shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent and shall receive the same training as required of other decision makers.

The parties' written statements in support of, or challenging, the determination of responsibility must be submitted within five (5) days after the Title IX Coordinator provides notice to the non-appealing party of the appeal. The decision maker(s) for the appeal shall issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The written decision will be provided to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide it simultaneously to both parties. The written decision will be issued within five (5) days of when the parties' written statements were submitted.

The decision maker(s) for the appeal's (or the original decision-maker's(s') if there is no appeal) decision shall be final.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies. If the complainant is still dissatisfied, the complainant may submit, within 180 days of the alleged discrimination, a written complaint to the Office for Civil Rights, located at:

Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
600 Superior Ave. East, Suite 750
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2611

Federal: 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX)
34 C.F.R. Part 106

Appendix F: College Credit Plus Policy

The Governing Authority understands that its students may benefit by participating in college-level courses offered by accredited colleges and universities in Ohio. Accordingly, Eligible Students may participate in the College Credit Plus Program (the "Program"), which permits students to receive school credit for completing college-level classes.

Program

Eligible Students that participate in the Program may enroll in one of two options.

- *Option A.* Eligible Students enroll in college courses and seek only college credit for the course(s) taken. The student pays for all tuition and costs of all textbooks, materials, and fees associated with the course. Under this option, a student is not considered enrolled in the school.

- *Option B.* Eligible Students enroll in college courses and seek college credit *and* high school credit. If the student successfully completes the course, the college and school shall award high school credit and the student will not pay any tuition or any fees. The student will not be charged any other fees. If the student does not complete the course, the student may be responsible for tuition and costs of all textbooks, materials, and fees. Under this option the student is considered enrolled.

Participation Requirements

Students in grades 7-12 are eligible to participate provided the student meets all criteria required by law.

Beginning in the Academic Year 2018-2019, students must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Students must be remediation-free in accordance to one of the assessments in the Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status document.

2. If a student scores within one standard error of measurement (SEM) below the remediation-free threshold and the student has a 3.0 GPA, the student is eligible to participate.

3. If a student scores within one SEM below the remediation-free threshold and the student receives a recommendation from a school counselor, principal or career-technical program advisor, the student is eligible to participate.

To participate, the following must occur:

- Prior to April 1 of each year, the student or the student's parent/guardian shall inform the School of intent to participate in the Program for the following year. If notice is not given by this date, a Dean's written consent is required. If the Dean does not provide written consent, the student may appeal to the Superintendent or Governing Authority. Within 30 days of notice, the appropriate entity shall hear the appeal and decide to either grant or deny that student's participation.

- The student must apply to an eligible college or university and meet that institution's standards for admission and course placement.

- The student and the student's parent/guardian shall sign a form stating they have received counseling and understand the responsibilities they must assume in the program.

The amount of credit a student may receive toward high school graduation is proportionate to the number of years a student has remaining.

- 7th-9th Grade students may not receive credit toward high school graduation for more than the equivalent of four years.
- 10th grade students may not receive credit toward high school graduation for more than the equivalent of three years.
- 11th grade students may not receive credit toward high school graduation for more than the equivalent of two years.
- 12 grade students may not receive credit toward high school graduation for more than the equivalent of one year.

Course Eligibility
Ohio's College Credit Plus program designates college courses as "Level I" or "Level II." A "Level I course" means a college course that is any of the following:

(1) a transferable course;

(2) a course in computer science, information technology, anatomy, physiology, or foreign language, including American sign language, that is not eligible to be a transferable course;

(3) a technical certificate course;

(4) a course included in a model pathway developed under section 3365.13 of the Revised Code that a student participating in the college credit plus program elects to pursue;

(5) a course designed to teach study skills and other skills for academic and career success to first-year college students;

(6) an internship course; or

(7) another course approved by the chancellor of higher education under a pathway or required sequence of courses.

A "Level II course" means a college course that is not a Level I course.

