Gateway Community Charter Schools

CCCS GCC Virtual Academy

GCC Family & Student Handbook
2026-2027

Table of Contents

SECTION 1 ..... **5**
Welcome to Gateway Community Charters 5
About GCC 5
Mission 6
Vision 6
Core Values (SERVICE) 6
Portrait of a GCC Graduate 7
Capturing Kids' Hearts 7
Understanding Legal Codes in this Handbook 7
Purpose of this Handbook 8
Annual Notifications Statement 8
SECTION 2 ..... **9**
ACADEMIC PROGRAM 9
Academic Standards 9
Academic Expectations 9
CAASPP and ELPAC 9
K-2 Reading Screener 10
Student Success Team (SST) 10
Special Education and Section 504 Services 10
At-Risk Students 11
Code of Academic Conduct 11
Physical Education 12
Physical Fitness Test 12
SECTION 3 ..... **14**
STUDENT ATTENDANCE & ENROLLMENT 14
Excused Absences 14
Unexcused Absences 14
Attendance – Independent Study (IS) Programs 14
Verifying Student Absences 14
The Importance of Attendance 15
When a Student is Chronically Absent 15
Nonclassroom-Based Tiered Re-Engagement 15
Voluntary Withdrawal 16
Involuntary Removal Process 16
SECTION 4 ..... **18**
STUDENT CONDUCT 18
Behavior Expectations 18

General School Rules....18
Dress Code Guidelines....18
PE Dress Code....18
Mobile Communications Device Policy....19
Items that Must Stay at Home (non-exhaustive list)....19
Animals/Pets....19
Bicycles, Scooters, Roller Skates (Blades), Skateboards....19
Anti-Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination....19
Internet Safety and Technology Use....20
Sale of Items at School Prohibited....20
SECTION 5....21
STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY....21
Health....21
Immunizations....21
Prescription Medicine....21
Over-the-Counter Medications....22
Head Lice....22
Student Emergency Contact Information....22
Custody Disputes....22
Counseling Services....22
Safety Drills....23
SECTION 6....24
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT....24
Opportunities for Parental Involvement....24
Volunteer Information....24
School Site Council (SSC)....25
District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC)....25
Communication with Parents....25
Aeries Parent Portal....25
Parent Square....25
School Newsletters....26
School Website and Social Media....26
Student or Parent Complaints....26
Uniform Complaint Procedures:....26
Title IX Complaint and Investigation Procedures:....26
SECTION 7....28
SCHOOL INFORMATION....28
Principal Welcome....28
Principal's Message....28
School Mission/Vision....29
School Contact Information....30

Calendar..... 31
2026-2027 School Calendar..... 31
Bell Schedule..... 32
Visitor Procedures..... 32
Campus Map..... 32
Staff Directory..... 32
Staff Directory..... 33
SECTION 8..... 35
SCHOOL PROGRAMS & PROCEDURES..... 35
Grading..... 35
Grading Policy..... 35
Grade Scale K-5..... 35
Grade Scale 6-12..... 36
Progress Reports..... 36
Academic progress and grade reporting:..... 36
School Work..... 37
Positive Reinforcement..... 37
Student Code of Conduct..... 38
Consequences..... 41
Graduation Requirements (if applicable)..... 41
Dual Enrollment..... 43
Work Permits..... 43
Biliteracy..... 44
State Seal of Biliteracy..... 44
Textbooks..... 44
Graduation Ceremonies..... 44
School Communication..... 45
APPENDICES..... 46
GCC and Community Resources..... 46
GCC Community Engagement Department..... 46
Immigration Resources..... 47
Gateway Community Charters 26/27 School Calendar..... 48

SECTION 1

Welcome to Gateway Community Charters

Gateway Community Charters, Inc (GCC) is a nonprofit 501(C)3 Charter Management Organization (CMO) that provides leadership, operational support, and shared services to its family of charter schools. GCC works in partnership with each school to ensure students receive a high-quality educational experience while supporting school leaders, teachers, and staff in meeting academic, operational, and compliance goals.

About GCC

GCC oversees nine independently authorized Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). While each GCC school maintains its unique mission, educational program, and school culture, GCC provides centralized support in areas such as educational services, student support, business operations, human resources, technology, facilities, compliance, and strategic planning. This collaborative structure allows each school to focus on delivering exceptional learning opportunities while benefiting from the resources and expertise of a shared management organization.

Gateway Community Charters Board of Directors
Lillie Campbell, Board President
Mark Anderson, Vice President
Harry Block, Secretary
Bruce Mangerich, Treasurer
Jack Turner, Director

Gateway Community Charters Cabinet
Jason Sample, Superintendent/CEO
Omaira Reyna, Chief Business Official
Joi Tikoi, Assistant Superintendent
Morri Elliott, Assistant Superintendent

Community Collaborative Charter School (Rise Academy, 9-12)
5715 Skvarla Way, Sacramento
Angee Phraxayavong-Briones, Principal

Community Collaborative Charter School (Resource Center: Sac Youth Center)
1901 Del Paso Blvd, Sacramento
Angee Phraxayavong-Briones, Principal

Community Collaborative Charter School (GCC Virtual Academy)
3612 Madison Avenue (Suite 25), North Highlands
Kaela Varmeulen, Principal

Community Collaborative Charter School (Connections Academy at Gateway)
3612 Madison Avenue (Suite 25), North Highlands
Kaela Varmeulen, Principal

Community Outreach Academy (Academy of Arts)
5640 Dudley Blvd, McClellan Park
Larissa Gonchar, Principal

Community Outreach Academy (Academy of Sciences)
3800 Bolivar Ave, North Highlands
Dr. Daniel Diego, Principal

Empowering Possibilities International School
2945 Ramco St #200, West Sacramento
Dr. Jerry Kosch, Principal

Futures High School
900 Grace Avenue, Sacramento
Vicente Luevano, Principal

Gateway International School
900 Morse Avenue, Sacramento
Michael Maita, Principal

Higher Learning Academy
900 Grace Avenue, Sacramento
Dr. Carla Galbrath, Principal

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy
1214 & 1224 North Market, Sacramento
Chelsy Stoufer, Principal

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (EGUSD)
3141 Dwight Road, Elk Grove
Lezli McEndree, Principal

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (SCUSD, Power Inn Campus)
5310 Power Inn Road, Sacramento
Summer Ash, Principal

Sacramento Academic and Vocational Academy (SCUSD, SIM Campus)
6207 Logan St, Sacramento
Summer Ash, Principal

Mission

The mission of GCC is to create and manage high quality charter schools which provide access to innovative, quality, standards-based educational opportunities for all students.

Vision

Our GCC vision is to provide all students, regardless of circumstance, a safe, caring school choice with high academic and behavioral expectations where they can reach their fullest academic and social potential.

Core Values (SERVICE)

- **S**tudent Focus: We make all of our decisions through the lens of what is best for our students, particularly in terms of safety, social/emotional needs, and preparation for College and Career success.
- **E**xcellence: We relentlessly pursue excellence with a strategic focus on our vision, mission, values and beliefs, priorities, goals and outcomes.
- **R**esponsibility: We know that everything we do has an impact therefore we act with intent, a sense of urgency and embody collective ownership with a focus on continuous improvement.
- **V**aluing People: In all of our actions, interactions and decision-making we seek to honor, recognize and invest in our stakeholders. We understand, acknowledge and live our Capturing Kid's Hearts culture throughout the organization.
- **I**ntegrity: We are committed to a high level of ethical behavior and our daily actions and interactions are honest, transparent and consistent leading to a high level of trust throughout the organization.
- **C**ollaboration: We create a culture that maximizes individual contribution while leveraging the collective intelligence of everyone through regular and ongoing systems of meaningful participation.
- **E**mpowerment: All stakeholders learn, develop, grow and contribute to the GCC and its schools in meaningful ways.

