

The Excel
Center®



Student Policies 2024-2025

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School (GEC) is committed to a policy prohibiting discriminatory practices in all aspects of its policies, programs, practices, and operations. All applicants and students shall be treated equally without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender or expression of gender identity, national origin, political affiliation, disability, matriculation, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, familial status, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth, genetic background, or any other legally protected characteristic.

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School (GEC) does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including pregnancy and gender identity) in the educational programs and activities which it operates, including employment, admissions, recruitment, referrals, and collective bargaining. If a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of Title IX, please reference GEC's Grievance Procedures which are available in the Student Handbook and in GEC's administrative offices.

Pregnant students will be provided the same accommodations and supports as are provided to persons with short-term disabilities.

For more information about Title IX, please contact:

Executive Director
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ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Goodwill Excel Center offers classes in 8-week terms, which makes daily on-time attendance very important. Missing even one day of classroom instruction is like missing an entire week, making a student's path toward graduation longer. For this reason, the Goodwill Excel Center has structured policies around attendance in order to maximize student success in its accelerated program and to support students in meeting the goals of their classes. Additionally, GEC has provided multiple levels of interventions within these policies to allow for time to understand student barriers, create support plans, and provide re-engagement where possible.

In person instruction:

GEC's focus on attendance is critical for student success. Most classes are in-person classes. For in-person classes, the student must be physically present in the class to be marked as present.

Regular distance instruction:

We understand that there are many reasons why a student might not be able to attend in person classes for a time and we want to provide opportunities for the student to continue their educational journey with GEC at those times by providing LIMITED opportunities for synchronous distance instruction. Additionally, some classes (such as foreign language and art/music) are regularly taught at GEC in an asynchronous format. Students are limited in the number of distance instruction courses they can take. For synchronous distance classes, attendance will be taken and students will be required to have their camera turned on when attendance is taken and for certain portions of instruction during the class. Further details on regular distance instruction can be found in the Class Criteria Framework/Student Distance Policy.

Situational distance instruction:

In the virtual world of instruction, for any point in time where GEC determines it is necessary to shift to distance learning as the result of a health, safety or other emergency, GEC will operate on the Microsoft Teams for Education platform. GEC's goal for students permitted to access virtual instruction is to access synchronous instruction. However, GEC understands that students will access instruction both synchronously and asynchronously. Students need to work with their Academic Success Coach to schedule courses at times they know they can synchronously attend class. However, if a student cannot attend a synchronous class, the student will still be marked present for the class if the student contacts their Academic Success Coach and engages in one of the following:

- Attended office hours in person or in Teams
- Attended tutoring in person or in Teams
- Attended coaching session in person or in Teams
- Submitted completed classwork to teacher in person or in Teams
- Completed online assignments on Odysseyware for specific classes
- Attended SPED service provider session in person or in Teams
- Completed testing (iReady, SRI, assessment) with a staff member in person or approved on Teams
- Viewed asynchronous lesson on Teams and submitted classwork to the teacher in person or in Teams
- A form of engagement approved by Director, Lead Teacher, and/or Lead Academic Success Coach

The Academic Success Coach must have a log note to match the evidence above to mark the student present as opposed to absent or excused.

Absence: A student is considered absent from a class if they do not attend his/her scheduled class. An adult student is considered absent for the entire day if he/she misses 50% of their entire scheduled classes. An under-18 student is considered "absent" if they miss all their classes and is considered "partially present" if they are present for at least one but not all of their classes and is considered "present" if they are present for at least 60% of their classes. An

absence will be “excused” if it is for one of the reasons listed below and the student follows the process below for having the absence found to be excused. During the first week of each term, a partial day absence will not count as an unexcused absence for the purpose of this policy if the reason for the partial day absence is a scheduling conflict

Absences will be excused for the following reasons:

- Student illness (COVID-19 or any public health concern and/or a doctor’s note)
- Family member of a student illness (including COVID-19 or any public health concern)
- Student doctor’s appointment
- Family member of a student doctor’s appointment
- Death in the student’s immediate family or close friend
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Absences to allow students to visit their parent or legal guardian who is in the military immediately before, during or after deployment
- Jury duty or attendance at court or an administrative hearing under a subpoena or as a party to the action
- Emergency or other circumstances approved by the Lead Academic Success Coach
- Confirmed positive COVID-19 case (and quarantine duration)
- Any period of time that CDC or DC Health guidelines recommend that a student isolate after having been a “close contact” of a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (at the time of the release of this handbook the CDC recommends a person isolate if they were a close contact and are not fully vaccinated and boosted)

Getting Course Work After an Absence:

In the case of an absence from school (excused or unexcused), the Academic Success Coach will connect the student and teacher together to provide next steps for the coursework and assignments missed.

Process for Having an Absence Found to be Excused:

- A student will contact their Academic Success Coach as soon as possible to inform the Coach they will be missing school and/or a class and the reason
- For some absences to be excused, a student must bring a note or other documentation to their Academic Success Coach; if required, the note must be brought to the Academic Success Coach within five days of the student’s return to school
- Absences can only be excused by the student’s Academic Success Coach

Even if the absence is excused, the student will have missed work and class time that they will need to make up. This may delay their progress toward graduation if the work is not made up.

If a student knows he/she has a planned absence (such as a doctor’s appointment, family situation, legal appointment, or housing situation), the student should inform his/her Academic Success Coach as soon as possible to work out a plan with teacher and the coach. The Academic Success Coach will still determine if these absences are excused or unexcused per the guidelines above.

Attendance Outreach:

After two consecutive absences from a class, the students' Academic Success Coach will reach out to determine any issue, barrier, or support needed and reconnect the student with the teacher.

After four unexcused absences (consecutive or non-consecutive) in a term, the students' Academic Success Coach will determine if an attendance support plan is needed. This action is determined by the Academic Success Coach based on the students' current communication as well as engagement and productivity in classes. The Academic Success Coach will go through an internal GEC checklist to determine the action needed. Based on that determination, the Academic Success Coach will complete one of the following:

- If a student is responsive to the coach, then the coach will determine if a formal attendance support plan is needed.
- If a student is not responsive to the coach after two days, then the student will be moved to the re-engaged list and have four days of creative outreach by the GEC staff.
- If the student does not respond after four days, then student is recommended for withdrawal if permitted due to age.