A student participating in the College Credit Plus program shall complete 15 semester credit hours of "Level I" courses that may be applied toward a certificate or degree prior to taking a "Level II" course, except as follows:

(1) a student may take a Level II course in the same subject prior to completing the required fifteen semester credit hours upon successful completion of a Level I course;

(2) a student may take a Level II course that has a Level I course as a prerequisite if the student, in accordance with the course placement guidelines of the college/university in which the student enrolls, has demonstrated by an assessment or other means that the student is academically prepared for the course; or

(3) a student may count an advanced placement course or international baccalaureate diploma course completed in the District toward the fifteen semester credit hours of courses with evidence that the student attained the required score on an examination covering the coursework. In the case of an advanced placement course, the required score shall be the passing score set forth in the standards adopted under R.C. 3333.163. In the case of an international baccalaureate diploma course, the required score shall be the passing score specified by the college/university in which the student enrolls that the college/university considers sufficient to award college credit for the course.

After successfully completing 15 semester credit hours as set forth above, the student may enroll in a Level II course that may be applied toward a certificate or degree.

Except as provided below for a predetermined pathway or required sequence of courses, a student may not receive credit under the College Credit Plus program for the following "non-allowable" courses:

(1) an applied course that involves one-on-one private instruction such as instruction in instrumental music, voice, or art;

(2) a course for which the fees (as defined in the rules and R.C. 3345.49) exceed an amount established by the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents;

(3) a study abroad course or similar course;

(4) a physical education course;

(5) a course that is graded on a pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis rather than using letter grades, with the exception of an internship course. (This does not apply to a transferable course that is graded on a pass/fail basis for all students not participating in the College Credit Plus program);

(6) a remedial or non-college-level course as prohibited by R.C. 3365.02;

(7) a sectarian course as prohibited by R.C. 3365.02.

If a non-allowable course as set forth above is a part of a predetermined pathway or required sequence of courses leading to a certificate or degree, a college/university, on behalf of one or more students who are enrolled in the college/university through the College Credit Plus program and have shown progress on that pathway or sequence of courses through their previous coursework, may request the chancellor of higher education to allow payment for the course under R.C. 3365.07.
Effect of Expulsion

If a student is expelled from the School, the Dean shall send a written notice to any college in which the student is enrolled at the time the expulsion is imposed. The Notice shall indicate (1) the date the expulsion expires, (2) that the school has adopted a policy pursuant to R.C. 3313.613 to deny high school credit for courses taken under College Credit Plus during an expulsion. The School shall notify the college of any expulsion extensions.

If a college withdraws acceptance of an expelled student, the School shall not award high school credit for the college courses the student was enrolled. The School may require the student to return or pay for any textbooks and materials provided free of charge.

Awarding Credit

In order to receive high school credit, the student must enroll in Option B prior to beginning the course. The student will receive high school credit upon the successfully completing the course. Students who fail or do not complete the course will not be awarded high school credit.

The amount of credit received shall be determined by the School. If the School offers a comparable course, the School shall award comparable credit. If the School does not offer a comparable course, the School shall grant an appropriate number of credits in a similar subject area. Disputes regarding the number of credits received may be appealed to the Ohio Department of Education. The Department of Education's decision is final.

All classes taken for credit will be transferred to the student's permanent record. Included in the record shall be the course completed and the name of the college/university where the courses were earned. The grade earned may be averaged in the student's high school grade point average.

Information Regarding and Promotion of the Program

Pursuant to Ohio law, the School shall provide information about the Program to students and their parents/guardians in grades six (6) through eleven (11) by February 1st of each year.
The School shall promote the program on its website. The School shall also schedule at least one informational session per school year with partnering colleges located within thirty miles of the School.

Underperforming Students

If a student enrolled in Program courses is classified as an "underperforming student", the School shall place the student on academic probation. An underperforming student is a student who meets at least one of the following conditions:

(a) Has a cumulative grade point average of lower than 2.0 in the college courses taken through the Program;

(b) Withdraws from, or receives no credit for, two or more courses in the same term.

In the event that a student is classified as underperforming, the School shall promptly notify the student, the student's parents/guardians and each institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled of the student's status and shall notify the student and the student's parents/guardians as to the requirements to continue with the Program.

When a student is on probation, the student shall enroll in no more than one college course in a term, and shall not enroll in a college course in the same subject as a college course in which the student earned a grade of "D" or "F" or for which the student received no credit. If the student had already enrolled in more than one course or an improper course for the next term before being placed on probation, then the student shall request that the college dis-enroll the student for any courses beyond the one allowed. In the event that a student fails to dis-enroll, the School shall notify the student and the student's parents/guardians that the student shall be responsible for all tuition, fees, and textbook costs for those courses, and that the student shall be declared ineligible and dismissed from the Program for the next term.