Portrait of a GCC Graduate

The Portrait of a GCC Graduate defines the knowledge, skills, and characteristics Gateway Community Charters strives to develop in every student before graduation or promotion. It guides curriculum, instruction, and student experiences to prepare learners who are Academically Ready, Workforce and College Ready, Life Ready, Global Citizens, Productive Citizens, and Reflective Citizens. Developed with input from students, families, staff, business leaders, faith-based organizations, and higher education partners, the Portrait reflects GCC's commitment to preparing students for lifelong success and meaningful contributions to their communities.

Capturing Kids' Hearts

Capturing Kids' Hearts, developed by the Flippen Group, is a relationship-centered approach that helps create safe, supportive, and engaging school environments. The framework emphasizes building strong connections between staff and students through trust, respect, empathy, and accountability. By fostering positive relationships, teaching social-emotional competencies, and establishing shared expectations, Capturing Kids' Hearts helps improve student engagement, behavior, academic success, and overall school culture.

Understanding Legal Codes in this Handbook

Many of the rights and responsibilities referenced in this handbook are based on legal mandates through the state and federal governments. While we have made an effort to explain these items in common terms, many of them are based on legal language contained in a variety of policy sources. The sources are referenced in parenthesis at the end of each relevant section.

For your reference, here are the codes you will see in this handbook, along with the acronym that will be listed. Access to the source California or United States policies are available online by searching the full source name and section number. GCC board policies and administrative regulations are available on the GCC website section titled, GCC Board Policies.

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- California Education Code (EC)
- California Health and Safety Code (HSC)
- California Penal Code (PC)
- California Vehicle Code (VC)
- California Code of Regulations (CCR)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Gateway Community Charters Board Policies (BP)
- United States Code (USC)

Purpose of this Handbook

This Parent/Student Handbook is designed to provide students, parents, guardians, and families with important information about Gateway Community Charters (GCC) schools. It serves as a guide to the programs, expectations, policies, procedures, and resources that support student success and help ensure a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment.

The handbook is intended to foster a strong partnership between the school and home by clearly communicating the rights, responsibilities, and expectations of students, families, and staff. Families are encouraged to review this handbook together and refer to it throughout the school year.

Because Gateway Community Charters operates multiple schools with unique educational models and programs, this handbook contains both organization-wide information that applies to all GCC schools and school-specific information that may vary by campus. When differences exist, the school-specific information provided by your child's school will govern.

This handbook is intended to summarize key information and should not be interpreted as replacing applicable federal or state law, the school's charter, or Gateway Community Charters Board Policies. GCC reserves the right to revise this handbook, policies, or procedures as necessary to comply with changes in law or operational needs. Families will be notified of significant changes as appropriate.

Annual Notifications Statement

Gateway Community Charters (GCC) provides parents, guardians, and students with an Annual Notifications document at the beginning of each school year, as required by federal and California law. The Annual Notifications include important information regarding student rights, parent rights, school policies, and other legally required notices.

The Annual Notifications are provided separately from this handbook and are incorporated by reference. Families are responsible for reviewing the Annual Notifications each year, as they contain important information that may not be repeated in this handbook.

The most current Annual Notifications are available on the Gateway Community Charters website and may also be obtained from your school office upon request.

If there is any conflict between information contained in this handbook and applicable law or the Annual Notifications, applicable law and the Annual Notifications shall govern.

SECTION 2

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Academic Standards

GCC has high academic standards and supports all students to work hard to achieve their potential. Upon graduation, our students will be prepared to pursue postsecondary education, work-force training, or employment that continues to promote lifelong learning, productive citizenship, and maximizes development in mind, body, and spirit.
GCC schools adopt curriculum based on California State Standards including Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Academic Expectations

All GCC students are expected to give their full effort every day. Parents/guardians should also expect this of their students and support them by getting their students to school on time. GCC schools assess every student regularly to determine progress and needs. If students are below their expected level, opportunities are given for support, such as reteaching, differentiated assignments, online programs, tutoring, and intervention support.

CAASPP and ELPAC

GCC students participate in all required California state testing. Students participate in tests such as the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC).

The tests in the CAASPP system provide information to teachers, parents/guardians, and students about student progress and readiness for college and career. In grades three through eight and grade 11, most students take the Smarter Balanced online tests for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. However, students who have a significant cognitive disability (as designated in their individualized education program) are eligible to take the California Alternate Assessments (CAAs). In grades five, eight, and once during high school, students are also tested in science.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a parent's or guardian's written request to school officials to excuse their child from any or all parts of the CAASPP assessments administered pursuant to this chapter shall be granted. (*EC* § 60615)

When a student enrolls in a California public school for the first time, the Home Language Survey is used to identify whether the student may need assessment for English language proficiency. If a language other than English is indicated in Questions 1–3 of the survey, the student must take the Initial English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (Initial ELPAC) within 30 calendar days of enrollment. Based on the Initial ELPAC results, a student will be identified as either Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) or English Learner (EL). Students identified as English Learners are required to take the Summative

ELPAC each year until they meet the criteria for reclassification as Fluent English Proficient. The ELPAC assesses students' skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To learn more about the ELPAC, please review the Parent Guide to Understanding the ELPAC, available on the California Department of Education website at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/elpacpgtu.pdf. For additional information about the English Learner identification or reclassification process, please contact your school administration.

K-2 Reading Screener

In order to provide early support and intervention for our young learners, GCC schools will screen all students in grades K-2 for reading difficulties risk. (*EC* § 53008)
Families will receive direct notification before the screener is administered, and results will be shared with families after the screener is administered.

Student Success Team (SST)

The Student Success Team meets as needed to provide recommendations, support, and program modifications for a student experiencing academic, behavioral, or attendance issues. Parents/guardians work together with the entire SST team to do what is necessary to help the student be successful. This might include putting specific interventions in place or moving forward with special education testing, if appropriate. Meetings are held at the school's or parent/guardian's request.

Students identified as needing additional support in the core subjects (ELA and Math) will be provided with intervention services during the school day and may be offered tutoring services before/after school by a credentialed teacher or paraprofessional.

Special Education and Section 504 Services

GCC is committed to providing all students with equal access to educational opportunities. Students who qualify for special education services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or accommodations under a Section 504 Plan will receive services and supports in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Parents/guardians who have questions about their child's IEP or Section 504 Plan, or who believe their child may be eligible for services, should contact the school administration. The school will work collaboratively with families to ensure students receive appropriate supports and accommodations to help them succeed academically and socially.

Students with IEPs and Section 504 Plans are expected to follow the same school rules and expectations as all students. When disciplinary actions are considered, the school will follow all applicable legal requirements related to students with disabilities.
Promotion/Retention in Grade

Students who do not make adequate progress may be identified as at risk and provided with additional academic support and interventions. A SST meeting will be held to

review the student's progress and develop a plan for improvement. The student's progress will be monitored throughout the school year. If retention is discussed, the school principal needs to immediately inform the Director of Student Services and Director of Academics for approval.

At-Risk Students

Students in grades 9-12 who are at risk of not graduating with their class shall be identified and provided with a variety of interventions and counseling support, designed to assist them in successfully transitioning to postsecondary education or employment. For students in grade 12, this will also include options for continuing their education if they fail to meet graduation requirements, including, but not limited to, the option of enrolling in an adult education program, community college, or continuing enrollment in the district. (*EC* § 52378)

Code of Academic Conduct

The Code of Academic Conduct prohibits such violations of academic integrity as: cheating; plagiarism; falsification and fabrication; abuse of academic materials; complicity in academic dishonesty; falsification of records and official documents; personal misrepresentation and proxy; bribes, favors and threats.

Definitions:
Abuse of Academic Materials: Destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible books, supplies or other academic resource material, or attempting to do so; stealing or otherwise obtaining advance copies of tests, examinations or other course materials or attempting to do so; duplicating copyrighted software without authorization or using such software on school computers; "hacking" on school computers or installing "virus" programs.