If the attendance support plan is created, then student will be monitored for 2 weeks (8 school days). While on an attendance support plan, if the student is not responsive to the attendance support and/or is not showing progress (meaning is unexcused for 3 of the 4 days in the first week of the plan), then an SST meeting will be scheduled for the student during the second week of the attendance support plan.

The SST meeting involves a coach scheduling a meeting with the student, Lead(s), and teacher(s) to create another layer of intervention and planning to support the student. The plan will involve moving forward with the second week of the attendance support plan.

If the student does not meet the attendance plan requirements and/or the SST plan requirements, a follow-up attendance plan meeting with the Academic Success Coach, the student, and the Lead Academic Success Coach is scheduled.

GEC's Levels of Attendance Support (tiered interventions and support) include:

- Attendance Support Plan
- Student Support Team Meetings (SST)
- Re-engagement
- Recommended for withdrawal

Attendance Support Plans:

Attendance support plans are individualized plans to support a student who is consecutively and/or consistently absent from class. If a student reaches three unexcused absences in a term, the student's Academic Success Coach will reach out to the student. The student must then meet with the Academic Success Coach within two school days of being contacted to create an attendance support plan. If the student is unavailable to meet during that time because of an excused absence, the meeting will take place as soon as possible via virtual platform.

The attendance support plan will be created by the Academic Success Coach, the student's teachers, and other relevant GEC staff. During the eight school days following creation of the plan, the Academic Success Coach will carefully track the student's attendance. If a student is on an attendance support plan, the plan will include a timeline for all missing work and

assignments with specific deadlines. The plan will also include tutoring times, office hours, and next steps for makeup work and instruction. The students' Academic Success Coach will monitor the plan.

Additionally, the Academic Success Coach has the ability to determine if a student needs to be placed on an attendance plan. The Academic Success Coach will collaborate with the teacher(s) to determine the next steps for the student based on attendance and current productivity. The discretion allows for the Academic Success Coach to understand the root cause of the absences and evaluate the students' current academic engagement, productivity, and course schedule.

If the student has less than four unexcused absences during the eight-day period, then the student will no longer be subject to the plan. Students under 18 who do not meet the requirements of the plan will remain on the plan. However, if the student remains consistently and consecutively absent on the plan, the coach will first determine if any classes need to be removed. Depending on the number of classes a student has, classes will be removed to support attendance and focus the student on outcomes in a smaller course load. If the student is still showing consistent consecutive absences on the attendance support plan and after the maximum number of courses have been removed from the students' schedule (meaning the student now only has one course remaining), then the student will be recommended for withdrawal (age permitting).

Un-Enrollment from the Goodwill Excel Center for Attendance:

- 1) *Students 18 years and older:* If the student does not meet with the Academic Success Coach within two school days of being contacted to create an attendance support plan, then the student will be contacted for a student support meeting (SST meeting) for another level of intervention. If the student is not able to be reached, the student will go on the re-engaged student list. If a student with an attendance support plan has four or more unexcused absences within the eight-day improvement period, the student will have courses removed from his/her schedule. If the consecutive, consistent absences remain, the student will be recommended for a final re-engagement effort and then withdrawal and un-enrollment
- 2) *Students 17 years and younger:* If a student has twenty (20) consecutive full-day unexcused absences, he/she will be unenrolled.

Any student who is unenrolled and wishes to re-enroll will be allowed to re-enroll at the next term if space is available once all those on the wait list have been accepted. Students will reapply on the GEC website.

Students with an IEP or 504 plan:

For any student 17 years and younger with an IEP or 504 plan, the Manager of Special Education and the Special Education Case Manager will be part of the Student Support Team meeting (SST). The Manager of Special Education and the Special Education Case Manager will continue to be consulted to determine what accommodations, if any, will be given to the student before unenrolling the student if:

- 1) The student has not contacted their Academic Success Coach within two days to set up an attendance support plan; or
- 2) After having an attendance support plan put in place, the student has four or more unexcused absences; or

After being on the re-engaged student list, there is still no contact or re-engagement.

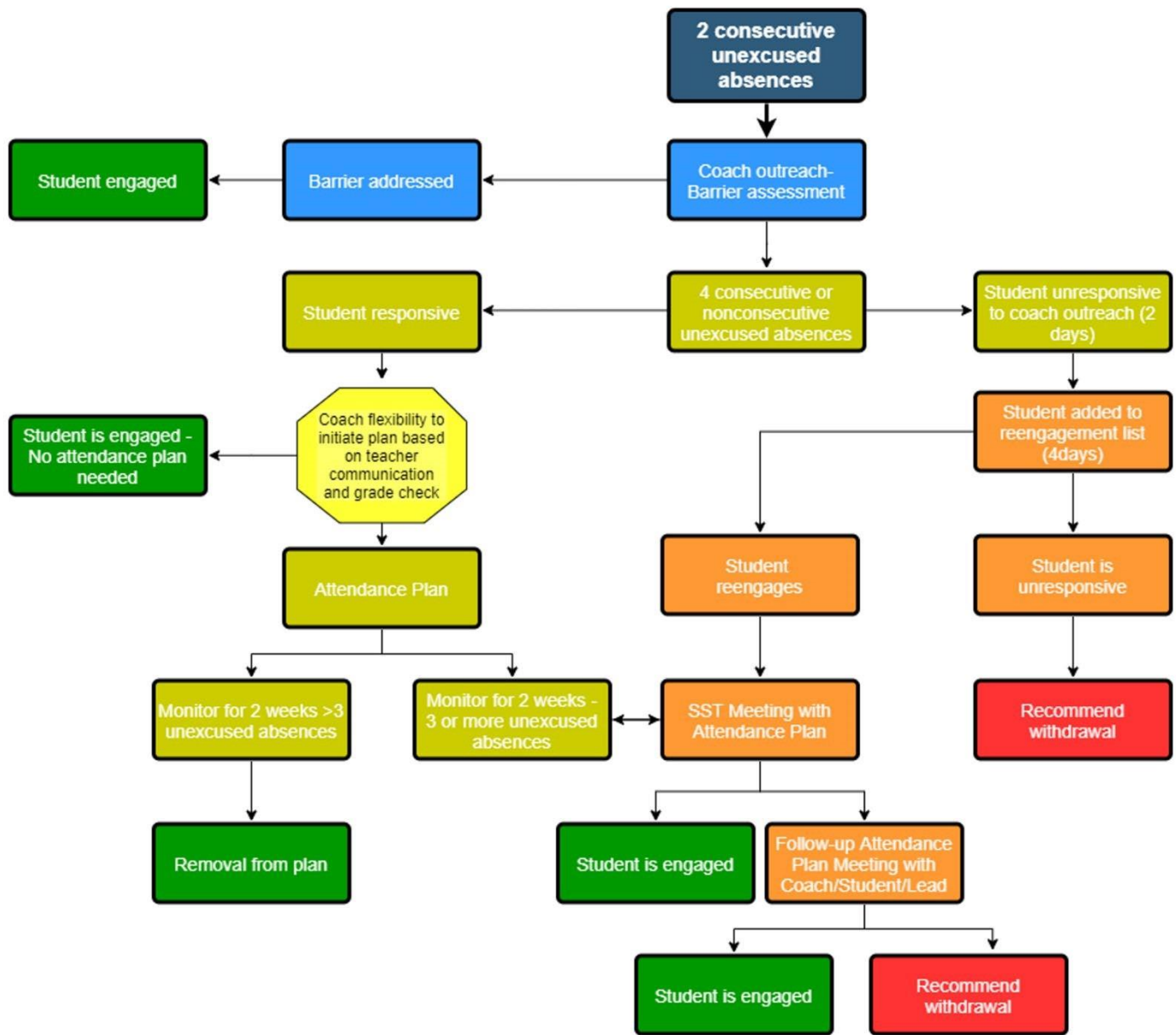
Childcare Accountability:

All students who would like to use the childcare center (for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years old) must submit all required paperwork to the YMCA before their child can attend. At the end of each term, the YMCA reviews the student roster with the School Director to determine any students who have not consistently used the center. If there is a waitlist for the center, there will be a conversation to support consistent attendance in the YMCA for the next term.

Any student has been awarded a childcare spot in the Childcare Development Center could be in jeopardy to lose their spot, and will be placed at the end of any waitlist, if either:

- 1) The student has not contacted their academic success coach within two days to set up an attendance support plan; or
- 2) After having an attendance support plan put in place, the student has four or more unexcused absences.

GEC Attendance Support and Policy Flow Chart
(Students ages 18+)



Student Support Team for Students Under 18:

For all students under 18, a student support team will conduct the following attendance interventions based on the number of unexcused absences the student has for the entire year:

- 2 days of unexcused absence – Youth Services Coach will reach out to student
- 3 days of unexcused absence – Youth Services Coach will reach out to student via phone call, text message, Teams call, Teams chat and/or email to discuss the students’ attendance, understand any attendance barriers, and develop interventions and reengagement for the student
 - An attendance letter is sent to the student about their attendance and any plans made to support the student.
 - The Youth Services Coach will anticipate coordinating a Student Support Team

(SST) Meeting for a student at 5 days of unexcused absences.¹

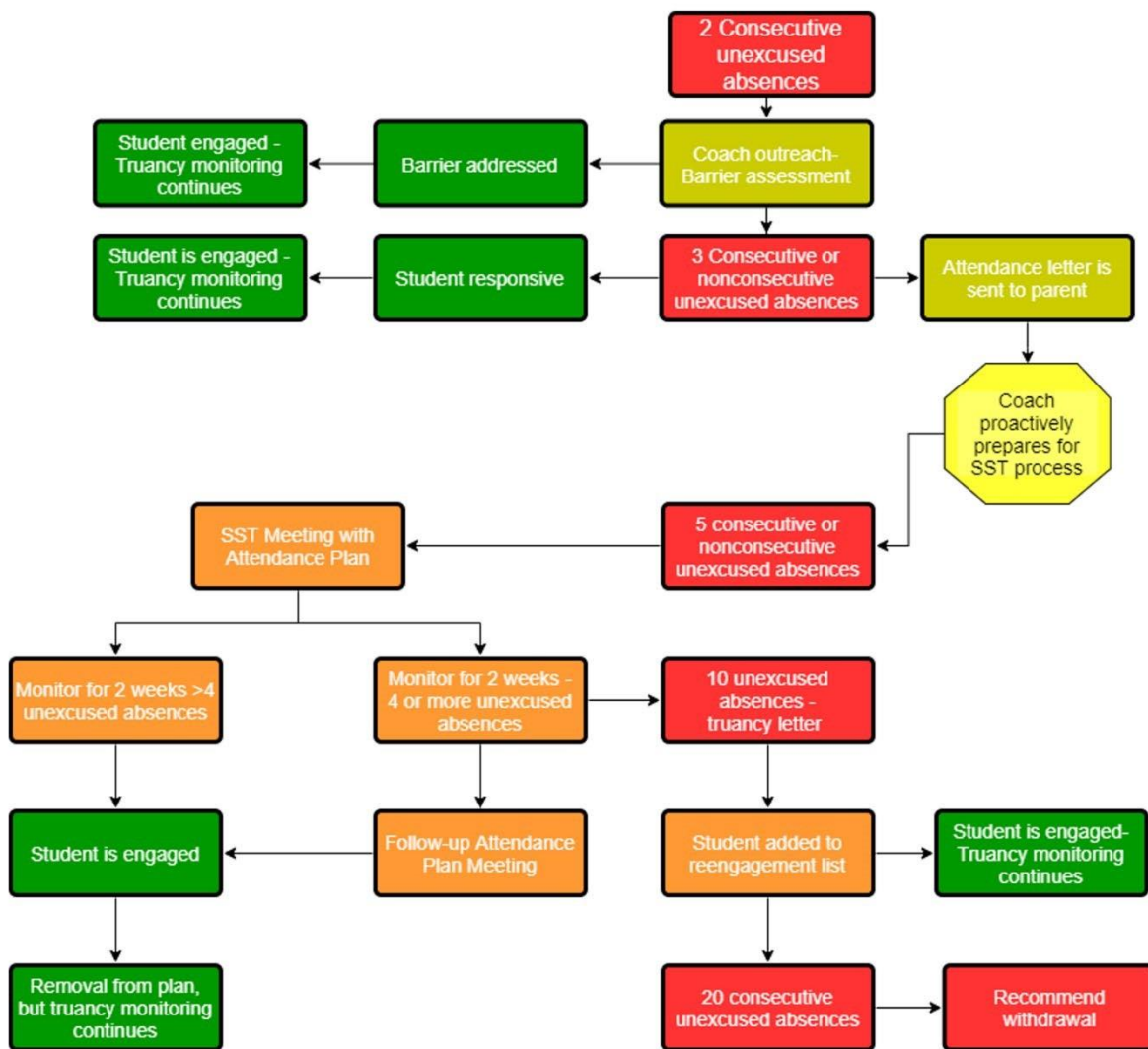
- If a SST meeting is scheduled at this point, an attendance support plan will be created and signed by all relevant GEC staff members and the parent/guardian of the student will be informed. ○
- 5 days of unexcused absence – Youth Services Coach schedules the SST meeting with the students’ team to create an attendance support plan for the student. The attendance support plan is signed by all relevant GEC staff members and the parent/guardian of the student will be informed ○ Student Support Team includes: Youth Services Coach, Lead Academic Success Coach, Manager of Student Support Services, and when necessary the Manager of Special Education and the Special Education Case Manager
 - Youth Services Coach will send a certified letter home and conduct a home visit to schedule a re-engagement meeting.
- 10 days of unexcused absence – Youth Services Coach will send the official truancy letter to the home and to the truancy courts (OSSE).
- Continued on-going outreach from the Youth Services Coach to the student and reengagement efforts by the Manager of Student Support Services.
- 20 consecutive days of unexcused absence (all documented) – Youth Services Coach is recommended for withdrawal and then approved for withdrawal by the Lead Academic Success Coach.

