



GCA Economy System Rules

Gulf Coast Academy of Science and Technology, Inc.
10444 Tillery Road, Spring Hill, Florida, 34608 (352)688-5092
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What is the purpose of the GCA Economy System:

The purpose of the GCA Economy System is to encourage responsible behavior by providing rewards and incentives for students who save and judiciously spend the credits they earn throughout the school year.

What is a credit?

A "credit" is the unit of currency in the GCA Economy System.

How are credits earned?

Credits are earned in one of five ways:

1. **Attendance:** Most credits are earned through attendance. Each GCA student earns one (1) credit for each non-FAP day in which they are in attendance for the entire school day. Students who arrive late or leave early (for any reason) will not receive their credit for that school day.
2. **Volunteerism:** Students may earn credits through volunteerism at an approved location. Approved locations appear on the official GCA Volunteer record. Students may earn up to ten (10) credits per quarter in this manner. Some conditions apply, please read on.
3. **Reading:** Students may earn credits by reading pre-selected books (novels) from the GCA reading library. In order to earn credits, students must prove that they have read the book by answering questions through a software quiz program called Reading Counts. Students earning a passing score (80% or above) will be awarded five (5) credits for each book. Some conditions apply, please read on.
4. **Memorization:** Students may earn credits by memorizing certain poems from the GCA poetry collection. Each poem, when memorized in its entirety, will earn five (5) credits. Some conditions apply, please read on.
5. **Interest:** Students who save their credits will reap the reward of interest. Interest is compounded at the END of each academic quarter. Students who spend their credits before the quarter ends will not receive interest.

Can credits be traded between students like U.S.A. dollars?

No, credits may not be traded or exchanged as this would compromise the integrity and purpose of the system.

Do the GCA credits have a cash or dollar value?

No, there is no direct dollar exchange rate for credits. It may be noted however that students who save their credits may purchase more valuable rewards later in the school year. Saving credits is encouraged as delayed rewards often are often more valuable than immediate rewards.

What kind of rewards can be purchased with credits?

Some of the rewards and incentives which may be purchased using credits include but are not limited to the following:

1. Dance Passes
2. Dance Pass Discounts
3. Saturday Trips and Activities (Movies, Caving, etc.)
4. Saturday Trips and Activities Discounts



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5. Gift Certificates
 6. Movie Passes
 7. Food Rewards (Pizza, Ice Cream, Soda, etc.)
 8. Special Program Informational CD's
 9. School Supplies (Pencil, Pen, Paper, Clipboard, Water etc.)
 10. Yearbook Discounts
 11. Summer Adventure Camp Discounts
 12. Elective Class Discounts (Spanish, Magic, Art, etc.)
 13. Special Incentives (Vary from School Year to School Year)
 14. Book Fair Titles

Most students embrace the GCA Economy System and are careful about financial management. Responsibility has its rewards, especially when students are working toward a particular goal. The GCA economy system places students on an level playing field as they all have equal potential to earn, save and redeem their credits for the rewards they seek.

Can students lose credits for irresponsible behavior?

Yes, the GCA Economy system also discourages irresponsible behavior as students may lose credits if they are unprepared, improperly dressed, defiant, or disruptive:

1. Teachers may assess a two (2) credit "service fee" (per assignment) for work which is turned in after the announced deadline.
2. Teachers and office staff may assess a two (2) credit "service fee" when they assess a deadline for a parent/teacher communication letter and that deadline is exceeded.
3. The administration assesses a three (3) credit fee when a student is referred to the office for misbehavior.
4. The administration assesses a one (1) credit fee for telephone usage during the school day. This fee is waived before school, during lunch and during the extended school day.
5. Teachers may require students to purchase classroom supplies (pencils, paper, pens, etc) if they arrive to class without being prepared.
6. Field Activity Program teachers may require students to pay a fee of two (2) credits to rent (borrow) a forgotten clipboard, two (2) credits to rent (borrow) a forgotten Field Activity Team Shirt, three (3) credits to rent (borrow) a forgotten FAP Folding Chair or Bag, one (1) credit to purchase bottled water for the day (two bottles are required each activity day), and two (2) credits to store forgotten or abandoned FAP gear.
7. Students are required to bring their personal checkbook to school each and every day; the administration assesses a charge of one (1) credit each time a student uses a borrowed check.
8. In the technology lab, students who waste paper and toner by printing without permission or by carelessly printing multiple copies may be charged one (1) credit per incident. Students may also be charged a one (1) credit fee for password recovery.
9. Students are required to bring their planner to school each and every day. Students who forget their planner may be assessed a fee of one (1) credit per day.



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10. Students can also be charged a fee of two (2) credits to store forgotten personal items and articles.
 11. Student can be charged two (2) credits for contracts including behavioral or academic contracts.

Responsible students rarely lose credits through the GCA Economy System. In this way we can achieve our goal of rewarding the students who routinely do what they are supposed to do: come to school on-time and remain for the entire school day, come to class prepared, turn in school work on time, return permission forms and other forms of communication in a timely fashion, and contribute to the school community in a positive way.

Why are negative account balances so serious?

Sustained negative account balances are typically an indication of a more serious pattern of irresponsible behavior. Students earn enough credits to purchase rewards throughout the school year and still have credits left over. Most students never encounter negative balances and many students consciously save their credits for greater rewards later in the school year. The Economy Reward System acts as a warning system for behaviors, which if left unchecked, could interfere with academic success. The system is fair and objective with natural consequences that actually benefit the child by providing healthy alternatives to traditional disciplinary measures such as detention or suspension. The consequences, by virtue of the numerical value, are always proportional to the severity of the situation. Students are always coached to avoid these consequences prior to enacting them. The administrative staff retains the right to levee more or less credits for an incident and has final determination in credit amount issues.