Bribes, Favors, Threats: Bribing or attempting to bribe, promising favors to, or making threats against any person, with the intention of affecting an evaluation of a student's academic performance; conspire with another person who then performs one of these acts on one's behalf.

Cheating: In any work submitted for evaluation (tests or assignments), copying or attempting to copy from another's work; looking up answers on an unauthorized website, using or attempting to use unauthorized information, notes, study aids, or other materials; any unauthorized collaboration with others, who may or may not be students, in work to be presented for a grade; altering graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work to be re-graded; tampering with the academic work of other students.

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty: Helping another to commit an act of academic dishonesty, especially providing material or information to another person with knowledge that this material or information will be used deceitfully in an academic evaluation activity; permitting one's own work to be submitted by another person as if it were that person's original work.

Falsification and Fabrication: Altering, counterfeiting, or inventing information or material presented in any assignment; "padding" a bibliography with made up titles or works not consulted, or providing false citations in footnotes; using inappropriate methods for collecting or generating data or including a substantially inaccurate account of the method by which the data were gathered or collected.

Falsification of Records and Official Documents: Altering transcripts, grade reports, or other documents affecting academic records; forging a signature or falsifying information on any academic document, such as permission forms, petitions, or other documents.

Personal Misrepresentation and Proxy: Taking another person's place in an exam, test, or other academic activity, either before or after enrollment; having another person participate in an academic evaluation activity or evaluation in place of oneself.

Plagiarism: Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e. without proper acknowledgment of the source or sources), or submitting material that is not entirely one's own work without attributing the unoriginal portions to their correct sources. The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources occurs when ideas or information are common knowledge.

If a teacher deems that the breach of the Academic Honesty Policy is a major violation then school administration will become involved. Any alleged violation of this school policy will be investigated thoroughly and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Physical Education

GCC schools provide a Physical Education (PE) program for students in kindergarten through grade 12 that is aligned with the California Content Standards and Framework for Physical Education.

Physical Fitness Test

The California Physical Fitness Tests will be administered to all students in grades 5, 7, and 9 to determine the levels of fitness of students. To evaluate health-related fitness and to assist students in establishing lifetime habits of regular physical activity, state law requires school districts to administer a set of tests. The complete test battery measures student performance in the following areas:

- Aerobic Capacity
- Abdominal Strength and Endurance
- Trunk Extensor Strength and Flexibility
- Upper Body Strength and Endurance
- Flexibility.

California officially transitioned the Physical Fitness Test to a participation-only model through emergency regulations prompted by Senate Bill 820. This change eliminated scoring "Healthy Fitness Zones," BMI data reporting, and gender reporting.

The California *Education Code* requires two years of physical education in high school. If a student has satisfactorily met at least five of the six standards of the physical performance test administered in grade 9, they may request an exemption from PE by completing the GCC's physical education exemption approval process. (*EC* § 51241.b.1)

California minimum graduation requirements require students to complete Two courses in Physical Education, unless the pupil has been exempted pursuant to the provisions of *EC* Section 51241.

Parents should provide any important medical history to the teacher. It is the student's responsibility to report injuries to their teacher immediately.

SECTION 3

STUDENT ATTENDANCE & ENROLLMENT

Excused Absences

Regular attendance is essential for student success. Absences may be excused for reasons permitted under California Education Code, including illness (including mental or behavioral health), medical, dental, or counseling appointments, quarantine, bereavement, religious observances, court appearances, military family leave, citizenship ceremonies, approved educational activities, civic or cultural events, and other circumstances approved by the school. Parents or guardians should notify the school as soon as possible and provide appropriate verification of the reason for the absence when requested. Students with excused absences will be given a reasonable opportunity to make up missed assignments and assessments for full credit.

Unexcused Absences

Absences that do not meet the requirements for an excused absence are considered unexcused. Excessive unexcused absences or tardiness may result in a student being identified as truant in accordance with California law. GCC school will work with students and families to improve attendance through supportive interventions; however, continued truancy may result in meetings with school staff, referrals to GCC student services department, and additional consequences as permitted by law.

Attendance – Independent Study (IS) Programs

Attendance requirements for students enrolled in Independent Study (IS) programs differ from those in classroom-based programs. Attendance is based on the completion of assigned work, meaningful participation, and regular communication with assigned teachers as outlined in the Independent Study Master Agreement. Families are expected to ensure students actively participate in their educational program and comply with all attendance requirements described in the Independent Study Handbook and Board Policy.

Refer to the GCC Board Policy SP 06-08: Attendance

Verifying Student Absences

Whenever a child is absent from school, the school must receive an absence verification from the parent/guardian. The verification must include the child's name, the date(s) of the absence, and the reason for the absence. This could be a phone call, note, or an email from the parent/guardian. Please provide a note signed and dated by your physician or dentist for doctor or dentist appointments. The school attendance clerk will call home if a phone call, note, or e-mail has not been received for absent students.

The Importance of Attendance

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. Being in school each day helps students build academic skills, develop positive relationships with teachers and peers, and stay engaged in learning. While absences due to illness or other legitimate reasons are sometimes unavoidable, frequent absences, whether excused or unexcused, can make it difficult for students to keep pace with instruction and achieve their full potential. GCC schools are committed to partnering with families to support consistent attendance. When a student's absences or tardies begin to increase, school staff will reach out to identify any barriers to attendance and work collaboratively with the family to develop appropriate supports and interventions. Early communication helps ensure students receive the assistance they need before attendance concerns become more significant.

When a Student is Chronically Absent

If a student's attendance becomes a concern, GCC school will follow applicable state laws and Board policies regarding attendance and truancy. Families may receive attendance notifications, participate in meetings with school staff, or be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) or other support services to develop strategies for improving attendance. The goal of these interventions is to support student success through regular school attendance and a strong partnership between home and school. Below is how we support students and families when absences begin to add up:

Nonclassroom-Based Tiered Re-Engagement

Student success in an Independent Study program depends on regular participation, communication, and completion of assigned work. If a student is not making satisfactory academic progress, completing assignments, participating in required live instruction, or maintaining regular engagement, GCC will implement a tiered re-engagement process designed to identify barriers and provide support. The process begins with outreach from the student's teacher and may include conferences with the family, a Student Study Team (SST) meeting (or IEP team meeting for students with disabilities), the development of a re-engagement plan, and connections to school and community resources to help the student successfully re-engage in learning.

If a student continues to demonstrate a lack of satisfactory progress despite these interventions, additional supports may be implemented, including home outreach and review by the GCC School Attendance Review Team (SART). The purpose of this process is to partner with families, address barriers to participation, and help students remain successful in their Independent Study program. If, after all required interventions have been exhausted, the student continues to violate the Independent Study Master Agreement by failing to engage or make satisfactory progress, GCC will initiate the involuntary disenrollment process in accordance with applicable law, Board Policy, and the Admissions Policy.

Voluntary Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary for families to withdraw a student from school, a parent/guardian must notify the school office as soon as possible. Any lost books or materials fees, etc. must be paid and teachers must complete a checkout form for each student.

Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed, or disenrolled, by the school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of the Charter School's intent to remove the student ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The Involuntary Removal Notice must be provided to the parent or guardian no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the proposed disenrollment date.

The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include:

- The discipline education code violation
- An explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action
- The CDE Enrollment Complaint Notice and Form

If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the Charter School's suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon a parent's or guardian's request for a hearing, the Charter School will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder and shall include a copy of the Charter School's expulsion hearing process.

If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing, the student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing.

For students with disabilities who are eligible for special education services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP), an IEP team meeting will be convened to review the student's educational program, supports, and placement before involuntary removal is considered. The Charter School will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding students with disabilities when considering involuntary removal.

