

Rules & Routines

Welcome!

Welcome to Gulf Coast Academy of Science and Technology. Let the Adventure begin! Our staff has been working hard to prepare lessons that will capture your interest, inspire your learning, and satisfy your curiosity. In order to provide you with a quality hands-on education, we do need to create an orderly learning atmosphere and enlist your cooperation. Please read on...

Why are rules necessary?

It would stand to reason that when you have fewer people you need fewer rules. The early settlers had fewer laws to follow as compared to modern day Americans. Laws (like rules) are designed to protect the rights of the individual while still maintaining the freedoms of the many. One of the best example illustrating the benefit of rules involves the "rules of the road." Can you imagine what it would be like to drive from place to place if there were no rules? If people just drove their vehicles however and wherever they liked without regard for the other drivers there would be chaos on the roads. Classrooms, like roads, are similar; a student who habitually blurts out comments or answers disrupts the orderly "flow of traffic" in the classroom. If everyone in the classroom behaved in this manner, no learning could occur because the teacher would not be able to teach in an atmosphere of chaos.

What are the school rules?

GCA has several common-sense classroom rules, these rules are similar to the rules used whenever groups of people are assembled. The rules are the same in each classroom and are as follows:

1. **Raise your hand** and wait to be recognized if you wish to speak, ask a question, answer a question, or leave your seat for any reason. Once you take your seat at the beginning of class you are expected to stay in that seat unless given permission to move about. If the teacher has assigned your seat you are expected to sit in that assigned seat whenever the class meets.
2. **Use silent hand signals** if you wish to use the restroom or get a drink of water. (These silent signals will be explained to you during the first week of school.)
3. **Respect the personal space and property of others.** The space surrounding another student is his/her personal space; this includes his/her desk and his/her property. If you put your feet on another student's desk you are invading their personal space, likewise if you borrow another student's pencil without asking you have disrespected the property rule.
4. **Calling all artists.** Everyone likes to doodle and drawing can be fun but it can also be considered disrespectful if done during class. Therefore, please refrain from drawing, doodling or sketching when your supposed to be learning, listening or working in class. Also, be sure not to doodle, draw or mark on school property unless you like cleaning, erasing and sanding on your weekends.
5. **Be prepared for class!** Can you imagine what would happen if a carpenter showed up to work without any tools? As a middle school student, your "tools" are the few items you are REQUIRED to bring to class each and every day; these include: (1) 3 pens (2) 3 pencils (3) 6 subject folders - one for each class. (4) 10 sheets of writing paper without jagged edges (5) homework from previous session (6) handouts from previous session (7) planner (8) check book (9) an organizer (binder) for all of these materials and (10) a positive attitude.
6. **Keep food and beverages out of the classroom.** When food and drinks are used in the classroom they invariably find their way onto the floor. This causes two problems: (1) the food gets squished into the rug - causing a permanent stain and (2) the food attracts ants and other insects.