If a student takes a college course after being placed on probation and the course grade raises the student's cumulative grade point average in the student's college courses to a 2.0 or higher, the student shall be removed from probation and may participate in the Program without restrictions. If the student meets the requirements again at a later point, they will be placed back on probation.

If a student meets the definition of an underperforming student for two consecutive terms of enrollment, that student shall be classified as an "ineligible student", and the School shall dismiss the student from the Program. The School shall promptly notify the student, the student's parents/guardians, and each institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled of the student's dismissal.

A student who has been dismissed from the Program shall not take any college courses through the Program. If the student had registered for any college courses for the next term prior to being dismissed, the student shall request each applicable institution of higher education to dis-enroll the student from those courses. In the event the student fails to dis-enroll from courses, the School shall promptly notify the student and the student's parents/guardians that the student shall be responsible for paying all tuition, fees, and textbook costs for courses from which the student was required to dis-enroll and that the student's dismissal from the program shall continue for an additional term.

After one term of dismissal, a student may request the School to allow the student to participate in the Program. The School shall review the student's full high school and college academic record to determine the student's academic progress. In order to be considered for reinstatement in the Program under probation terms, the student must show at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average, including both college courses and high school courses. In order to be reinstated in the Program without restrictions, the student must show at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average, including both college courses and high school courses. Failure to make sufficient academic progress as outlined above shall result in an extension of the dismissal.

Upon receiving a request for reinstatement, the School shall issue a decision to continue the student's dismissal, place the student on probation, or allow the student to participate in the Program without restrictions. Summer shall count as a term of dismissal from the Program only if the student is enrolled in one or more high school courses during the summer.

The student may appeal a decision of the School to the Governing Authority as set forth in Ohio Administrative Code 3333-1-65.13. The student shall request an appeal within five business days after being notified of the dismissal or

probation that prohibits the student from taking a course in a subject. The School shall promptly notify any institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled that the student has requested an appeal. The Governing Authority of the School shall issue a decision on the student's appeal within ten business days after the date the appeal is made. The decision shall be final. The School shall promptly notify any institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled of the decision.

Reimbursement Where Student Fails Course

If the Dean determines that a student participant has not attained a passing final grade, the School may seek reimbursement for state funds paid to the college. Unless the student was expelled the School shall not seek reimbursement if the student is identified as economically disadvantaged. The School may withhold grades and credits received until the participant provides reimbursement.

Appeals Policy

The College Credit Plus Probation Appeals policy for GEMS is based on the requirements of Ohio Administrative Code 3333-1-65.13. Students who have been placed on CCP Probation, which prohibits the student from taking a course in the same subject and wish to appeal, must notify the district superintendent within five business days after being notified of the CCP Probation status. GEMS will notify the college or university in which a student is enrolled that the student has requested an appeal. The district superintendent's designee will issue a decision on the student's appeal within ten business days after the date of the appeal is made. The decision of the superintendent is final.

To request an appeal, a student must provide a written explanation of why the student should be permitted to take a course in the same subject while on CCP Probation. The district superintendent's designee will review the written explanation and will consider the following possible activities that a student has taken:

- Completion of high school courses with an established grade point average
- Completion of tutoring, extra course assistance, as available
- Development of an individual pathway plan that includes high school graduation requirements and possible college courses

The district superintendent has the discretion to allow a student to participate in the program if the student meets other factors to demonstrate readiness. In general, GEMS follows the CCP Probation guideline that the student may only enroll in one CCP course one college term during probation. However, GEMS supports students re-enrolling in a failed course

Note: The CCP Probation policy (OAC 3333-1-65.13) does not alter, supersede, or affect any college policy or procedure on academic probation or dismissal through the college. Students wishing to appeal the college's policy must do so by following the college's procedures.

Ohio: R.C. 3365.
R.C. 3313.613

Appendix G: Graham Family of Schools Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy (amended and approved by all 3 boards on 6/15/26)

Positive School Climate

The Graham Family of Schools (TGFS) aims to help all students grow in their academic and social-emotional learning, ongoing. All efforts are focused on preparing students to be successful in achieving this mission as they work toward full readiness for the next grade level and ultimately college and careers. Our aim is to continuously advance students' skills and demonstrate critical analysis and problem solving, collaborative teamwork, thoughtful reflection on experiences, sharing in responsibility for academic success, and creating a safe learning community for all.