If as a result of the hearing the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known school district of residence within thirty (30) calendar days.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent the Charter School from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

***The above is a summary of our procedures. For a copy of the full Attendance Policy, please see the school website or the main office.*
***In the event of any discrepancy between the attendance process outlined in this handbook and within the complete Attendance Policy, the complete policy shall supersede and govern.*

SECTION 4

STUDENT CONDUCT

Behavior Expectations

Students, parents/guardians, and staff at GCC Schools can expect a safe and productive learning environment where individuals (children and adults) will be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) has been implemented school-wide to develop a culture of unity and respect. CKH is at the core of a powerful process that allows every member of the school family to foster and become part of a high-performing learning community by building positive, productive, and trusting relationships among students and staff members. It consists of student-centered Social Contracts, non-verbal cues such as hand signals, and strategies for redirecting behavior. Disciplinary consequences are sometimes necessary for students to take responsibility for their choices, learn from their mistakes, and seek acceptable alternative solutions to their problems.

General School Rules

- Show respect (Respect yourself, others, and their property.)
- Make good decisions
- Solve problems
- Actively listen
- Do your best

Dress Code Guidelines

- Dress code policy is put in place to ensure a safe, distraction-free learning environment. Do not send your child to school in violation of this dress code. All clothing must be neat, clean, and appropriate for school. Clothing must be safe, worn in the manner it was designed to be worn, and must not promote conflict among students. Clothing that displays emblems of any sort that the staff and other students may perceive to be obscene, vulgar, racially-biased, gang-related, or in any other way distracting is not allowed. Students will be sent home to change if the dress code is not followed, or parents must bring appropriate attire.
- Tops that expose undergarments are not permitted.
- Pants must be worn at or above the hip point and must not show undergarments.
- Footwear must be worn at all times. Sandals must have an ankle strap. No flip-flops are allowed.

PE Dress Code

In order for our students to take full advantage of our activities, we require, for safety, modesty, and hygienic reasons the following guidelines for dress codes in all physical education classes: athletic clothing (not jeans or skirts/dresses) and sneakers with laces that are secured.

Mobile Communications Device Policy

The GCC Board of Directors recognizes that student use of smartphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, and other personal mobile communication or computing devices on campus may support student learning, safety, communication, and well-being, but may also be disruptive to the educational environment and instructional program in certain circumstances. When on campus or under the supervision of district employees, students may use such devices only as permitted by GCC Mobile Communications Devices Board Policy SP5131.8.

Items that Must Stay at Home (non-exhaustive list)

Aerosol cans, gum, sunflower seeds, water balloons, nail polish, matches/lighters, perfumes/colognes, pocket knives, sodas, energy drinks, beverages in glass containers, cigarette or drug paraphernalia, weapons/replicas, unauthorized medication, electronic games, radios, toy guns, sports equipment, and fireworks should NOT be brought to school. Individuals who bring money or other valuables onto school grounds do so at their own risk. Students who bring prohibited items on campus may be subject to our discipline policy.

GCC schools are not responsible for the damage, theft, or loss of personal property on or off school grounds.

Animals/Pets

Dogs, cats, as well as other animals and pets, are not permitted on school property while students are on campus. Contact the office for assistance in the event of a stray animal on school premises or if there is a need for a service animal.

Bicycles, Scooters, Roller Skates (Blades), Skateboards

Students may ride their bicycles or scooters to school and park in the designated space. Please note that the school will not accept responsibility for loss or damage to the bicycle/scooter. Students should not use roller skates or blades, heelys, or skateboards (or RipStiks) on the school grounds at any time. This includes shoes that have wheels built into them. Students must walk their bicycles/scooters on and around the school campus. Additionally, students are required to wear helmets as stated by California law when riding a bicycle and obey all laws relating to bicycle/scooter use to ensure safety.

Anti-Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

GCC schools adheres to the Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Policy, SP 1517. All GCC schools educate students about bullying at the beginning of every school year and will not tolerate bullying/cyberbullying or harassment/discrimination of any kind. Staff, students, and parents are required to report to an administrator any known incident of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or discrimination. These reports can be made in person or anonymously. To report anonymously, use the reporting link on your school's website.

You must provide enough information for the GCC staff to conduct a thorough investigation or contact you if more information is needed. GCC schools investigate all reported incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and/or discrimination with sensitivity and respect to all parties involved. During and/or after the investigation is complete, parents are contacted and appropriate consequences are given. The goal is to deter the bullying from happening again.

***The complete Policy is available for review on the school website or by contacting the main office.*

Internet Safety and Technology Use

Students and parents/guardians must review and agree to the GCC Computer Use Guidelines at the beginning of each school year. Students are expected to comply with these guidelines at all times. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, including the suspension or revocation of technology privileges. GCC schools provide instruction on internet safety and review the requirements of this policy with students.

***The complete Student Use of Technology Policy is available for review on the school website or by contacting the main office.*

Sale of Items at School Prohibited

The sale of any item by students, including but not limited to toys, playing cards, candy, soda, etc. to other students or staff is prohibited. Students who sell things at school will receive consequences. GCC schools are not responsible for the items, including cash, involved in transactions among students that are against the rules.

SECTION 5

STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

Health

It is not always easy to know when to send your child to school and when to leave your child home. These guidelines are based on the public health department. If you have any questions about them, please contact the school nurse. GCC schools will follow all state and county health guidelines and mandates.

Do not send a child to school with any of the following symptoms

- Fever- 100.4 or above
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Certain illnesses and rashes like chickenpox, measles, or hand, foot, and mouth disease

A healthcare provider or school nurse can help you distinguish those illnesses and when your child is no longer contagious.

School policy mandates that students with a contagious disease stay home. To ensure the health and welfare of all students, school personnel can request a doctor's note to confirm that the student is no longer contagious upon return. School personnel will provide minor first aid treatment but will contact a parent or guardian if a student vomits, suffers a severe injury, or is running a temperature. Students who are sick must be picked up immediately.

Immunizations

Students must be current on required immunizations. Students who do not have all the required immunizations for their age/grade must receive the next required dose by the specified due date to remain eligible for attendance. Students shall be excluded from school and attendance for a failure to provide proof of required immunizations or a valid medical exemption.

Prescription Medicine

An authorization form must be completed by the student's parent/guardian and doctor before trained, designated school personnel can administer prescription medications. All prescription medications must be brought to school by the parent, in the original container with the prescription label attached. This form is available in the school office and on GCC website. Students CANNOT carry any prescription in their backpacks unless in rare cases where the student is provided authorization from their doctor and approved by a GCC nurse. Please see the front office to obtain a medication authorization form.

**The complete Administration of Medications Policy (SP 5141.21) and authorization form is available for review on the school website or by contacting the main office.

Over-the-Counter Medications

The school cannot administer any over-the-counter medications. If a child needs an over-the-counter medication at school, the parent/guardian must come to the school to administer it. Students CANNOT carry any over-the-counter medicine in their backpacks unless in rare cases where the student is provided authorization from their doctor. Please see the school front office to obtain a medication authorization form.

Head Lice

Students found with active head lice can stay in school until the end of the day, but will not be allowed close contact with others. Parents are informed about treatment and encouraged to start it immediately, checking all household contacts.

Student Emergency Contact Information

Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping current emergency contact information on file. It is extremely important to have updated information in case of an emergency to ensure timely communication. The school must know how to reach you in case of an emergency. Persons other than the guardian who picks up students should be prepared to show identification.

Custody Disputes

Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the school if there is a court order limiting the parental participation or access rights of one or both parents. A parent/guardian must notify the office and the teacher, and provide the office with a current court order. Otherwise, both biological parents (with appropriate identification) have equal rights to participate in their child's education, including the right to: come to school to see their child, obtain school records for their child, or pick the child up from school.

Counseling Services

GCC schools provide counseling services to support students' academic, social-emotional, college and career, and overall well-being needs. School counselors work collaboratively with students, families, teachers, and administrators to help students succeed and address challenges that may affect their educational experience.

Counseling services may include academic planning, social-emotional support, college and career readiness, crisis intervention, and referrals to community resources when appropriate. Parents/guardians who have questions about available counseling services are encouraged to contact their school counselor or school administration.