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7. **If you make a mess, clean it up.** When twenty-two students gather in the same classroom, there is bound to be a mess from time-to-time - especially if those people are involved in projects and activities. Sometimes it may be unclear as to which portion of the mess came from you. In any event the mess needs to be cleaned up so please pitch-in, pick-up, help-out, and the mess will disappear.
8. **Dress for success.** Out of all the rules, the school dress code is the one that has to be refined over time to adapt to various trends and fads. Who could predict gel bracelets, dog collars, and black lipstick? We have devoted a special section just for the school dress code included later. In short, dress conservatively, wear sensible closed toe, closed heel shoes, and you won't have to worry about this rule.
9. **Use appropriate language in all situations.** Appropriate language is language that does not offend, provoke, irritate, annoy, stereotype, or hurt-the-feelings-of, another person. You may have heard the phrase "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me." Well... this would be true if the word "physically" were added to the end. Let's face it - words can hurt, and in some instances are carefully crafted to be purposefully hurtful. Here's another old phrase: "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all." This is a great position to take. We take verbally abusive comments very seriously, especially when they are used intentionally. There is a very fine line between verbal teasing and verbal abuse, please report any excessive teasing to the administration before it escalates. We are very effective at putting a stop to this type of behavior.
10. **Practical Jokes can be funny but...** Practical jokes often hurt other peoples' feelings and result in unintended, unpredictable and unnecessary results. These "tricks" and "jokes" often escalate to consume your time and our time. So practical jokesters please find another creative outlet!
11. **Horses play rough, Middle-schoolers don't!** Horseplay is a common term that is loosely defined as unnecessarily rowdy or rough play. Horseplay usually starts as touching, poking, pulling, fighting, running, yanking, bopping, pushing, kicking, shoving, ... you get the picture! In almost all cases of horseplay in the middle school setting the result is often as follows: broken items; bruises; rips; fights, tears; burns; marks; hurt feelings; and tears. Please exercise the self-control necessary to avoid horseplay and involve a staff member before entering into a situation that will result in an office referral. Please note that horseplay resulting in physical injury or damage to property will be immediate grounds for a suspension. Leave the horseplay to the horses!
12. **Do not retaliate!!** The staff and administration are skilled in handling middle school disputes quite well. We also have a guidance counselor who is an expert mediator. If you take matters into your own hands by retaliation, you may find yourself in a situation where the tables are turned and you are perceived as the aggressor. Physical retaliation (punching, kicking, biting, etc.) can get you thrown out of school. Always involve a GCA staff member before matters escalate to this point.
13. **Wear appropriate closed-toe, closed-heel shoes every day.** Footwear deserves its own special paragraph. While you are at school, you must wear shoes that protect your entire foot, not just your toes!! For in-school use, sneakers are the best way to go. They fit snugly (i.e. they won't fall off), they cover the toe and the heel, and they are comfortable. Do not wear: sandals, clogs, flip-flops, shower-shoes, slippers, moccasins, aqua-sox, high-heels, platforms, or any non-traditional footwear that may lead to classroom disruption or personal injury. If the appropriateness of a particular type of footwear is called into question, the directors will have the final say as to their suitability for a school environment. This might be a good place to mention that your shoes must remain tied or otherwise secured onto your feet throughout the entire day.
14. **Leave your gum at home.** Gum is destructive. It sticks to everything and stays stuck. It destroys carpets, sidewalks, furniture, and clothing. It gets stuck in hair and results in tears and hard feelings. Gum is not sold in theme parks like Disney World, Universal Studios, and Bush Gardens for these reasons. The bottom line: do not

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bring gum to school, do not bring gum on the bus, do not bring gum to school events, do not bring gum on school trips, do not bring gum to the bus stop. Do not bring gum here nor there, do not bring gum anywhere!