Referral to Judicial System for Truancy of Students Under 18: If a student who is under 18 has ten unexcused absences during the school year, the Goodwill Excel Center will send the student’s parent(s) information about the compulsory attendance requirements for minor students, and report the student to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Students under age 18 with 15 full-day unexcused absences during the school year will be referred to Court Social Services and the Office of the Attorney General Juvenile Section.

GEC Attendance Support and Policy Flow Chart

(For students 17 and younger)

¹ If the Youth Services Coach determines an SST meeting is needed at the 3 days of unexcused absences, the Youth Services Coach can schedule this meeting. Additionally, an SST meeting can be coordinated for the under 18 year old student at any time to support the student.



CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Goodwill Excel Center strives to be a place where all students can learn within a safe environment. The intent of the Code of Conduct is to ensure students remain focused on growth and learning. The Code seeks to provide fair and reasonable rules and procedures to ensure students do not engage in conduct that in any way harms others or interferes with the education of other Goodwill Excel Center students. Students enrolled in the Goodwill Excel Center can expect to receive prevention and intervention support aimed at preventing behavior-based disruptions while at school.

Student Behavior Expectations

A culture of respect is critical to the success of The Goodwill Excel Center. Students must demonstrate respect through appropriate actions, words, tone, and body language. All expected behavior is focused on preparing students for success in life and careers. Unacceptable behavior includes any behavior that harms another person or infringes on another student's ability to learn. This Code of Conduct applies to conduct on or adjacent to school property or

that is directed to students or staff of the school. After enrolling in The Goodwill Excel Center, students are provided a copy of this policy and given examples of ways each infraction can be prevented, along with expectations around intervention, largely led by the Academic Success Coaches and Manager of Student Support Services.

To ensure expectations are clear for all students, below is a list of conduct violations -- classified by severity of the offense into five tiers -- along with the possible responses for each violation.

Bag Checks at GEC

GEC has a bag check policy to ensure the safety and security of the GEC community. At any given time, GEC can institute a bag check requirement for entry into the school building. The bag check protocol is as follows:

- Students will be notified that there is a bag check in place by GEC Staff and the Security Guard
- The bag check will take place by the Security Guard Desk and students are not permitted into the learning area without completing a bag check
 - Students can exit the building if they do not wish to participate in the bag check, but if they come back, they will be subject to a bag check
 - If a student exits the building and does not return for the day, this will be an unexcused absence
- Students will stand with their bag while it is checked by a GEC Staff Member or the GEC Security Guard
- If there is no contraband found in the student's bag, the student will sign in at the Security Desk and proceed to class for the day
- If contraband is found in the student's bag, then the following will happen:
 - The Security Guard will notify the School Director and/or The Manager of Student Support Services
 - The student will not be permitted beyond the Security Guard Desk (and might be asked to wait outside the school building)
 - The School Director and/or Manager of Student Support Services will assess the contraband found (it will not be confiscated) and determine the Tier infraction and proceed with next steps according to the discipline outcomes outlined below
 - Any contraband found that requires contacting authorities will take place
 - Any contraband found that requires suspension will take place
 - GEC will not confiscate any contraband
 - If the student has not left already, the student will be asked to leave for the day
 - If the student is a minor (U18), then the contraband will be confiscated, and the parent/guardian will be called and next steps in alignment with the contraband will take place
- If a student refuses to comply with a bag check and chooses not to leave the building, this will fall under a Tier 4 disciplinary action and next steps will be determined by the School Director and Manager of Student Support Services (see Tier 4 Behaviors below)

On days when bag checks are in place, they will remain in place for the duration of the day and throughout the day and will require students to have their bags checked when returning from lunch and into the building.

GEC reserves the right to institute a bag check in the discretion of the School Leadership. When in place, GEC will follow all bag check policies and protocols.

Tier 1 Behaviors

- Arriving to class late.
- Failing to attend class and/or loitering in the hallways or outside of GEC, during class time. This includes attending distance learning classes in the hallways and not in the assigned rooms.
- Not returning to class after a fire drill or other safety drill.
- Failing to possess GEC issued student identification.
- Loitering or littering (including cigarette butts) on the sidewalks adjacent to the building or in the common areas of the building.
- Smoking cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco-based products inside or within 50 feet of the building.
- Disruptive cellphone use during instructional time.
- Wearing clothing that reveals private body parts, underwear, midriff, see through clothing, or pieces of clothing that are extremely short.
- Gambling by playing cards, shooting dice or otherwise making bets.
- Violation of computer use policy for which no other response is specified in this policy.
- Arguing with GEC staff, demonstrating defiant behavior, or exhibiting non-compliance with GEC staff.
- Failure to comply with GEC required health and safety policies.
- Inappropriate dancing, and/or sexually suggestive movement.
- Using sexually suggestive language, especially in a threatening or disruptive manner.
- Using profanity in a disruptive manner.
- Violation of GEC’s Non-Solicitation Policy.