Safety Drills

Fire and safety drills are held monthly to teach students proper responses to emergency situations. Evacuation maps are posted in each classroom and hallways and safety drill instructions for teachers can be found in the red classroom emergency binders. Students are to quietly and quickly follow all directions given by school staff and/or emergency personnel.

SECTION 6

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Opportunities for Parental Involvement

Parents are an integral part of our school program and community, and as such, are strongly encouraged to become involved. Parents can become involved by volunteering in the classroom helping with field trips or special events, and attending School Site Council meetings. Parents interested in volunteering their time, skills, or talents, should talk to the classroom teacher or reach out to the school's front office for details and then fill out the volunteer paperwork with the front office. Increased parental involvement at school and at home, increases student success. GCC adheres to GCC Board Policy SP 6020 regarding parent involvement.

Volunteer Information

Gateway Community Charters (GCC) encourages and appreciates parents, guardians, and community members who are willing to share their time by volunteering in our schools. Volunteers can play an important part in enriching the lives of our students. GCC cares about our students and their safety and, therefore, has created volunteer procedures and requirements to keep the children safe. All volunteers must follow the volunteer procedures and requirements of GCC. All volunteer applications can be completed online in Informed K-12. Applicants should choose the appropriate form for the correct level of volunteering, either Level 1 or Level 2.

Level 1

Level 1 volunteers are those who are volunteering for a one-time event on-site and will be under the direct supervision* of a GCC staff member who is physically present at all times with the volunteer. They are required to complete a Volunteer Application and sign the Volunteer Oath. The Volunteer Application must be signed and approved by the Principal and both documents must be maintained by the school site. Level 1 volunteers are not required to complete the fingerprint clearance or provide tuberculosis (TB) screening results; however, if the volunteer wishes to volunteer more than once, he/she will then have to complete Level 2 volunteer requirements.

*Direct supervision means that the volunteer will not be alone with students at any time during the volunteer period. The students are still under the constant and direct care and supervision of the GCC staff member.

Level 2

Level 2 volunteers are those who volunteer more than one time and/or will be working with students without the direct supervision of a GCC staff member present at all times with the volunteer. Level 2 volunteers will be required to complete a fingerprint clearance and provide proof of a clear tuberculosis (TB) screening, in addition to the application and oath. All TB Risk Assessments are valid for four years. If a TB clearance expires during your

time as a volunteer, an updated TB clearance must be provided to continue as a volunteer for GCC. Level 2 volunteer applications are processed by the GCC Human Resources department. When a volunteer has cleared, the site will be notified by HR that the applicant is clear to start volunteering. The site will contact the applicant to inform them of their clearance and permission to start. HR and the school site must maintain a list of cleared Level 2 volunteers and maintain the list year to year. *Field trips chaperones are considered Level 2 volunteers and must meet all Level 2 requirements.*

***Volunteers under 18 years of age must complete the volunteer application and oath and must always be under the direct supervision of a GCC staff member.*
***Please Note: Volunteers who drive students on a field trip must also complete the Volunteer Personal Automobile Use form and supply the required documentation, including a valid driver's license and proof of liability insurance prior to the field trip.*

School Site Council (SSC)

The School Site Council is a very important part of the governance structure at GCC schools. The SSC is charged with participating in the development of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (including the site budget), approving the plan, and recommending it for approval by the GCC Board of Directors. SSC is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the plan, including the expenditure of funds and the monitoring of achievement. SSC parents are elected by all parents. If you are interested in being placed on the ballot, please contact the school principal in August.

District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC)

This committee is made up of parents whose students are English language learners and speak another language at home. They are elected by parents and give input regarding the program and services offered to EL students.

Fundraising

Throughout the year, GCC schools hold fundraisers. Proceeds benefit students and the school as a whole. As school budgets have been deeply cut, support and involvement with fundraising efforts are appreciated (though not required for your student's continued enrollment at GCC).

Communication with Parents

Aeries Parent Portal

Families should create an Aeries account and link all students to one account. You can monitor absences and grades in real-time. Please visit Aeries Parent Login

Parent Square

Families should also have a Parent Square account. This account links to Aeries and is used to provide secure communication and documents to families. *Please visit ParentSquare Login*

School Newsletters

A school newsletter will be emailed regularly, informing parents of important information, upcoming events, and ways to help out at the school.

School Website and Social Media

The school website, X, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook page have a wealth of information. It is important to consistently check the website(s) for new information.

Student or Parent Complaints

If students or parents have a school-related complaint, this should first be addressed at the site level. Students or parents should contact the teacher in a timely manner and directly either by email or in person if they have a question about grading or assignments. These concerns must be dealt with after instructional hours. Parents cannot interrupt a class session to ask teachers about grades or express concern. The conversation must also be private, not in front of other students, parents, or staff. Students and parents can also bring their concerns directly to the school administration. Parents may not confront other students on campus. If you have concerns about other students, you must bring that to the attention of a staff member and let the staff address it.

Uniform Complaint Procedures:

GCC schools are responsible for ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs and have established procedures to address allegations of unlawful discrimination and/or failure to apply such laws. The GCC Board encourages early, informal resolution of complaints at the site level whenever possible. If parties feel further investigation and resolution are needed, concerns should be submitted in writing to:

Gateway Community Charters
5112 Arnold Avenue, Suite A, McClellan, CA 95652
Phone: (916) 286-5129
Fax: (916) 993-4110

A complete copy of the Uniform Complaint Procedures is posted in the school office and available upon request.

Title IX Complaint and Investigation Procedures:

GCC schools are responsible for ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing sex- based discrimination and harassment.

A copy of the Title IX Policy is provided to families annually and posted to the school website.

Three-Way School Compact

School Name: _____

It is important that families and schools work together to help students achieve high academic standards. Through a balanced educational approach, we can ensure success. The following are agreed-upon roles and responsibilities for teachers, students, and parents. Your signature signifies support for these actions.

Student Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Come to school on time ready to learn and work hard.
- Bring necessary materials and completed assignments..
- Know and follow my social contracts and school rules.
- Ask for help when I need it.
- Communicate regularly with my parents and teachers about school experiences so that they can help me to be successful in school.
- Limit my TV watching and video games and instead study or read every day after school.
- Respect the school, classmates, staff, and families.

Family/Parent Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Provide a quiet time and place to study and monitor screen time.
- Read to my child or encourage my child to read every day.
- Communicate with the teacher or the school when I have a concern.
- Ensure that my child attends school dressed appropriately every day, gets adequate sleep, regular medical attention, and proper nutrition.
- Regularly monitor my child's progress in school.
- Participate at school in activities such as school decision-making, volunteering, and/or attending parent-teacher conferences.
- Communicate the importance of education and learning to my child.
- Respect the school, staff, students, and families.
- Monitor my child’s online activities.

Teacher Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction.
- Endeavor to motivate my students to learn.
- Have high expectations and help every child to develop a love of learning.
- Enforce and follow social contracts.
- Communicate regularly with families about student progress.
- Provide a warm, safe, and caring learning environment.
- Provide meaningful, daily assignments to reinforce and extend learning.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning and support the formation of partnerships with families and the community.
- Actively participate in collaborative decision-making and consistently work with families and my school colleagues to make schools accessible and welcoming places for families which help each student achieve the school's high academic standards.
- Respect the school, students, staff, and families.

*****I have read and received the parent and student handbook.***

_____ Student Signature	_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Teacher Signature
_____ Date	_____ Date	_____ Date

SECTION 7

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Principal Welcome

Welcome to GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy

Principal's Message

GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy Families,

Welcome to the new school year! My name is Kaela Vermeulen, and I'm honored to serve as the Principal of GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy. I want to personally welcome you to a new year of growth, learning, and connection.

GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy offers a unique and dynamic approach to learning online. We combine the flexibility of a virtual environment with the structure, support, and expertise of dedicated educators that lead instruction as if in a traditional school setting. Our model is built on strong family partnerships, virtual learning experiences, and high expectations for every student.