15. **Do your homework and turn it in on-time.** Students who do their homework and turn it in on-time earn maximum credit and typically earn higher grades. The best way to stay ahead of the curve in middle school is to be organized. We will provide you with a calendar book so that you can plan your week. This planner is a fantastic place to write down the due dates for assignments and so that you may budget your time.
16. **If you are absent, your parents must notify the school.** This is a small school, when you are absent we miss you. In fact we ALWAYS call your home if we haven't been notified of your absence. Please remind your parents to call the school's main number when you are absent. You can typically call as early as 7:00am or call the night before and leave a recorded message.
17. **Make-up your work if you are absent.** Quite a bit happens at GCA in any given day. If you miss a day of school or even a class you will need to make-up your missing work. Missing work is to be made up by attending the appropriate sessions during the "extended school day." The extended school day meets on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2:00pm - 5:00pm. If transportation is a problem, you can take our 5:00pm bus home.
18. **Try not to be absent.** Too many unexcused absences or excessive tardiness (5 in one month or 10 in a semester) will result in a referral to the Student Services for Truancy.
19. **Respond to low progress report grades.** Progress reports are published every two to three weeks, low progress report grades indicate missing work, low test scores, or incomplete projects. Any student who receives a grade of "D" or "F" on his/her progress report is REQUIRED to meet with the corresponding teacher for assistance during the "extended school day." The extended school day meets on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2:00pm - 5:00pm. If transportation is a problem, you may take our 5:00pm bus home.
20. **When you arrive to school, report to your first session class.** If this is your field activity day, you are to report to the field activity briefing area. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to gather outside or in the common area.
21. **If you are late, sign-in and get a tardy pass.** Teachers are instructed to disallow late students from walking into their class without a pass. If you arrive late (after 7:50am) please report immediately to the office and sign-in. Once you have signed-in, you may request a tardy pass. Repeated tardiness will result in an unexcused absence.
22. **Staying after school? Be sure to have a purpose.** Our extended school day is designed to provide an opportunity for students to make-up work, study under the guidance of a teacher, expand their learning, assist teachers with special projects, meet with a guidance counselor (by appointment), or enroll in an elective class (Spanish, Art, Algebra, etc.) The computer lab is also available four days per week for students who need additional computer time. Do not stay after school solely for the purpose of "hanging-out."
23. **Gotta Go?, Let Us Know!** Please schedule your restroom breaks so that they do not interfere with class time when possible. While we realize that emergency situations exists, we also understand that unnecessary or excessive use of the facilities during class time can be disruptive. Be sure to sign the restroom log when using the facilities during the class period. If the restroom privilege is abused, your parents might have to give you your pass back to class after repeated restroom breaks.
24. **The Field Activity Program is Fun ...** but schoolwork comes first! Please understand that the Field Activity Program (FAP) is a class with learning objectives, written work and tests. In many cases the FAP is linked to your classroom learning and grades can even be shared. Furthermore, if you have a "D" or an "F" in any class, if you are missing work, or if you have excessive absences your field activity day can be forfeited and you will

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remain at school for the entire day accomplishing your make-up work. If you have been placed on a disciplinary behavior tracking card you also may be required to remain at school. Any time a FAP day is missed you must complete the required alternative Field Activity Program assignment.

25. **Keep your backpack at home unless it is your field activity day.** Backpacks are only necessary on your field activity day. Keep it packed with the following: water, pens and pencils, towel, change of clothes, rain poncho, REQUIRED aqua-boots, swimsuit, sunscreen, insect repellent.
26. **Field Activity Day: Bring the Required Gear.** Part of your field activity grade will be associated with your responsibility. ALWAYS bring the following items:
- ** Field Activity Backpack - With shoulder straps, suitable to be carried two miles
 - ** Field Activity Program Team Shirt
 - ** Specified Camping Chair with Bag- See School Supplies List
 - ** Specified Aquatic Boots - For uniformity, purchase boots through school.
 - ** Two PaperMate Black (or Blue) Ink Pens, Not EraserMate
 - ** Two #2 Pencils, Sharpened (with Eraser)
 - ** Two Dollars - Hidden in Backpack, Typically Unused.
 - ** Swimsuit—1 Piece Conservative swimsuit for Girls and Knee-Length Lined Trunks for Boys
 - ** Small Towel
 - ** Dry Change of Clothes (T-Shirt, Shorts, Underwear, Socks, etc.)
 - ** Two Bottles of Water in a sealed, leak-proof bottle. (Bottled or Tap water in a 20oz Cola Bottle is fine.)
 - ** Rain Poncho (Correctly sized to protect entire torso from a downpour.)
 - ** Lunch in Soft Cooler Lunch Box with Ice Pack (Lunch may sit in a hot bus for several hours.)
 - ** Sunscreen (Recommend Bullfrog SPF36 spray-on formula.)
 - ** Insect Repellent
 - ** Deodorant or Antiperspirant (Optional)
27. **Don't forget your Team Shirt on Field Activity Day!** The Field Activity Program (FAP) Team Shirt gives you a sense of identity as part of the team. Whenever groups of people come together for a common goal one of the most important expressions of their team spirit is common dress. The Yankees don't wear those pinstripes for nothing! Dressing the same on field activity day also helps our FAP leaders keep the group together and focused. For these reason you are required to bring and wear you FAP Team Shirt on your designated field activity day. Team shirts must be worn as the outermost layer of clothing and must not be modified in any way. You can rent a "forgotten" shirt or even buy a lost one if necessary but don't be without a team shirt on your FAP day.
28. **Can you hear me now?? -- Good.** Cell phones have certainly become part of our society. Perhaps you've seen the video entitled "Inconsiderate Cell Phone Man" while waiting for a movie to begin. Students may bring cell phones to school so long as their presence is invisible to the classroom teacher. Teachers are authorized to confiscate cell phones that become "visible" due to their use during class, ringing, buzzing, or use as a gaming device. Confiscated cell phones will be held in a secure location until a parent or guardian can claim them.
29. **Leave your "Burned" and Explicit Lyrics music at home.** GCA does not allow students to listen to "burned" music, nor do we allow music with explicit lyrics. We have this policy for several reasons: (1) music is easy to "share" and parents may not want their children listening to music with explicit lyrics. (2) burned music may has been "pirated" or illegally obtained. (3) the GCA staff cannot tell if a musical performing artist is appropriate for middle school listening if they are shown a blank CD with magic-marker writing on it. (4) there is no way of telling if a blank CD or MP3's has music, or software without placing it into a computer; software CDs are not