In order to achieve this mission at our schools, TGFS will:

- Maintain and promote a growth-mindset toward all students and staff such that everyone has an expectation to grow in their intelligence, and display of it;
- Foster in students a commitment to self-direction about their own learning and to the school and wider community in which they live;
- Teach at all grade levels with sensitivity to brain development in children, including course and class lessons that focus on human brain development and its relation to learning, and grow students in their academic learning and social-emotional development;
- Utilize the community outside the school doors as a resource to advance experiential learning for our students;
- Treat all students and staff with compassion, honesty, and respect;
- View academic achievement as a reflection of both student and teacher jointly teaming for success;
- Create, state, and display norms for how people are expected to act at school regarding academic work and behavioral interactions;
- Design an operational strategy at each TGFS school for advancing our work in academic achievement, social and emotional learning, grade advancement, and college and career readiness.

Attendance Policy Overview

Students enrolled in the TGFS schools must attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered by the school is predicated upon the presence and punctuality of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Student absences, whether excused or unexcused, take away from instructional time and have an adverse effect on student learning when classroom instruction is missed.
Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled at the School during the days and hours that the School is in session.
To support academic success for all students, TGFS will partner with students and families to identify and reduce barriers to regular school attendance.

TGFS utilizes a continuum of strategies to reduce student absence including, but not limited to:

- Notification of student absence to the parent or guardian;
- Counseling;
- Parent education and parenting programs;
- Mediation;
- Intervention programs available through juvenile authorities; and
- Referral for truancy, if applicable.

The Board has adopted the following terms and definitions that will be consistently utilized in our attendance-related work and reporting.

Compulsory school age: A child between 6 and 18 years of age is "of compulsory school age" and must attend school each day. A child under 6 years of age who has been enrolled in kindergarten also shall be considered "of compulsory school age."

Average Daily Attendance (ADA): A schoolwide measurement that shows the total hours all students attended school divided by the total hours all students could have attended the school year. It is an indicator of how many students typically show up each day. Average Daily Attendance tends to mask chronic absence and can make it difficult to see when a school or school has an attendance issue.

Chronic Absence: Missing at least 10% of instructional time for any reason in the school year. Student absences from school, whether excused, medically excused, unexcused, or out-of school suspensions, take away from instructional time and have an adverse effect on student learning.

Excused Absences

Absences due to the following will be excused:

1. Personal physical illness that prevents attendance at School (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, a written statement from a physician/clinical nurse specialist/certified nurse practitioner will be required).
2. Personal mental illness such that the student will not benefit from instruction (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, a written statement from a physician/clinical nurse specialist/certified nurse practitioner/mental health professional will be required).
3. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, a written statement from a physician and an explanation as to why the child's absence was necessary will be required).
4. Quarantine in the home (absence will be excused for the duration of the quarantine as determined by proper health officials).
5. Death in the family (absence will be excused for no more than eighteen (18) hours unless the Dean or his/her designee determines that a longer absence is reasonably necessary).
6. Medical, behavioral, or dental appointments (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, a written statement from a physician, mental health professional, or dentist confirming the appointment may be required).
7. Observance of religious holidays or expression of religious beliefs consistent with the truly held religious beliefs of the child or the child's family for no more than three (3) school days (the Dean may require confirmation of the parent's signature requesting the absence, but may not inquire as to the sincerity of the student's religious or spiritual belief system).
8. College or university visits (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, verification of the date and time of the visit may be requested).
9. Pre-enlistment reporting to military enlistment processing station (at the discretion of the Dean or his/her designee, a written verification confirming the date and time reporting may be required).
10. Absence due to a placement in or changes to a foster care placement or any court proceeding related to a student's foster care status.
11. Absences due to a student being homeless.
12. Absences due to deployment activities of a parent or custodian.
13. The existence of an emergency condition at home such as absence, illness, or death of the parent or custodian.
14. Necessary work in a family business or on a family farm (after proof of necessary absence is provided to the Dean or his/her designee.
15. Necessary work directly and exclusively for a child's parent, if the child is over the age of fourteen (14) and has been in regular attendance at school during the current school year (after proof of necessary absence is provided to the Dean or his/her designee).
16. Instruction at home from a person qualified to teach the branches of education in which instruction is required, and such additional branches, as the advancement and needs of the child may require (after adequate certification of home instruction has been provided to the Dean or his/her designee).