With over 13 years in education as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, Vice Principal, and your school leader, I have seen firsthand how students thrive when they are supported with both love and high expectations. At GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy, we believe deeply in nurturing the whole child. Our mission is to embrace and support each student, empower families, and ensure all learners are challenged, inspired, and prepared to succeed.

Inside this handbook, you'll find important information about our school's policies, expectations, and support structures. I encourage you to use it as a helpful resource throughout the school year.

Thank you for choosing to be part of our community. We are truly excited to partner with you on your child's educational journey. Together, we will create a school year filled with purpose, joy, and academic success.

With gratitude,

Kaela Vermeulen

Principal, GCC/CCCS Virtual Academy

A Program of Community Collaborative Charter School

School Mission/Vision

Mission

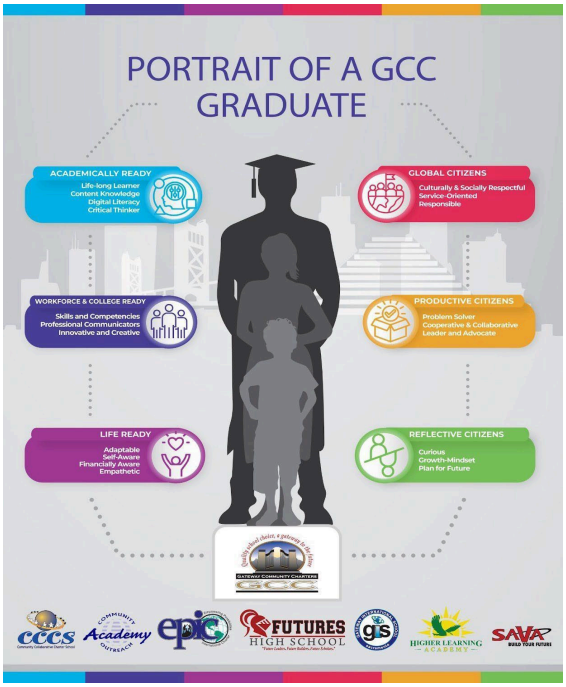
It is the mission of Community Collaborative Charter School (CCCS) to implement a rigorous, standards-based curriculum in an equitable, personalized, and culturally responsive learning environment with access to community resources for students and their families.

Vision

The vision of CCCS is to establish a personalized setting, serving a full range of students, explicitly designed to cultivate their transition to successful post-secondary educational, vocational, and personal endeavors. CCCS students will graduate with a high school diploma and will have opportunities to gain skills that will prepare them to be academically ready, workforce and college ready, life-ready, global, productive citizens, and reflective citizens.

Equity Commitment

Recognizing that equity does not mean equality, Virtual Academy aligns systems, accountability, supports, and resources to achieve excellence for all students. The school provides high-quality, rigorous instruction, curriculum, and equitable opportunities and outcomes by ensuring academic engagement and support for every student.



School Contact Information

School	GCC Virtual Academy, a program of Community Collaborative Charter School (CCCS)
Address	3612 Madison Ave Suite 25 North Highlands, CA
Main office phone	(916) 286-1915
Main office hours	8:00am - 4:00pm
Principal	Kaela Vermeulen
Enrollment Support: Registrar	Anna Sozonova
Attendance Support: Clerk	Roni Amavisca

Calendar

2026-2027 School Calendar

Note: The School Status Legend below the calendar reflects the possible school statuses for each event. All events which show a status of School In Session indicates they are school days for students. All events which show any other status indicates they are NOT school days for students. Please refer to the legend to determine whether teachers and/or administrator staff are available for each event according to its status.

Event	School Status	Date
First Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	August 5, 2026
School Recess	School and Office Closed	September 4, 2026
Labor Day	School and Office Closed	September 7, 2026
Teacher in Service	Staff Work Day, No School	October 5, 2025
Veterans Day	School and Office Closed	November 11, 2026
Thanksgiving Break	School and Office Closed	November 23-27, 2026
First Semester End Date	School and Office Open	December 18, 2026
Winter Break	School and Office Closed	December 21, 2026-January 1, 2027
Teacher in Service	Staff Work Day, No School	January 4, 2027
Second Semester Start Date	School and Office Open	January 5, 2027
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	School and Office Closed	January 18, 2027
President's Week	School and Office Closed	February 15-19, 2027
Spring Break	School and Office Closed	March 26- April 2, 2027
Teacher in Service	Staff Work Day, No School	April 5, 2027
Last Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	May 28, 2027
Second Semester End Date	School and Office Open	May 28, 2027
Memorial Day	School and Office Closed	May 31, 2027
School Status Legend:		
School and Office Closed = No one is in school		
School and Office Open = Everyone is in school		
Staff Work Day, No School = Students are not in school but Admin and Teachers are on duty		

Bell Schedule

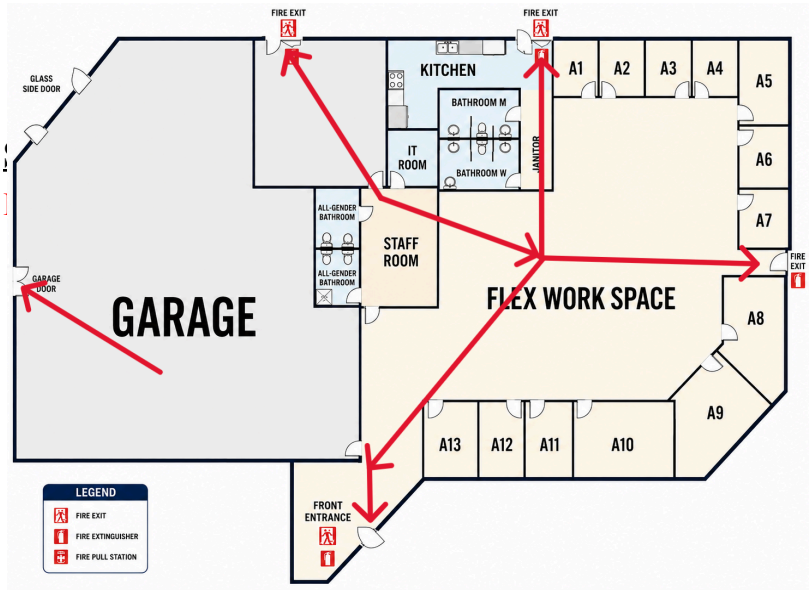
GCC Virtual Academy provides online instruction through live classes, independent study, and academic support. Students must attend virtual school Monday through Friday and be available from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on all school days. Students must attend every scheduled class or session on time, remain for the full session, and be prepared to learn.

- Daily attendance is based on participation in scheduled virtual instruction and completion of assigned work.
- Students must use the school-issued Chromebook for school activities and follow camera expectations during live sessions.
- Families should avoid scheduling appointments or vacations during scheduled classes and sessions.
- If a student cannot attend a scheduled class or session, the family must contact the teacher before the scheduled time.

Visitor Procedures

GCC Virtual Academy welcomes families and approved community partners for scheduled school business. Visitors must follow all school safety, conduct, and check-in expectations while at the school site. Volunteers must complete the appropriate GCC application through Informed K-12. Level 1 volunteers serve at a one-time on-site event under the direct supervision of a GCC staff member. Level 2 volunteers serve more than once or may work with students without continuous direct supervision; field-trip chaperones must be approved as Level 2 volunteers.