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allowed on campus. **Important note:** Recordings are considered “explicit” even if the offensive language has been “blacked out” or if substitute words are used in a “clean version.” Students who violate these rules shall have their CDs or MP3 players confiscated by a staff member and held until a parent or guardian can drive to the school and claim them. After ten days all confiscated CDs will be discarded. All entertainment devices are subject to random inspections to determine if the device contains explicit content.

30. **CD players, IPOD’s, MP3 Players, and electronic gaming devices should not be brought to school, however...** they may be used on the field activity day bus. All music rules listed above apply. Since GCA cannot guarantee the safety of these devices you bring them at your own risk. Like other electronic devices, if misused (for example if you continue to use an electronic device while the teacher is giving instructions) it will be confiscated and held until your parent or guardian can retrieve it. In addition, bringing these items on trips is a privilege which will be revoked if you continue to misuse the device or ignore the music rules.
31. **Stay off our frequency!** Believe it or not there are several devices that can be used to interfere with school communications. Any device which transmits a radio frequency or infrared signal that corresponds with or disrupts GCA’s communications is prohibited. This includes Walkie-Talkies, Certain Hand-Held Phones, RF Adapters, Remote Controls, Wireless Components, etc.
32. **Light Amplified through the Stimulated Emission of Radiation, or LASERS to you and me!** Lasers have become more powerful and more common in recent years. The school has a special green laser that can transmit light over two miles for astronomy viewings! Lasers and other Light Producing Devices can be distracting and dangerous though, particularly if used in or around vehicles. For this reason, GCA does not allow the use of lasers or other Light Producing Devices like flashlights or LED’s without a need and permission.
33. **Keep your memories NOT your photographs!** Recording devices are permitted by special written permission only. These devices include, but are not limited to, cameras, digital cameras, disposable cameras, video cameras, micro “spy” cameras, camera phones, audio tape recorders, digital audio recording devices, or any other device capable of capturing audio, still pictures or video. Problems arise when these devices are used at inappropriate times in school or inappropriate locations such as the bus or field activity program. For this reason if you wish to bring a recording device to school you must obtain written administrative permission in advance.
34. **Leave your role-playing “gaming” cards at home.** GCA is a very busy place and you will have no time to play.
35. **Order your lunch in advance...** lunches are ordered on the first day of the week for the entire week. Be careful NOT to order a lunch on your field activity day or you will be responsible for payment. If you are absent on the day lunches are ordered it is your responsibility to place your order in the morning, first-thing, when you return.
36. **Follow the correct path to and from your ride.** Riders enter/exit their vehicles at the far end of the building closest to the science room alongside the curb. Please follow the sidewalk to enter/exit the building through the back common area door. NEVER cross the parking lot or cross in front of the cars. Riders must wait until their name is called before leaving their last class. Parents may not enter the parking lot at the end of school to pick up their child until after the school bus has left. After the school bus leaves parents may enter the GCA parking lot via the marked Tillery Road Entrance and join the pickup line. After 2:15 p.m. all pickups must be conducted through the administrative office. Parents, please park your car in the GCA parking lot and come to the office where we will call for your child to come to the office and meet with you for dismissal.
37. **Safety First!** Proper attire, including safety goggles, may be required for certain experiments involving the use of liquid and flames. For this reason, students who do not wear the safety attire will not be allowed to participate and will be given an alternate assignment in an alternate educational setting.
38. **Contracts! Contracts! Contracts!** Referrals to the administration may result in a clear statement of our