Tier 1 Responses

| 1 st Offense Response | 2 nd Offense Response | 3 rd Offense Response |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Verbal redirection/coaching session | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Placement on a behavior modification plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement on a behavior modification plan • Mandatory mediation meeting |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory mediation meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term (1-5 days) suspension if behavior is a safety threat |

Tier 2 Behaviors

- Loud, boisterous behavior, including peer-to-peer arguing, and language, and tones that disrupt GEC or patrons of area retail stores and restaurants and do stop and/or minimize with re-direction from GEC Staff Members. This includes both in the building and the distance learning classrooms and Teams learning and community spaces.
- Being under influence of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol.
- Off campus use of marijuana or other illicit drugs or alcohol that results in student emitting odor that is distracting to peers or GEC staff.

Tier 2 Responses

| 1 st Offense Response | 2 nd Offense Response | 3 rd Offense Response |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Verbal re-direction /coaching session • Small group session • Leave campus to “air out” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Placement on a behavior modification plan • Mandatory mediation meeting • Small group session • Leave campus to “air out” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement on a behavior modification plan • Mandatory mediation meeting • Short term (1-5 days) suspension if behavior is a safety threat • Leave campus to “air out” |

Tier 3 Behaviors

- Loud, boisterous behavior, including peer-to-peer arguing, and language, and tones that disrupt GEC or patrons of area retail stores and restaurants and do not stop and/or minimize with re-direction from GEC Staff Members. This includes both in the building and the distance learning classrooms and Teams learning and community spaces.
- Failure to comply with GEC’s safety and security policies including bag check policies and protocols.
- Committing academic dishonesty by copying from a peer, duplicating a peer’s work and submitting it as one’s own work, cutting and pasting Internet-based content, and submitting it as one’s own and/or printing Internet content and submitting as one’s own. Additionally, this includes utilizing tools such as ChatGPT to submit class assignments that will be flagged as academic dishonesty by a plagiarism checker.
- Engaging in sexual activity, including the exposure and contact of private body parts.
- Stealing and/or attempting to steal from GEC as a school, GEC staff, and/or GEC peers, items valued at less than \$100.

Tier 3 Responses

| 1 st Offense Response | 2 nd Offense Response | 3 rd Offense Response |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up •• Mandatory tutoring •• Small group session • Academic probation • Community service • Short term (1-5 days) suspension • Failure of class (academic dishonesty) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Placement on a behavior modification plan • Mandatory mediation meeting •• Small group session •• Academic probation • Community service • Failure of class (academic dishonesty) • Short term (1-5 days) suspension • Long term suspension/expulsion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term (1-5 days) suspension • Long term suspension/expulsion • Failure of class (academic dishonesty) |
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Tier 4 Behaviors

- The use of technology to access sexually and/or violently explicit content, to post inappropriate or unauthorized pictures, and/or post threats, embarrassing, or hurtful images of GEC peers.
- Engaging in sexual harassment by proposing or soliciting sexual favors, sex-based responses, or reactions especially in a way that is offensive, obscene and/or hurtful.
- Bullying or otherwise making threats; physically, or verbally intimidating a GEC staff member and/or peer.
- Stealing and/or attempting to steal from GEC as a school, GEC staff, and/or GEC peers, items values at \$100 or greater.
- Creating, or falsifying communications, records, or documents, including phone records, text.
- Committing false alarms.
- Fighting or otherwise engaging in violence; causing physical harm to another person.
- Malicious destruction of property causing less than \$1,000 damage.
- Possession, use, sale or exchange of a dangerous weapon such as a knife or box cutter.
- Possession or use of drug paraphernalia or a drug that is illegal under Federal law (including marijuana) in or within 500 feet of GEC. (*Note:* see Tier 5 for more serious drug offenses.) **Note: any materials confiscated by GEC under this provision will be turned over to the police.**
- Suspended for a tier 1-4 infraction two times or more.

Tier 4 Responses

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| 1st Offense Response | 2nd Offense Response | 3rd Offense Response |
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| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Community service • Short term (1-5 days) suspension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student disciplinary write-up • Placement on a behavior modification plan • Require cellphone to be “checked,” with | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term (1-5 days) suspension • Long term suspension/expulsion |
| | <p>Academic Success Coach each day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory mediation meeting • Community service • Short term (1-5 days) suspension • Long term suspension/expulsion | |

Tier 5 Behaviors

Hitting or otherwise assaulting a GEC staff member, or threatening serious bodily harm to a GEC staff member, or:

Any conduct that is a felony under Washington D.C. or Federal law, such as:

- Felony assault (such as assault with a dangerous weapon, assault with intent to cause serious bodily harm, or assault while committing another crime).
- Robbery (theft of something from a person’s immediate actual possession).
- Possession of a firearm; possession of a switchblade (spring loaded) knife; possession of a knife that is longer than three inches with intent to use the knife unlawfully against another person. **Note: any materials confiscated by GEC under this provision will be turned over to the police.**
- Manufacturing, sale or possession with intent to distribute of a schedule I, II or III controlled substance (not including simple possession of 8 ounces or less of marijuana). **Note: any materials confiscated by GEC under this provision will be turned over to the police.**
- Malicious destruction of property causing more than \$1,000 damage.
- Bomb threat.

Tier 5 Responses

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|--|
| 1st Offense Response |
| Expulsion |

Marijuana and Drug Free School Zone

GEC is a school and therefore is a drug free zone. GEC understands marijuana is decriminalized in DC, however it is not permitted in the school building. If marijuana and/or

marijuana paraphernalia is found, it will not be confiscated, but will be a Tier 4 or potentially a Tier 5 infraction and the outlined responses will take place. Students will be asked to leave if it is found on them or in their belongings and the aligned Tier discipline actions will take place. GEC wants to ensure the health and safety of the community is upheld and the school continues to be a drug free zone that is focused on learning.

Discipline Process

The student is written up by the teacher (if the incident occurred in class) or an Academic Success Coach, or non-instructional staff member (if the incident did not occur in class) and the write-up goes to the School Director and the Manager of Student Support Services.

After class (if it is a Tier 1 incident that occurred in class) or after the incident (in all other cases), the School Director and the Manager of Student Support Services (if on site) meets with the student, and, if available, the student's Academic Success Coach. During this meeting, the student is to complete a "First Person Narrative" which is an opportunity for the student to tell what happened, in writing, from their perspective.

The student follows the remainder of their daily schedule unless a suspension is issued before the end of the school day. If a suspension is issued and the student is 18 or older, the student will leave GEC immediately. If a suspension is issued and the student is under 18, the student will not be permitted to leave GEC until the end of the student's regular class schedule or until the student is picked up by his/her parent or guardian. For all students under 18, the Coach will seek and facilitate involvement of the student's parent or guardian in response to the incident resulting in a disciplinary action.