Campus Map



Key	
Room	Occupant / Purpose
A1	Lori – Instructional Coach
A2	General Education Paraprofessionals
A3	Heidi – Instructional Coach
A4	IEP / VACA Paraprofessionals
A5	Happy- Student Support
A6	Jody – CA Counselor
A7	Nancy – VA Counselor
A8	Conference Room 2
A9	Kaela – Principal
A10	Conference Room 1
A11	Ekat – Site Manager
A12	Andrea – Administrative Assistant
A13	File Room

Staff Directory

GCC Virtual Academy Staff Contacts GCC VA is a Program of CCCS		
3612 Madison Ave., Ste 25, North Highlands CA 95660		
Office/Leadership		
Staff Member	**Title**	**Phone Number**
Kaela Vermeulen	Principal	916-286-1915 x46501
Lori Jenkins	Instructional Coach (K-8)	916-286-1915
Heidi Stepp	Instructional Coach (9-12)	email
Andrea Flores	Admin Assistant	916-286-1915 x46503
Ekaterina Kostyuk	Site Manager	916-286-1915 x45502
Anna Sozonova	Registrar	916-286-1915 x45510
Para Educators		
Nataliia Oksanych	Para educator	916-286-1915
Gabriela Monsalve-Sanchez	Para educator	916-286-1915
Danielle Moreno	RSP Para educator	916-286-1915
High School		
Dylan Besk	HS Math Teacher	916-846-3205
Helen Deng	HS ELA Teacher	530-784-4654
Holly Morgan	HS Science Teacher	916-827-5723
Jenn Longrie	HS Social Studies Teacher	279-842-0111
Kim Longrie	HS ELA Teacher	916-827-5810
Middle School Team		
Matt Bressler	MS ELA Teacher	916-224-6139
Jenn Feiner	MS Science Teacher	916-750-6974
Katie Delyon	MS Math Teacher	916-207-1580
RSP & Student Services Team		
Megan McMurry	RSP Teacher	601-550-4555
Nancy Vang	Counselor	916-903-8408
Hannah Larson	Social Worker	916-903-8052
Sarah Oettle	Intervention Teacher	916-903-8139
Jackie Rico	School Psychologist	email
Alisha Sanchez	Speech Therapist	email
Waithira Kamau	School Nurse	916-796-2219
Svitalana Muzychenko	Family & Community Engagement Specialist	916-286-5199

Elementary Team		
Robin Baumann	Elementary TK-1	916-844-9632
Minea Good	Elementary 2-3	916-844-8798
Jenny Kuwazaki	Elementary 4-5	916-903-8011

SECTION 8

SCHOOL PROGRAMS & PROCEDURES

Grading

Grades and high school credits are earned through completion of assigned coursework and demonstrated mastery of grade-level or course standards. Students must complete their own work and follow the Code of Academic Conduct. Teachers may require a student to explain a submission verbally or complete additional follow-up when authorship or mastery needs clarification.

Students and families should review assignment feedback and current course progress regularly.

Students should use teacher support, tutoring, and office hours when they need help rather than relying on unauthorized assistance.

Grading Policy

The grades given for any course (or for any subject area for elementary students) is the grade determined by the teacher of the course. The determination of the student's grade, in the absence of a clerical mistake, shall be final.

If a guardian or student elects to contest the final grade given by the teacher of the course or subject, the School Principal will be consulted, and the teacher, to the extent practicable, will be given the opportunity to state orally, or in writing, or both, to the School Principal and the student/guardian the reasons for grade given. The teacher will also be given the opportunity to participate in all discussions related to a potential grade change and thereby have input into any decision to make a change to a final grade. When necessary, a GCC designee may be involved in the discussions and will be authorized to make a final decision on whether a grade change should be made.

Grade Scale K-5

Mark	Title	Sort Order	Low Percentage	High Percentage
SE	Standard Exceeded	1	95%	100%
SM	Standard Met	2	70%	94.99%
SD	Standard Developing	3	60%	69.99%
SN	Standard Not Met	4	0%	59.99%
NA	Not Assessed	5	0%	0%

Grade Scale 6-12

Grade	Grade %	Passing?	Non Weighted	Weighted (Honors)	Weighted (AP)
A+	98-100	Yes	4.00	4.50	5.00
A	94-97.99	Yes	4.00	4.50	5.00
A-	90-93.99	Yes	3.67	4.17	4.67
B+	88-89.99	Yes	3.33	3.83	4.33
B	84-87.99	Yes	3.00	3.50	4.00
B-	80-83.99	Yes	2.67	3.17	3.67
C+	78-79.99	Yes	2.33	2.83	3.33
C	74-77.99	Yes	2.00	2.50	3.00
C-	70-73.99	Yes	1.67	2.17	2.67
D+	68-69.99	Yes	1.33	1.83	2.33
D	64-67.99	Yes	1.00	1.50	2.00
D-	60-63.99	Yes	0.67	1.17	1.67
F	0-59.99	No	0.00	0.00	0.00

Progress Reports

Progress reports provide families with an interim update on student achievement, work completion, and progress toward course or grade-level expectations. Families should review each report with the student and contact the teacher promptly with questions or concerns.

Academic progress and grade reporting:

Families are encouraged to communicate regularly with teachers regarding student progress, academic performance, or other concerns.

A parent/guardian, teacher, counselor, or administrator may request a conference at any time. To minimize disruptions to instruction, conferences should be scheduled before or after instructional hours or at another mutually agreed-upon time.

Report Cards will be sent out on the following dates:

Semester 1 – the week of December 18, 2026
Semester 2 – the week of May 28, 2027

School Work

- Adhere to the Academic Honesty Guidelines/Code of Academic Conduct.
- Grades/credits are earned based on work completion and mastery of grade-level standards.
- Students will only use the school-issued Chromebook to attend online sessions/complete school work. The school Chromebook will only be used for schoolwork.

Homework and School Work:

In the virtual learning environment, students are expected to maintain the same dedication and rigor as in a traditional classroom setting. Daily participation requires students to complete all assigned classwork during their regular online sessions; in addition, independent homework must be completed and submitted by the specified due dates. All academic work is evaluated based on completion and the mastery of grade-level standards to earn grades and course credits. Furthermore, students must strictly adhere to the Academic Honesty Guidelines and Code of Academic Conduct at all times. To ensure a safe, secure, and focused educational experience, students are required to use only their school-issued Chromebook to attend online sessions and complete coursework. School-issued devices are strictly reserved for educational purposes.

Retaking Curriculum-based Assessments

If students would like to retake a quiz or test (curriculum-based assessment), students can email their teacher to request a retake. The teacher will determine an activity that students will engage in and complete to show they have relearned the knowledge needed to retake. The teacher will "reset" the assessment for the student to retake and mark the lesson incomplete once the relearning activity is completed. Note: this will delete the initial assessment score and student responses. The score earned on the retake attempt will be saved to the gradebook.

Positive Reinforcement

We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive. We implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a proactive, schoolwide Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports, MTSS, framework that teaches, reinforces, and celebrates positive behaviors while providing students with the support they need to be successful.

Rather than focusing solely on consequences, PBIS emphasizes teaching clear expectations, building positive relationships, recognizing responsible choices, and using restorative practices to help students learn from mistakes. Our goal is to foster a culture of respect, responsibility, and belonging where every student feels valued and empowered to grow.

Student Code of Conduct

CA at Gateway is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all its students, and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations among members of the school community. The Non-Discrimination Policy can be found page 4.

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community, whether by or toward any student, staff, Learning Coach, Caretaker, or other third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

The following definitions are intended to provide guidance in assessing whether a particular behavior is a violation of the code of conduct. They are not exhaustive in their scope and are not intended to replace the intuition of the individual. When in doubt as to whether a particular behavior is a violation, you are urged to rule on the side of caution and report your concerns to the appropriate authority, as provided for in this policy.

Harassment - any intentional behavior or course of conduct (whether written, verbal, graphic, or physical) directed at a specific person or group of persons that causes substantial physical and/or emotional distress or harm and is sufficiently severe, persistent, and/or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, and/or abusive educational environment for other person(s) and serves no legitimate purpose.

Bullying – a course of abusive treatment (whether written, verbal, graphic, or physical) that typically involves the use of force or coercion to affect others, particularly when habitual and involving an imbalance of power. It may involve verbal, written or cyber harassment, physical assault or coercion and may be directed persistently towards particular victims.