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behavioral expectations for you, i.e. a contract. For instance, if you are caught chewing gum (see the gum rule above) you will be required to sign a "GUM Contract". This contract helps clarify any misconceptions you may have about the school rule and the associated consequences. Contracts have proven to be an effective tool to communicate behavioral expectations and to generate positive results in school.

39. **Contracts, Contracts, Contracts!** From time to time it may be necessary to communicate daily with your parents regarding your schoolwork, homework, or grades. In this instance you will be placed on an Academic Contract. This involves a daily tracking card that is to be filled out by you during each class, signed by the teacher at the end of each class, signed by your parent at the end of each day and signed by the administration the next morning before school. This contract typically lasts between one progress reporting period and the next, by then you will have improved your grades with everyone helping!
40. **And Even More Contracts!** You will not be able to participate in labs without having a signed contract and a grade of 100 on the lab safety quiz. All lab safety rules must be followed. Failure to comply with lab rules, regulations, and verbal instructions given by the teacher will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, removal from lab.
41. **No materials may be removed from the lab.** This includes glassware, equipment, disposable items, balloons, gloves, GCA safety goggles, chemicals, liquids, solids, or any other materials.
42. **Living specimens kept in the lab are for observation only.** Handling of the animals is a privilege extended only to the individuals who help care for them. Students wishing to handle the animals must demonstrate responsibility and take a test specific to the animal they wish to handle. All living specimens must remain in the lab while being handled.
43. **Do not enter the science classroom unless the teacher is present.**
44. **Never perform unauthorized experiments.** Unauthorized use of chemicals can produce catastrophic results that may cause personal injury and/or damage to property.
45. **No storage devices** of any kind are permitted in the computer lab at any time. This includes zip drives, pen drives, USB drives, flash memory devices, hard drives, external floppy disk drives, external hard drives, RF transmitters or any other device capable of extracting data from the school network.
46. **Do not install software on school computers.** No student is permitted to install software on any school computer. This includes software downloaded from the internet. Students are prohibited from downloading software from the internet and installing it on a school computer. (Yes, games, songs, music players and screen savers are software!)
47. **Do not play games on school computers.** The school computers are equipped with the software to accomplish tasks like building power point presentations, computer programs, web pages, and documents for print. They are not gaming machines.
48. **Do not send or receive e-mail from school computers.** Students are not permitted to communicate with others through school computers. Instant messaging is not allowed!
49. **Use of the internet is restricted to approved research only.** General surfing of the internet is not allowed. Students will face disciplinary action if they display or attempt to display material that is sexual explicit, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate for a school setting. Students may not purchase or attempt to purchase merchandise using school computers.
50. **Do not enter the computer lab unless the teacher is present.**
51. **Do not tamper with the network files.** Would you like it if someone snooped around your bedroom? Each person's home drive is an extension of their personal space and must not be invaded. Therefore it is against