As stated previously the consequence of volunteerism is only enacted when the child and parent fail to respond to the warning signals; these include loss of credits due to: frequent administrative referrals; weekly late assignments; weekly situations in which the child is unprepared for class, frequent dress code violations, and other forms of errant spending.

A signed warning notice is given when a student's account approaches or is below a negative balance. This letter must be acted upon within two weeks of receipt. If no action is taken to remedy this situation and the student's credit balance remains negative after two weeks a final signed warning notice is given. Failure to respond to the final warning notice within one week can result in a Disciplinary Action including, but not limited to, loss of FAP day or suspension from school until the situation is rectified.

Can eighth graders, upon graduation, leave their credits to a person of their choosing? No, students must earn their credits, they may not be given away or exchanged.

Can sixth and seventh graders carry a credit balance from one year to the next? Students are encouraged to spend the credits they have earned during the school year in which they were earned; however students may roll up to twenty (20) credits from one year to the next. This gives the older students a slight advantage over the incoming sixth graders. That being said, students must redeem their credits (in excess of twenty) for incentives by the end of the school year or risk losing them.

How can I find out how many credits I have in my account?



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Credit statements are usually printed monthly and distributed with the progress reports. Students are also encouraged to keep track of their credits in their check register. Remember, no credit is earned if a student arrives to school late or leaves school early. Those credits, having already been automatically given, will appear as a deduction with a description of either absent, early release, or tardy on the student's credit statement.

Can students earn credits through volunteerism even if they do not have a negative balance? Yes! Students may earn up to ten (10) credits per academic quarter by volunteering at an approved location. All student volunteerism restrictions apply. Volunteerism is rewarded at a rate of two (2) credits per hour. Students working five (5) hours will receive ten (10) credits for their work. Credits earned through volunteerism must also be pre-approved by the school administration prior to being earned and must be submitted to the school on the fully completed official GCA volunteer credit form.

Can students earn credits through volunteerism but not use them unless they are needed at a later date? No, credits must be presented to the school within one week of the date they were earned. For example, students may not earn credits during the summer and declare them in the late fall. Nor can students volunteer during one quarter and receive GCA credits during another quarter.

Can volunteer hours earned for other organizations be used at GCA? If volunteerism is a requirement for a youth group, religious organization, scouting organization, court program or any other program that provides a benefit or requires volunteerism, the hours earned cannot be used to earn GCA credits. This would be considered "double dipping" and is not allowed.

Is there a limit to the number of volunteer hours which may be earned during the summer for GCA credit? Yes, a student with a GCA Economy System balance greater than zero may earn up to twenty (20) credits during the summer months. All student volunteerism restrictions apply.

Can students volunteer at GCA during the summer? Yes, students may volunteer at GCA during the summer, however they must make an appointment with GCA's administrative assistant prior to arriving. Summer GCA volunteer opportunities are limited and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

How to Earn Credits in READING Class:

Exercise your brain by memorizing interesting poems! Credits may be earned through poem memorization or reading novels:

How can I earn credits through poem memorization?

Borrow a poem from the GCA Poetry Collection. Commit this poem to MEMORY through practice and recital. Recite the memorized poem to your English teacher and earn five (5) credits. **Rules:** (1) You must memorize the poem in its entirety, you will not be given partial credit. (2) You may not read your poem, nor may you work from written notes of any kind; your poem must be recited from your memory. (3) You must recite your poem from beginning to end; you may



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not break during the recital for any reason. (4) The recital must be witnessed by the GCA English teacher or an Administrative Staff Member in order to receive credit. (5) Recital attempts must be separated by at least one week; this will grant you the time to practice in between recitals. (6) You must return your poem in good condition before another will be loaned to you. (7) You may work toward the memorization of one poem at a time; you must complete one poem's memorization before you may begin another. Poems must be memorized sequentially, not concurrently. (8) You may change your selected poem (if you fail to memorize it) after thirty days has elapsed from the time you originally borrowed the poem. This rule is designed to discourage "poem hopping."

How can I earn credits through Reading Counts?

Earn credits by reading interesting and enjoyable novels! Check-out a novel from our Reading Counts Collection, read this novel, and take the associated Reading Counts quiz upon completion and earn five (5) credits. **Rules:** (1) You must have possession of the novel for at least two weeks before you can take the test. (2) If you earn a passing score on this test and submit the test score print-out or have the test score witnessed by the administration or English teacher your account will be increased by five (5) credits. (3) If you do NOT earn a passing score on this quiz you will be given the opportunity to test again ONE WEEK LATER. (4) If you do not earn a passing score on your second attempt, you will not earn any credits and you may not test on this novel again. You may however begin to read another novel AFTER the second testing attempt. (5) You may not check out more than one novel at a time. If you check out a novel you MUST complete the testing cycle on that novel; you may not "change your mind" and choose another novel during the testing cycle. (6) You must return your novel in good condition before another will be loaned to you. (7) If you lose or damage your novel, you must replace it before another will be loaned to you. (8) Books read for credit enhancement must be on grade level or above. (9) Only one book may be read every two weeks, so counting on books as a way to rectify a negative credit situation over minus five is not possible.



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