17. An emergency or set of circumstances which in the judgment of the School constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence. Two excused days for family emergencies per semester with verbal or written communication from parent or guardian.
18. If a student is absent from School for the sole purpose of traveling out of state to participate in a School-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity, the School shall count that absence as an excused absence, up to a maximum of twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the School is open for instruction. The student must complete any classroom assignments he/she misses due to the absence. If the student will be absent for twenty-four (24) or more consecutive hours that the School is open for instruction, a classroom teacher must accompany the student during the travel period to provide the student with instructional assistance in order to count the student as in attendance.

The Dean or his/her designee reserves the right to verify statements and to investigate the cause of absence.

Excuses from future school attendance:

1. Shall be limited to a period not to exceed thirty (30) school hours and can be renewed at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee for thirty (30) additional hours. Absences shall not exceed sixty (60) consecutive hours unless the child's parent has recently died or become totally or partially incapacitated and there is no older sibling living in the home who is out of school. At the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee, a written statement from a physician may be required.
2. May not materially endanger the child's educational welfare or scholastic advancement.

The parent, legal guardian, or custodian must provide an explanation for the absence, which shall be recorded by the approving authority of the school and shall include the date and time of the absence according to local policy.

Religious Expression: A student may have up to three days excused for religious expression. To receive these days, the building Dean must receive written notice from the student's parent or guardian within 14 days of the beginning of the school year or within 14 days of the student's enrollment date. A student absent in this way may still participate in after-school activities. The student will also receive reasonable accommodations for any academic requirement or testing missed. A non-exhaustive list of major religious holidays, festivals, and religious observations is available on the school's website.

Postsecondary Visitation: Students are encouraged to explore postsecondary options (such as technical college or university), and sometimes this must happen during the school day. Parents and guardians must coordinate with their child's building administrator to receive approval and discuss accommodations before each visit. With building approval, each student will be marked as "present" for school for up to three days each school year.

Extracurricular Activities: In-state events sponsored by the school may be considered instructional opportunities for students. The superintendent or designee may determine under what conditions these opportunities allow for a participating student to be marked as "present" for school.

Habitual Truancy: Any student who is absent without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month, or 72 or more hours in one school year, unless the student's school or school determines the student and student's family are making satisfactory progress in improving the student's attendance at school. However, if the student and the student's family cease to continue making progress in improving the student's attendance, a complaint in the juvenile court shall be filed.

Out-of-School Suspension: A disciplinary action that removes or excludes a student from their usual educational setting. This is different from in-school suspension, which may include an alternative learning opportunity for a student in a different setting and still may be counted as present. Truancy shall not be the sole reason for a student's suspension or expulsion.

Attendance Intervention Team

The purpose of the attendance intervention team is to establish a student-centered attendance intervention plan for every student who is habitually truant by identifying specific barriers and solutions to attendance.

The attendance intervention team is cross-sector and includes the participation of the student and the parent or guardian or parent appointed designee. If a parent or guardian or parent appointed designee is non-responsive to the attendance intervention team's outreach, then the attendance intervention team will assess if the non-response requires a mandated referral to the child protective services agency.
When a student is habitually truant, the following will occur:

1) Within seven (7) days of the triggering absence, TGFS will do the following:
   a) A member of the School's Attendance Intervention Team (AIT) will make three (3) meaningful attempts to secure the participation of the student's parent or guardian or appointed designee on the attendance intervention team.
2) Within ten (10) days of the triggering absence, the student will be assigned to a specific member of the AIT;
3) Within fourteen (14) days of being assigned a member of the AIT, TGFS will develop the student's attendance intervention plan **and send a copy of the attendance intervention plan to the parent or legal guardian**;
4) If the student does not make progress on the plan within sixty-one (61) days or continues to be excessively absent, TGFS may file a complaint in the juvenile court.
5) When a student is identified as having excessive absences and/or being habitually truant, TGFS will inform the student's parent or guardian that the student has been placed on the attendance intervention team and make three meaningful attempts to secure the participation of the student's parent, legal guardian or parent appointed designee on the attendance intervention team.

TGFS must notify a child's parent, guardian or custodian if the child has "excessive absences" which shall be defined as when *nonmedical* excused absences and unexcused absences exceed 38 hours with or without a legitimate excuse in one school month or 65 hours in a school year. This notice shall be made in writing within 7 days after the date of the absence that triggered the notice. A "medical excused absence" shall include:

(1) personal illness;
(2) illness in the family necessitating the student's presence;
(3) quarantine of the home;
(4) death in the family;
(5) appointment with a health care provider (doctor, dentist, orthodontist, mental health provider, etc.); or
(6) on a case-by-case basis, any other set of circumstances the School deems to be a good and sufficient cause for medical absence from school.