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- school rules to use the account of another person. Never give your user name or password to another person. You are responsible for the contents of your home directory. You must safeguard this information.
52. **Do not delete files unless you created them and are told to delete them.** Deletion of files may lead to system errors or loss of your work. Never delete a file unless it is one that you are sure you do not need.
 53. **Always save your work products in your own home directory.** You may never find it again if it is not properly saved in your home directory.
 54. **Do not enter the bus unless a staff member is present.**
 55. **“Click-it or tick-it”.** A seat belt must be worn at all times when using school provided transportation and when seat belts are available.
 56. **Follow all posted bus rules!** These include but are not limited to the following: Do not throw objects of any kind, keep all body parts inside the bus at all times (even when the bus is stationary), do not interact with other drivers on the road, do not interact with pedestrians, do not distract the bus driver while he or she is driving, do not make loud noises or sounds, keep your voice and the noise level at a minimum.
 57. **Achieve High standards of behavior in the Field Activity Program.** We will be incorporating Ron Clark’s “The Essential 55” into our field activity program, ISBN: 1-4013-0001-4. This publication deals with students expectations of behavior in public places in addition to respect and common courtesy in relation to others. However you may bring Doritos for lunch (see book).
 58. **“You Gotta’ Eat!”** A proper sac lunch should include a non-carbonated drink along with an element of protein, a fresh fruit or vegetable, and a snack. Do not trade or sell your lunch. Do not touch another person’s lunch. All Field Activity Day lunches should include an ice pack to keep your lunch safe from bacterial invasion.
 59. **Please make all payments on time ...** unless advance arrangements have been made. The student’s name and the purpose of the payment must be clear and evident on the check or payment envelope. We have a secure “drop box” located in the office to streamline payment delivery. Important: please do not combine payments, for example a lunch payment cannot be combined with a quarterly activity fee. Please also pay in advance for lunch. And yes, we take ’em (Visa, MasterCard, Discover).
 60. **Inform the office if you are changing your scheduled means of transportation home.** Bus passes must be requested with parental permission in order for you to ride home with another student or exit at a different stop. Both parents must have given their permission to either the administrative assistant or one of the directors in order to change a stop or a ride home.
 61. **Do your own work, give credit where credit is due.** Cheating or plagiarism (copying another person’s work without giving them credit) is taken very seriously. Do not cheat on any assignments (you can often redo low scores after school). Do not copy anyone else’s work without giving them proper credit.

GCA Dress Code

Gulf Coast Academy’s dress code policy is designed to provide an environment where appropriate social and learning skills are developed for lifetime use. The school setting should model a social structure of mutual respect and cooperation. We strongly feel that appropriate language and dress are essential to effective teaching and student success. Gulf Coast Academy will enforce this dress code in addition to the dress code policy established by the Hernando County School Board for all students in attendance. This dress code states: (Section 4, Pg. 1-12, Article VII) Dress Code: Students are required to wear appropriate clothing according to the situation and the grade level involved. Students may wear shorts, although, spandex-style "bicycle" shorts, cut-off jeans, short shorts, running

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shorts, spaghetti strap tops, bare mid-drifts, and see through boxer type shorts are not allowed. All shirts worn by students must be long enough to be tucked in at the waist and stay tucked in even when the students' arms are raised above their heads. While we do not require students to wear their shirts tucked in, the shirts must be long enough to remain tucked in in these circumstances. Students will not be allowed to wear a jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt to cover unacceptable attire. Shirts that expose skin at the waist will not be allowed in school and students will be sent home to change or be placed in "time-out" should they wear inappropriate attire to school. Any apparel, jewelry, accessory or manner of grooming by which virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark or other attribute denotes membership in a gang or advocates drugs, tobacco products, alcohol, violence or disruption is prohibited. Jewelry shall be worn in a way that is not distracting or does not present a safety or health hazard and does not disrupt the educational process.

The following provisions will also be enforced at GCA:

- No hats or headwear will be allowed (includes caps, bandanas or headbands). Note: Students may wear hats/sunglasses for sun protection on field activity days.
- Halter tops, cut-off shirts (boys or girls), tank tops with cut-out shirts are all prohibited.
- Undergarments are not to be exposed.
- Clothing which has been signed, marked, graffiti-ed, or decorated after manufacturing is prohibited.
- All shirts must have sleeves which cover at least one-half of the upper arm, even if rolled.
- Shorts, shirts and dresses must extend to at least mid-thigh.
- Strapless dresses and tops are prohibited.
- Sandals, "flip flops", clogs, "Jellies" or any open-toe or open-heeled shoes are prohibited.
- "Big Johnson" or other innuendo t-shirts are prohibited.
- Hair may not be colored, clumped, spiked, or worn in a "Mohawk" or other distracting style.
- Stuffed animals, toys, balloons, and other items that are determined to be distracting are prohibited.
- Jewelry which pierces any part of the body except for the earlobe is prohibited.
- Earrings are limited to one-piece studs without any dangling components or small rings.
- Pajamas or other clothing designed to be worn as sleepwear is prohibited.
- Team shirts are to be worn on field activity days as the outermost layer.
- Shoes must have a closed toe and closed heel for foot protection.
- Shoes must be worn with socks.
- Shoes designed for use in and around the water are not permitted at school.
- Shoes may not have any metallic ornamentation including screws, spikes, studs, cleats, chains, etc.
- Shoes must have non-marking soles.
- Shoes which are abnormally large or designed for a special application (i.e biking, motorcycle riding, dancing, climbing, etc.) are prohibited.
- Slippers, slipper socks, moccasins, or other footwear considered lounging footwear are prohibited.
- Sweatbands and other wide bracelets are prohibited.
- Gel bracelets may not be worn in a manner that is determined by the administration to be disruptive to the educational environment.
- Jewelry in the form of chains is not permitted.
- Wallet chains are not permitted.
- Dog collars or spiked wristbands are not permitted.

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- Lipstick, lip-coloring, or lip-gloss with vivid or unnatural colors is not permitted.
- Electronic flashing devices or lasers are not permitted.
- Field Activity Footwear: Students are required to wear a water boot from the approved list in order to participate in wading activities. Water shoes or “aqua-sox” are not permitted. In order to ensure that students have the correct boot, please purchase through the school.
- If suspenders are worn, they must be worn properly (over the shoulders).

Clothing determined by the administration to be unsafe, inadequate, disruptive or indecent will be prohibited at school functions and on school grounds. Students must follow the dress code when attending school functions such as activities, dances, fundraising events, Saturday activities, and/or field trips. Students will be required to wear a T-shirt (provided) to cover an inappropriate shirt or a non-team shirt (on activity day). Students will be required to wear that shirt or be placed in an alternative educational setting until an appropriate change of clothing or shoes can be provided.

GCA Code of Student Conduct

The student code of conduct for the Hernando County School District shall apply to the Gulf Coast Academy of Science and Technology along with the exceptions, amendments, and additions written herein. Whenever there is a conflict between the two documents, the statements in this document shall prevail. For clarification purposes, the term “principal” used in the HCSB “Student Code of Conduct” shall reference the GCA directors; the term “school board” shall reference the GCA Governing Board. Please note the specific differences in the dress code policies and the “levels of disciplinary action” for middle and high school.

A disciplined orderly learning environment is an essential component of a quality educational program. The directors of GCA and the Governing Board will work together to create and maintain this environment through the implementation and enforcement of the school’s discipline policies. Disciplinary reaction on the part of the GCA administration will be governed by: the severity of the offense, the impact on student learning, the impact on the reputation of the school, and the impact or infringement on the rights of the other students in the school.

There are three distinct disciplinary levels, they are:

1. Zero Tolerance
2. Major Discipline Issues
3. Minor Discipline Issues

Zero Tolerance: The GCA Governing Board will not tolerate the presence of persons who engage in violent criminal acts on school property, on school sponsored transportation, or during school sponsored activities. Those students who are found to have committed the following offenses shall receive the most severe consequences provided by the GCA Governing board: Homicide, Sexual Battery, Armed Robbery, Aggravated Battery, Battery or Aggravated Battery on a School Employee, Kidnapping, Arson, Possession-Sale-Use of a Firearm, Possession-Sale-Use of any explosive device, Possession-Sale-Use of any controlled substance, False Reporting of an Emergency Situation, and Victimization.