The teacher (or other staff) is to complete a "First Person Narrative" no later than the beginning of the next business day.

The School Director and the Manager of Student Support Services reviews both First Person Narratives and determines the appropriate discipline intervention based on the disciplinary protocol and past offenses with the goal of making the discipline individualized, fair, equitable, developmentally appropriate, proportionate to the severity of the student's offense and, where appropriate, restorative.

Law enforcement will be involved only if school personnel determine that student behavior cannot safely and appropriately be handled through other disciplinary action.

Following is a description of each discipline intervention.

Disciplinary Write Up and Verbal Redirection/Coaching

Counseling by an Academic Success Coach is the initial step to mentor or modify conduct. The Coach will discuss the behavioral concern or conduct violation, affirm expectations regarding conduct, and communicate what the response will be if there is no improvement. Coaching will be documented in the student's file. Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected and coaches will follow-up with the student to ensure consistent success.

Behavior Modification Plan

The conduct violation and expectations will be communicated in writing to the student and the student will be provided with a written behavior modification plan. Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected.

Short Suspension (1-5 days)

The Manager of Student Support Services and the School Director will investigate the conduct violation and adhere to the student discipline code of conduct. During the investigation, there will be a meeting with the student to give the student notice of the charge and the information the school has to believe the student engaged in the conduct. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story and/or an explanation for his/her behavior verbally and through completing a "first person narrative." This "first person narrative" will become part of the reports in the investigation. The Manager of Student Support Services and the School Director will meet to review the reports and investigation and determine the next steps for suspension in alignment with the Handbook. A letter including the length and reason for the suspension will be given to the student (and parents of students under the age of 18). All students (and parents of students under the age of 18) receiving suspension will be afforded the opportunity to appeal (see process in next section). Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected upon a student's return. While suspended, students will be provided with work and access to teachers and coaches to assist them. Any school work that cannot be completed by the student during the suspension may be made up upon returning to school.

Suspensions may only be used to ensure safety or in response to the most serious offenses.

**Long-Term
Suspension (6-10
days) or Expulsion**

Expulsion may be necessary when any of the above interventions are not successful in improving conduct or if a student commits a Tier 5 conduct violation, or multiple Tier 4 conduct violations. The Manager of Student Support and the School Director will investigate the matter promptly (ordinarily within 3 days) and review the performance history and record of progressive discipline. If the decision is made to move forward with expulsion, a hearing shall be scheduled promptly (and ordinarily to occur within 5 days of the decision to move forward with the hearing). Written notice must be provided to the student (or parents of students under the age of 18) at least 1-2 days before the expulsion hearing of the specific grounds for the expulsion, and the nature of the evidence supporting the expulsion. The decision maker at the hearing shall be impartial and shall only consider evidence presented at the hearing. The student shall be permitted to present evidence at the hearing. The decision shall be provided in writing to the student (or parents of students under the age of 18) promptly after the hearing (ordinarily within 2 days after the hearing). All students (and parents of students under the age of 18) receiving expulsion will be afforded the opportunity to appeal (see process in next section). While suspended, students will be provided with work and access to teachers and coaches to assist them. Any school work that cannot be completed by the student during the suspension may be made up upon returning to school.

If a student who is under 18 or has an IEP is expelled, the Manager, Student Support will recommend alternative school placement.

When there is a recommendation for expulsion of a student, the School Director and the Manager of Student Support Services may suspend the students until the conclusion of the investigation following the procedure for short suspensions outlined above. This may occur if the School Director, Manager of Student Support Services, or designee believes that the students must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of:

- Interference with an educational function or school purposes;
or
- A physical injury to themselves, other students, school employees, or visitors to the school.

Long-term suspensions and expulsions may only be used to ensure safety or in response to the most serious offenses. No student under age 18 may be suspended for more than 20 cumulative school days during an academic year unless (a) the President/CEO of GEC provides written justification to the student and parent describing why exceeding the 20 day limit is a more appropriate disciplinary action than alternative responses; or (b) the student's conduct necessitated an emergency removal and the President/CEO of GEC provides written justification for the emergency removal to the student and parent.

Discipline Appeal Process

Students (or parents if a student is under age 18) shall have 2 business days after being notified of a suspension or expulsion to contact the School Director to request a meeting to appeal a suspension or expulsion. The staff hearing the appeal shall, if feasible, be above, in the supervisory chain of the school, the person who made the suspension or expulsion decision. During the meeting, the student (or parents if a student is under age 18) shall have the right to review the summary of the conduct violations and present their case.

Discipline Process for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that demonstrate conduct violations will immediately be referred to the Manager of Special Education, where intervention plans will be developed and implemented. Students with conduct violations that could be the direct results of their disabilities will be required to attend a mandatory intervention meeting with their instructors and their Academic Success Coach and the Manager of Special Education. In instances where students are over the age of 22, The Goodwill Excel Center will not need to continue to implement IEP (which does not serve students over age 22) goals for students who are expelled and will not need to contract services for students who are expelled.

For students under age 22 who have IEPs, a Manifestation Determination shall be made by the IEP team within 10 school days of the removal. School personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to students with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures that would be applied to students without disabilities, if:

- In the MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION review, the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the code of conduct is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability;
- SERVICES DURING PERIODS OF REMOVAL are provided to the student; and
- Notification of a CHANGE OF PLACEMENT is given to the student.

School personnel must provide the student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program with written notice of the school's obligation to provide the student with an opportunity to complete coursework required for graduation that: (a) includes information regarding all methods available for completing the coursework; and (b) states that the methods available for completing the coursework are available at no cost to the student.

School personnel may remove the student to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if there are SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES and the removal is for not more than 45 school days.

Return After Expulsion

An expulsion from GEC will ordinarily be for five terms, which is the equivalent of one full year. After five terms, a student can re-apply to GEC using the same process and subject to the same requirements as any other student. Before the first day of class, he/she will also be required to (1) submit a letter to the School Director explaining why he/she is ready to return to GEC; and (2) participate in a re-entry meeting with the student's Academic Success Coach, the Manager of Student Support, the School Director and the Executive Director.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

It is the policy of the Goodwill Excel Center that all employees, students, parents, and visitors have the right to voice their complaints or grievances about matters pertaining to its programs and activities. Accordingly, the following grievance procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

A grievance is a complaint to GEC about one of the following:

- (1) The educational environment or interpersonal conflicts;
- (2) Issues related to identification and placement of English Language Learners; or (3) Discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or otherwise.