<u>Disciplinary Action for Unexcused Tardiness</u>

Repeated unexcused absences/tardiness may be grounds for disciplinary action that will not include suspension or expulsion.

A student is tardy when a student is more than five (5) minutes late for School or for a class. If a student misses more than half a class, the student will be marked absent for the class. When tracking hours of missed instruction for excessive absence and truancy purposes, the School shall:

- Track tardiness and early dismissal times based on the precise amount of missed instruction, tracked to the nearest minute (e.g., if a student is thirty-five (35) minutes tardy to school and leaves school forty-five (45) minutes early, the student shall be counted as absent for eighty (80) minutes of that day).

Students shall not be considered absent for purposes of habitual truancy calculations while out of class for a legitimate reason, including but not limited to restroom breaks, visits to the nurses office, counselor meetings, or remediation sessions.
Any student who, due to a medically-documented physical or mental impairment, is absent for an extended period will not be disciplined. Such students may be entitled to receive an education tailored to their individual needs or abilities as provided for under federal and/or state law.

Truancy and Absence Intervention Strategies

The Dean or his/her designee may act as the School's attendance officer or delegate that duty as permitted by law. The School's attendance officer shall investigate possible School attendance violations, and is authorized under Ohio law, to serve warrants, to enter places where children of compulsory School age are employed, and to take such other actions as may be necessary to enforce the compulsory education laws.

A student is chronically absent from school if a student is absent from the School for ten percent (10%) or more of the minimum number of hours required in the school year with or without legitimate nonmedical or nonreligious excuse. When a student misses five percent (5%) of the minimum number of hours required in the school year, the attendance officer shall notify the student's parents of the student's absences.

The School shall employ absence intervention strategies for all students who are chronically absent from School. Such strategies shall include the following tiered systems of supports, which shall provide more intensive interventions and supports for students with greater numbers of absences and include resources to help students and families address root causes of absences:

1. Providing a truancy intervention plan for any student who is chronically absent or at risk of becoming chronically absent from school;
2. Providing counseling for a habitual truant;
3. Requesting or requiring a parent to attend parental involvement programs;
4. Requesting or requiring a parent to attend truancy prevention mediation programs; and
5. Taking legal action under R.C. 2919.222, 3321.20, and/or 3321.38.

A student is habitually truant if the student is absent without a legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, for forty-two (42) or more hours in one (1) school month, or seventy-two (72) or more hours in one (1) school year.

Legitimate excuses for the absence of a student otherwise habitually truant include but are not limited to:

1. the student was enrolled in another school;
2. the student's absence was excused in accordance with applicable law or policy; or,
3. the student has received an age and schooling certificate.

The attendance officer shall examine cases of supposed truancy within the School, and shall warn the child and the parent in writing of the legal consequences to being truant. When the child is not attending school, the attendance officer or his/her designee shall notify the parent of that fact and require the parent to cause the child to attend school immediately.

The attendance officer shall file a complaint with the juvenile court against a student if the student is a habitual truant, unless the attendance officer determines that the student is making satisfactory progress in improving the student's attendance at school. If a student is not deemed to be making progress to improve attendance at school, or ceases to continue making progress to improve attendance, the attendance officer shall file a complaint in the juvenile court against the student. Any complaint filed under this policy shall alleged that the child is an unruly child for being a habitual truant and that the parent has violated Section 3321.38 of the Revised Code.

The Superintendent or his/her designee is also authorized to establish a parent education program for parents of students who are habitually truant. Any parent assigned to the program who does not complete the program is to be reported to law enforcement authorities for neglect of parent education, a fourth class misdemeanor if found guilty.

Zero Tolerance

TGFS has a zero tolerance policy for violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by students per Ohio Revised Code 3313.534. TGFS has removed "excessive absences" from its zero tolerance policies. TGFS will not suspend or expel students for being absent from school.

Suspension

TGFS will not suspend (out of school) or expel students for truancy. TGFS will be proactive in working with families and community organizations to break down barriers that prevent students from attending school.