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Major Discipline Issues: Major discipline issues are actions or behaviors that have a substantial negative impact on: the school's learning environment, the school's reputation, and/or the rights of the other students in the school. The following step-wise discipline interventions will be implemented to correct this type of behavior, while continuing to maintain an environment in which students can learn. Examples of major discipline issues include but are not limited to the following: classroom disruptions, fighting, bullying or intimidation, extortion, threatening another student or staff member, vandalism, improper treatment of animals, unauthorized experimentation, laboratory safety violations, aggressive or lewd physical touching, harassment, inappropriate use of computers in violation of the acceptable use policy (AUP), discrimination, and/or repeated or accumulated minor disciplinary infractions. Other behaviors which fall into this category may be found in the HCSB Student Code of Conduct in Chapter 5, Section 9-A.

Levels of Disciplinary Action for Major Breaches of the GCA/HCSB Code of Conduct:

This section replaces the levels of disciplinary action referenced in Chapter 5, Section 9-A of the HCSB Student Code of Conduct. Particularly egregious behaviors may be dealt with in a non-sequential manner at the discretion of the school's directors.

Level I Intervention: The Level I intervention includes ALL of the following: Parental notification, alternate educational setting for one to three days, and a mandatory meeting with guidance counselor to develop a behavior modification strategy. Student must apply the behavior modification strategies when permitted to return to his/her regular schedule. Repeated behaviors will be referred as a Level II intervention.

Level II Intervention: The Level II intervention includes ALL of the following: Parental notification, parental shadowing for one FULL school day, alternate HOME educational setting for one to three days, and a mandatory meeting with guidance counselor to develop/redevelop/enhance a behavior modification strategy. Students must apply the behavior modification strategies when permitted to return to his/her regular schedule. Repeated behaviors will be referred as a Level III intervention.

Level III Intervention: The Level III intervention includes ALL of the following: Parental notification, parental shadowing for two FULL days, alternate HOME educational setting for one to five days, and two mandatory meetings with guidance counselor to develop/redevelop/enhance a behavior modification strategy. Students must apply the behavior modification strategies when permitted to return to his/her regular schedule. Repeated behaviors will be referred as a Level IV intervention. A level IV intervention is a recommendation for expulsion.

Level IV Intervention: The Level IV intervention is the most serious (school based) measure that will be taken by GCA to assure a quality learning environment for all students. Students referred at this level will be suspended from school (OSS) while awaiting an expulsion hearing by the GCA governing board. This suspension will not exceed ten days without an academic intervention.

Minor Discipline Issues: GCA will implement an economy reward system with specific consequences for minor discipline infractions. This system will replace the levels of disciplinary action found in Chapter 5, Section 8-A of the HCSB Student Code of Conduct. The economy system will be implemented to reward students who set a good example for others by their cooperation and behavior (See GCA Economy Merit System).

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____



Rules & Routines

GCA Economy Merit System

Students will earn credits for their attendance (excluding field activity days). Students must attend the full day to be credited. These credits will be tracked in the GCA banking system and may be used to purchase items at the school, purchase items on designated field activity days, purchase incentives such as dance admissions, special lunches, and other privileges. Statements of account will be issued to the students on a monthly basis so they may track their earnings.

Credits will also be used to deter irresponsible behavior. Students will be charged “Fees”, payable in credits, if they are unprepared for class and need to purchase materials, wish to turn in a late assignment, need to borrow a shirt on field activity day, need to purchase checks, are sent out of class, or violate other school rules.

No student will be permitted to incur a negative balance on their account as this will become a disciplinary issue. Students incurring a negative balance will be required to earn enough credits through community service volunteerism in order to bring their account into good standing. Students who habitually carry a negative balance after written notification will face a long term suspensions until the negative balance issue is resolved.

Students will manage their account by keeping track of their income and expenditures using provided checks and a check register. The skills necessary to maintain the “checking account” will be incorporated into the math curriculum and provide an opportunity for students to practice financial responsibility.

Used responsibly, the GCA Economy Merit System will allow students demonstrating responsible behavior to enjoy benefits, privileges, and incentives furthering their positive attitude and building their self esteem.

Please now refer to the GCA Economy System Rules.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