1. Who May File a Grievance

The procedures set forth below may be used by grievants who are students or parents.

2. Other Remedies

The existence of this procedure does not bar grievants from also filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

3. Informal Grievance

Because many difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, grievants are encouraged to discuss their concern or harassment complaint promptly and candidly with their Academic Success Coach.

If the Academic Success Coach cannot remedy the grievance, the student is encouraged to submit their grievance informally, in writing. When presented with an informal written grievance, the following procedure should be followed:

- The Academic Success Coach should schedule a mediation with the student and the alleged harasser or perpetrator (unless the Academic Success Coach determines that a mediation is likely to subject a victim of harassment to further harm).
- If the mediation is not successful, the student should come with their Academic Success Coach to the School Director for a grievance conference.

The grievant is not required to discuss his or her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal grievance.

4. Formal Grievance

To file a formal grievance, within ninety (90) days of the harassment, discrimination, or complaint that is the subject of the grievance, a grievant shall file a written notice with the Manager, Student Support. The written notice shall identify the nature of the complaint, the

date(s) of occurrence, and the desired result, and shall be signed and dated by the person filing the grievance. Contact information for the Manager, Student Support Services is:

Lawrence Hopkins
Manager, Student Support Services
1776 G Street, NW
Washington DC, 20006
Lawrence.Hopkins@goodwillexcelcenter.org(202)-934-0285

The Manager, Student Support Services will promptly initiate an adequate and impartial investigation of the grievance. Each formal complaint will be investigated, and will be decided after receiving information from the appropriate individuals. Investigations may include interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents, and allowing parties to present evidence.

All documentation related to the investigation and discussions held in this process are considered EXTREMELY CONFIDENTIAL and should not be revealed to or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the complaint, with its investigation, or with the decision making process. This provision does not include discussions with governmental authorities.

Within thirty (30) days of receiving the written notice, the Manager, Student Support shall respond in writing to the grievant (the "Response"). The Response shall summarize the investigation, state whether the grievance has been found to have merit and, if so, state the appropriate resolution.

If, as a result of the investigation, harassment, or a valid grievance is established, appropriate corrective and remedial action shall be taken.

If the grievance is with the Manager, Student Support Services the grievant should direct their concerns to the School Director. If the grievance is with the School Director, the grievant should address their concerns with the Executive Director (Dr. Chelsea Kirk), and if after his/her investigation and action, the grievant is still unsatisfied then the grievant should direct their concerns to the Chief Integration Officer who can be reached at:

Colleen Paletta
Chief Integration Officer
1140 3rd St, NE, Suite 350
Washington, D.C. 20002
Colleen.Paletta@dcgoodwill.org
(202) 715-2609

5. Appeals

If the grievant is not satisfied with the Response, the grievant may appeal in writing to the School Director within ten (10) business days of the date of the Response. The written appeal must contain all written documentation from the initial grievance and the grievant's reasons for not accepting the Response.

Within thirty (30) days after receiving the written appeal, the Executive Director will respond in writing to the appellant stating whether the appeal has been found to have merit and, if so, state the appropriate action to be taken.

The Executive Director can be reached at:

Executive Director

Chelsea Kirk

Chelsea.Kirk@goodwillexcelcenter.org

Phone: 202-309-6615

6. Prohibition Against Retaliation

The Goodwill Excel Center prohibits retaliation against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, the Goodwill Excel Center prohibits any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

7. Miscellaneous

The Goodwill Excel Center may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the modification (a) is for good cause, and (b) does not violate due process rights or policies of the DC Public Charter School Board.

Grievants also have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html. For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or ocr.dc@ed.gov.

GEC's board member contact for purposes of this Grievance Policy is:

Catherine Meloy

Board Member

1140 3rd St, NE, Suite 350

Washington, D.C. 20002

Catherine.Meloy@dcgoodwill.org

(202) 715-2603

SAFEGUARDING OF STUDENT INFORMATION (FERPA) POLICY

Purpose: To clarify the restrictions on disclosure of students' education records under the Family and Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") for the Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School ("School") and its employees.

Policy: The School may not release personally identifiable information contained within student education records to a third party unless such release is expressly permitted under FERPA. A student's education records under FERPA include all records directly related to the student and which are maintained by a School. Records covered by FERPA therefore include, but are not limited to: grades, report cards, transcripts, attendance information, academic appeals, and records of any disciplinary proceedings. This list is not exhaustive and is provided only as an example of the wide range of information considered to be an "education record" under FERPA.

Definitions:

Eligible Student: A student 18 years of age or over. (Eligible Students have FERPA consent rights.)

Parent: A parent or legal guardian of a student at the School who is under the age of 18, or a legal guardian of a student at the School who is 18 years of age or over.

Procedures:

Annual Notification

The School will provide annual notification to Parents and Eligible Students of their rights under FERPA.

Disclosure

The School will protect the privacy of all student education records and will not disclose personally identifiable information within student education records to anyone other than the Parent or Eligible Student unless (1) the Parent or Eligible Student has provided prior written consent of such disclosure using a "Consent to Disclose Student Education Records" form available from the School Registrar or other authorization form approved by the School's General Counsel; (2) the information to be disclosed has been classified as "directory information" in the School's annual FERPA notification (described further below); or (3) the disclosure is permitted under one or more FERPA exceptions, some of which are presented below, but must be specifically determined to apply in a particular circumstance by the School's administration before the disclosure occurs.

Consent to Disclose Student Education Records Form ("Consent Form")

Unless the requested records are not covered by FERPA, have been classified "directory information" in the annual FERPA notification, or another exception applies, a Parent, or Eligible Student must provide advance written permission to release the student's education records to an outside third-party. The Parent's or Eligible Student's permission must be given through completion of the Consent Form available from the School Registrar. No information may be released beyond the scope of the permission as indicated in the form.

Once completed, the signed Consent Form will be kept in the School's records. Parents or Eligible Students may revise their consent at any time during the year by completing a new form.

No form shall be effective for more than one academic year.

Directory Information

Allowable Information

The School may disclose student information that has been classified as "Directory Information" in its annual FERPA notification. Directory information refers to information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to, the following student information:

1. Student name
2. Address and telephone number
3. E-mail address
4. Photograph
5. Date and place of birth
6. Grade level
7. Dates of attendance
8. Participation in officially recognized activities
9. Degrees, honors, and awards received

Directory information cannot include a student's Social Security number. A student's ID number or user ID can be considered directory information, but only if that identifier cannot be used to gain access to the student's education records without utilizing a password or personal identification number.