Withdrawal

A student who fails to participate in seventy-two (72) consecutive hours of learning opportunities will be automatically withdrawn, unless the student's absence is excused. Otherwise, a parent may withdraw a student voluntarily. A record request with a start date must be received by the new school in order to officially withdraw the student, otherwise the 72 hour rule will take effect.

Whenever a student withdraws from the School voluntarily, the Registrar shall attempt to ascertain the reason for withdrawal and shall immediately inform the Superintendent or his/her designee of the reason for the withdrawal. If the Student voluntarily withdrew from the School as a result of a change in residence, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall notify the superintendent of the school to which the Student has moved of all essential information regarding the Student, including the Student's new address.

If the Superintendent or his/her designee becomes aware that a Student who has withdrawn from the School for reasons other than a change of residence is not enrolled in another school, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall notify the juvenile judge of the county in which the School is located of the Student's likely violation of the State's compulsory education laws. Notice shall be given within two (2) weeks and shall include the Student's name, address, date of birth, School, and the school where the Student resides. Any notice given in error shall be immediately rescinded by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

An Integrated Multi-Tiered System of Supports as Part of an Attendance Strategy

The Board maintains that students must be present and engaged to learn, and attendance is a critical factor for academic success. The Board is committed to a problem-solving approach to improving attendance and uses legal action as a last resort. When absences are the result of community and school challenges, a punitive approach is not likely to be effective and can undermine partnering with students and families to identify and address the underlying reasons for absence.

Instead, the Board endorses an integrated multi-tiered system of supports that is inclusive of universal prevention and early intervention before students become chronically absent. A continuum of supports will be in place with different types of evidence-informed instruction and interventions to meet the diverse needs of students and address the range of barriers that prevent students from participating and engaging in learning. More intensive supports are provided for students with greater numbers of absences, along with resources to help students and their families address the root causes of the absences. The school shall have teams work with students at risk of becoming chronically absent and their families to improve the students' attendance at school. The Board encourages the superintendent to integrate the school's attendance improvement strategy within existing initiatives and teams whenever possible.

These components will inform the school's use of an integrated multi-tiered system of supports: **Universal Screening**: School and building teams will regularly review attendance data alongside other student data using an early warning system. This proactive, systematic process helps identify areas of need early on, allowing for timely interventions.

Data-Based Decision-Making: Collecting, analyzing, and using various forms of data to inform student needs and allocate resources. This approach ensures that decisions are grounded in evidence and tailored to the specific needs of students.

Continuum of Supports: Organizing evidence-based academic and non-academic instruction and supports across three tiers:

- Core: Universal attendance messaging and engagement practices provided to all students and families to establish the expectation of daily attendance.
- Targeted: Early intervention for students who miss 5% - 19% of instructional time. The Board requires schools to begin communication and supportive outreach as soon as absence patterns indicate a concern which can be missing just 2-3 days per month.
- Intensive: Individualized supports provided to students missing 20% or more of instructional time.

This structure allows for a range of interventions to address the diverse needs of students and prevent chronic absenteeism before it affects achievement.

Progress Monitoring: Ongoing and frequent collection of data to assess student performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and supports. This continuous feedback loop helps in adjusting strategies to better support students and improve attendance.
Team-Based Problem Solving: A collaborative, responsive, and systematic process for understanding and addressing complex problems impacting students. This approach involves personalized outreach to students and families, intentional engagement strategies, and ongoing progress monitoring.
Shared Leadership: A collaborative approach to providing strong, ongoing leadership for implementing an integrated multi-tiered system of supports, including infrastructure, professional development, and monitoring. This ensures that staff have the skills and support to create strong foundations for learning. The school believes that all adults have an opportunity and responsibility to support attendance, and the school will provide regular and embedded professional development opportunities to support this understanding and drive action.
Professional Capacity: Ensuring staff members are knowledgeable, organized, and equipped to deliver effective instruction using an integrated multi-tiered system of supports. The school will continually review and evaluate practices and skills to ensure they align with attendance improvement for all students.
Communication and Collaboration: Essential processes to promote and support engagement and shared responsibility for creating conditions for effective instruction for all students through a strengths-based lens among all teaching and non-teaching staff, administrators, families, caregivers, and students. This reinforces the importance of attendance and fosters a supportive community.