Annual FERPA Disclosure Regarding Directory Information and Opt Out Option

In order for the School to disclose directory information, it must first provide public notice in an annual FERPA notification to Parents and Eligible Students of the following:

1. The types of personally identifiable information that is designated as directory information;
2. A Parent's or Eligible Student's right to refuse the designation of any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information; and
3. The period of time within which a Parent or Eligible Student has to notify the School in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information.

The required annual FERPA notification can be provided within other informational documents sent by the School or as separate School correspondence.

Exceptions

Allowable Disclosures

There are several exceptions that permit the release of student education records under FERPA. The following are some common examples of parties who can receive disclosures without the student's written consent in a manner that does not violate FERPA:

1. A contractor, consultant or volunteer to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions, if the party is under the direct control of the School and has met the Third-Party Requirements described below.
2. Other schools, school districts or institutions of postsecondary education in which the student is seeking to enroll or to transfer credits.
3. Authorized representatives of the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB), the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education ("OSSE"), U.S. Department of Education ("DOE"), the U.S. Attorney General ("AG"), or the U.S. Comptroller General ("USCG") for audit, evaluation, or compliance activity with respect to Federal or state education programs.
4. Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, PCSB, the School, or another governmental entity provided such organization has met the Third-Party Requirements described below.
5. Schools' accrediting agencies.
6. To appropriate parties, if necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other individuals.
7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

Responses to requests for student records can be made to the third-parties identified above.

Recordkeeping Requirements

Unless the disclosure is to a school official as defined in 34 CFR 99.31(a)(1), a record of any disclosure must be made in the students' education records, which describes: (1) the party or parties who received the students' records; and (2) the legitimate interests of the party or parties had in requesting and obtaining the information. In the event that the disclosure is to an authorized representative of the PCSB, School, OSSE, the DOE, AG, or USCG, the record of the disclosure may be made by class, school, or other appropriate grouping. (For example, if OSSE requested all student records from the School, a record could be made indicating that the entire School's student records were provided, rather than placing a record in each student's file.)

Notification Requirements

If the School receives a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, there may be certain notification requirements it must make before disclosing the students' records. The Parent or Eligible Student may need to be notified of the order or subpoena in order to be given an opportunity to seek protective action. Upon receipt of any judicial order or subpoena (whether it requests student education records or not), immediately notify the School's General Counsel ((202) 719-1235).

Third-Party Requirements

If the School discloses student records that contain personally identifiable information to a contractor or consultant who is a school official as defined in 34 CFR 99.31(a)(1), the School and the contractor or consultant must enter into a written agreement that specifies that the contractor or consultant will not disclose the information to any other party without the prior consent of the Parent or Eligible Student.

If the School discloses student records that contain personally identifiable information to a research organization, a written agreement must be entered into. The agreement must specify the following:

1. The type of student records to be disclosed to the authorized representative;
2. The purpose for which the student records are being disclosed;
3. A requirement that the authorized representative must destroy any personally identifiable information when it is no longer needed for the purpose specified, and a time period in which the information will be destroyed; and
4. Policies and procedures to protect personally identifiable information within the students' records from re-disclosure and unauthorized use by the authorized representative.

Health and Safety Emergencies

The School may disclose student education records that contain personally identifiable information to appropriate parties, including parents of a student, in connection with an emergency, if necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other individuals as determined by the School's President & CEO, Chief Integration Officer or Executive Director, in consultation with the School's General Counsel. In disclosing student records, a determination must be made that there is a clear and significant threat to individuals' health or safety. If a disclosure is made due to a health or safety emergency, the School must record a description of the significant threat to students or other individuals that formed the basis for the disclosure, and the parties who received the information.

Other FERPA Requirements:

Right to Request Inspection of Student Records

Every Parent or Eligible Student shall be allowed to personally inspect copies of his or her records upon request. The School shall either provide copies of student records to Parents and Eligible Students upon request, or make arrangements to allow for inspection of requested records within 45 days of when the request was received.

A reasonable fee for copies of student records may be charged, but not if imposition of a fee will prevent the Parent or Eligible Student from receiving copies of the records. No fee may be charged solely in order to search for or retrieve a student's education records.

Right to Request Amendments to Records and Hearings

If a Parent or Eligible Student believes that the education records maintained by the School relating to the student contains information that is inaccurate or misleading, he or she may ask the School Registrar, in writing, to have the records be amended. If, based on that written

statement, the School decides not to amend the records as requested it must inform the Parent or Eligible Student of its decision and the right to a hearing. The hearing may be conducted by any School staff who was not involved in the initial decision not to accept the Parent's or Eligible Student's request to amend the relevant records.

In the event of a hearing, if the School staff who conducted the hearing decides that the information in question is inaccurate or misleading, it must direct relevant staff to amend the records accordingly and inform the Parent or Eligible Student of the amendment in writing. If, on the other hand, School staff decides that the information is not inaccurate or misleading, it must provide its decision in writing and inform the Parent or Eligible Student of the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information. School staff's decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

Reasonable Protection of Student Information

The School will permit School employees to obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests. The School will use physical and technological access controls for controlling access to education records.

Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("Eligible Students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School ("School") receives a request for access.

Parents or Eligible Students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the School Registrar a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or Eligible Student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or Eligible Student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or Eligible Students who wish to ask the School to amend their child's or their education record should write the School Registrar, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or Eligible Student, the School will notify the parent or Eligible Student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or Eligible Student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official typically includes a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the School, performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as a business that provides a cloud hosting services for School data, an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is

already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include information from the student's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or Eligible Student's prior written consent. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with names, addresses and telephone listings of students unless Eligible Students or parents have advised the LEA that they do not want the student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want School to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from the student's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify School in writing within the later of: (a) 14 days after the student's first day of class at the School; or (b) 14 days after the first day of the School year. The School has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student name
2. Address and telephone number
3. E-mail address
4. Photograph
5. Date and place of birth
6. Grade level 7. Dates of attendance
8. Participation in officially recognized activities
9. Degrees, honors, and awards received

Directory information cannot include a student's Social Security number. A student's ID number or user ID can be considered directory information, but only if that identifier cannot be used to gain access to the student's education records without utilizing a password or personal identification number.

ADMISSION PREFERENCE POLICY

GEC does not use any preferences in its admission process.