Data and Accountability

The Board requires the superintendent to create and maintain real-time attendance reports that allow school and building staff to access and use attendance data throughout the year. Such data shall be disaggregated and used to identify:

- Schoolwide patterns and trends for the development of annual student attendance
- Engagement goals and strategies for inclusion in the school's strategic and/or improvement plan and individual school improvement plans The Board requests that the superintendent provide the Board with attendance and chronic absence data, for each school, each grade, and each student group. The superintendent shall periodically report to the Board, at least quarterly, on the school's progress in improving student attendance and meeting school goals.

The superintendent shall ensure building leaders and school teams collect and review chronic absence data to:

- Identify positive, school-wide messaging and expectations that make regular attendance a priority
- determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students, students at risk of becoming chronically absent, and their families,
- use attendance data to promote continuous improvement, and
- assess the effectiveness of attendance improvement strategies and the impact on educational outcomes.

The Board expects the superintendent to develop administrative protocols and training for how all staff will contribute to improving attendance and student engagement and thus maintain a chronic absence rate under 5%.

<u>Absence Notifications</u>
School begins promptly. Students who are not with their teacher when the first bell rings are considered unexcused without a legitimate excuse. A student who is returning from an unexcused absence must be signed in at the front office by a parent and/or legal guardian along with appropriate documentation for the student's absence.

TGFS expects all students to be in their appropriate class when the bell rings, and prepared for instruction. The family of the student should contact the school by 8:00am with advance notice of their student's pending absence on a given day. If no notice of the student's absence is received by the school, the school will attempt to contact the student's parent and/or legal guardian within the first 120 minutes of the school day. The attempt may be made via a live telephone call, automated telephone call, a notification through the school's automated student information system, a text message, email, home visit, or another notification procedure adopted by the school.

Attendance is an extremely high priority at TGFS and Ohio law. **TGFS has an overall attendance rate goal of 96% for the school year**!

This Board consulted with the juvenile court of the counties in which the School is located, parents of students attending the School, and state and local agencies deemed appropriate by the Board prior to adopting this policy.

R.C. 2151.011; R.C. 2151.27; R.C. 3314.03(A)(6); R.C. 3314.11; R.C. 3321.01; R.C. 3321.041; R.C. 3321.13-.191; O.A.C. 3301-69-02.

Appendix H: Cell Phone Policy

To support school environments in which students can fully engage with their classmates, their teachers, and instruction, the Governing Boards of The Graham Family of Schools have determined the use of cell phones by students during school hours should be limited. TGFS will maintain a requirement that students only use school-issued technology from the first bell to the last bell of each school day which prohibits personal cell phones, tablets, smart watches, headphones & earbuds, or other bluetooth/electronic devices.

The objective of this policy is to strengthen the schools' focus on learning, in alignment with our mission to ignite students' passion for learning, cultivate a strong foundation of knowledge, and foster a sense of community within our schools.

I. Research

Research shows that student use of cell phones in schools has negative effects on student performance and mental health. Cell phones distract students from classroom instruction, resulting in smaller learning gains and lower test scores. Increased cell phone use has led to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders in children.

II. Applicability

This policy applies to the use of cell phones by students while on school property during school hours.

III. Use of cell phones

Students are prohibited from using cell phones at all times during the school day.

IV. Exception

Nothing in this policy prohibits a student from using a cell phone for a purpose documented in the student's individualized education program developed under Chapter 3323 of the Ohio Revised Code or a plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 29 U.S.C. 794.

A student may use a cell phone to monitor or address a health concern. Health concerns need to be documented and communicated to the school leadership prior to an exception being granted and is at the discretion of the school leadership.

V. Cell phone storage

Students shall keep their cell phones in a secure place, such as a closed backpack, or a storage device provided by the school, at all times when cell phone use is prohibited. Each school building will determine their procedures. Those procedures will be communicated to students, families and staff in writing and can change at the discretion of the school leadership.

VI. Discipline

If a student violates this policy, a teacher or administrator shall take the following progressively serious disciplinary measures:

- Give the student a verbal warning and require the student to store the student's cell phone in accordance with this policy.
- Securely store the student's cell phone in a teacher- or administrator-controlled locker, bin, or drawer for the duration of the class or period.
- Place the student's cell phone in the school's central office for the remainder of the school day.
- Place the student's cell phone in the school's central office to be picked up by the student's parent or guardian.
- Schedule a conference with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the student's cell phone use.
- School leadership may issue a consequence for a violation as described in the Student and Family Handbook.