Cyber-bullying – the use of information and communication technologies, such as, but not limited to, cell phone, email, instant messaging, social media websites, Twitter, etc., to support deliberate and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that (i) is intended to harm others or (ii) that an objectively reasonable person would expect to cause harm to others. Cyber-bullying includes the posting or other transmission of text, video, or images that are embarrassing, demeaning, or threatening in nature, regardless of whether the subject of such text, video, or images directed, consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue posting or other transmission.

- Possible forums for social media bullying include, but are not limited to:
    - Internet websites with free registration and ease of registration.
    - Internet websites offering comment forums or sections.
    - Internet website offering peer-to-peer instant messaging.
    - Internet websites offering image or video posting platforms.

Hazing – the use of ritual and other activities involving harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, abuse, or humiliation for the purpose of initiating a person or persons into a group, regardless of whether such person(s) consented to or otherwise acquiesced in the at issue behavior(s) and action(s).

Intimidation – a course of behavior that instills fear or a sense of inadequacy.

Violence within a dating relationship - any behavior by a student exhibited towards that student's dating partner that is an attempt to gain and/or maintain power and/or control over a dating partner through violence, threats of violence, and/or physical, verbal, psychological, and/or mental abuse.

Sexting - knowingly using a computer, or any other device capable of electronic data transmission or distribution, to transmit or distribute to another person any photograph or video which depicts nudity and/or text message that is sexually explicit and/or is harmful to minors. Knowingly possessing a photograph or video that was transmitted or distributed by another person as described above.

Sexual Harassment – (as defined by Title IX regulations) conduct on the basis of sex that may be one or more of the following:

1. An employee of California Connections Academy conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (commonly referred to as quid pro quo).
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault means an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the FBI.
4. Dating violence means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of these factors: the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
5. Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.

School Administration will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which (i) cause, threaten to cause, or an objective and reasoned third-party would find was intended to cause, bodily harm or personal degradation, or (ii) creates, or an objective and reasoned third-party would determine was intended to create, an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment for any student, staff member, member of the administration, Caretaker, or other third-party.

This Policy applies to all school-related activities and/or engagements, including, but not limited to, online school-related activities such as LiveLesson sessions, participation in clubs and activities, email messages, text messages, discussions, telephonic

communications, and in-person activities, such as state testing, field trips, open houses, and any other in-person school-related activities on school property.

This Policy also applies to those activities or engagements which occur off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, where an employee is engaged in school business, or where the prohibited behavior is facilitated using any school property or resources.

Any student or student's Caretaker who believes that a student, any other student, or other third-party, has been or is the recipient of any of the above-described prohibited behaviors should immediately report the situation to the appropriate staff member.

When the target of the prohibited behavior is a student, the School shall provide that student with a written copy of the rights, protections, and support services available to them. If there is any evidence that the student has experienced physical harm as a result of the prohibited behavior, the School shall promptly communicate that information to the appropriate personnel, including, but not limited to, emergency personnel and /or law enforcement.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, bullying/cyberbullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action in accordance with the School's disciplinary process. This may include up to expulsion for students; up to discharge for employees; exclusion for Caretakers, guests, volunteers, and contractors; and/or removal from any official position. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for employees will follow the procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook. Remedial and/or disciplinary action for students will follow the procedures outlined in this Supplement.

When appropriate, the target(s) of the prohibited behavior (and/or such target(s') Caretaker(s)) shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and, when appropriate, that action has been taken. In providing such notification, care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the accused perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, bullying/cyberbullying, and/or dating violence.

If, after investigation, the act(s) of prohibited behavior by a specific student is/are verified, the School Leader or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the Caretaker of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

> **Retaliation** against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of harassment, intimidation, bullying/cyberbullying, dating violence, or any other prohibited behavior will not be tolerated, independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of school policy, and suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as prohibited behavior. Making intentionally false reports about prohibited behavior will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

This Policy shall not be interpreted as infringing upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by state or federal law).

Consequences

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

First Offense:

- Teacher notifies administration and submits a written report with evidence.
- Teacher contacts parent/guardian and reviews the Academic Honesty Policy with the student and parent.
- Student redoes the assignment/task with points deducted on final grade.
- Administration may restrict participation in non-academic activities.

Second Offense:

- Teacher repeats first-offense steps and assigns a zero (0%) for the affected assignment.
- Administration notifies all relevant staff (teachers, counselors, coaches) and parent/guardian.
- Student may be removed from extracurriculars, enrichment, or dual-enrollment programs.
- A failing grade in the course may be considered.
- Continued restriction from non-academic activities.

Third Offense:

- Same steps as second offense.
- Incident is documented in the student's permanent cumulative record.
- Student will receive a failing grade in the course.
- Student will be restricted from all non-academic activities.
- Removal from the virtual program may be recommended.

Promoting Integrity

Students are encouraged to:

- Ask questions when unsure if collaboration or tools are allowed
- Cite sources appropriately, even in digital formats
- Take pride in original work and personal effort
- Utilize academic support resources (tutors, office hours) instead of dishonest shortcuts
- Teachers may require verbal explanations or additional follow-up for submissions.

Graduation Requirements (if applicable)

A student must earn a minimum of 200 credits in courses approved by the GCC for high school credit in order to graduate. The grade point average (GPA) on all credits counted toward graduation shall not be less than 1.0 on a 4.0 scale. Courses offered by the GCC for

high school credit usually award five (5) credits for each course completed each semester. The minimum of 200 credits for graduation from high school shall include:

- English 40 credits
- Math 20 credits
- Integrated Math 10 credits
- VAPA/Foreign Language 10 credits
- Life Science 10 credits
- Physical Science 10 credits
- World History 10 credits
- US History 10 credits
- Economics 5 credits
- Government 5 credits
- Career & College Readiness 10 credits
- Electives 40 credits
- Physical Education 20 credits

Special Conditions Regarding Graduation Requirements

No more than 40 credits may be earned in any semester from any combination of courses without prior written permission by the school principal or designee. Note: Dual Enrollment college courses do not count in this total. A student may petition and may receive permission for a maximum of 50 credits to complete graduation requirements in the student's graduating semester.

The Superintendent or designee regularly will make available a list of specific courses approved by the GCC, which meet graduation requirements and a list of specific courses that may be taken for elective credit.

GCC Board Policy BP 14-17 Homeless and Foster Youth Graduation Requirements may be utilized in appropriate circumstances, allowing homeless and foster youth under certain extenuating circumstances to have an amended credit requirement (credit reduction).

Participation in Graduation Activities

Students who have discipline or behavioral issues may be excluded from participation in graduation.

Progress Toward Graduation

Normal progress toward graduation is defined as maintaining a minimum Grade Point Average of 1.5 or above and accumulating a minimum of: 50 credits by the beginning of the sophomore year; 100 credits by the beginning of the junior year; 150 credits by the beginning of the senior year. Students shall complete a minimum of 25 credits per semester. The school will prepare an intervention plan for students who do not achieve the number of required credits for adequate progress.

Dual Enrollment

GCC students may have the opportunity to take approved community college courses while they are still in high school, either as part of a school's pathway or on their own. These courses can help students explore college and career interests, build confidence with college-level work, and, in most cases, earn both high school and college credit. Students should work closely with their school counselor before enrolling in any college course. Counselors help students and families choose courses that fit the student's graduation plan, academic readiness, and college or career goals. Parent/guardian input, course availability, and school approval may also be part of the process.

Approved dual enrollment courses may be accepted for high school credit when students earn a passing grade. College courses are recorded on the student's high school transcript using the grade issued by the college and may also be eligible for weighted GPA credit. Because college courses become part of a student's official college record, students and families should take dual enrollment seriously. Poor performance or repeated course withdrawals may affect future college or financial aid opportunities. GCC encourages students to use available supports, including counselor check-ins and dual enrollment support classes when assigned or recommended.

Students with IEPs or 504 Plans should speak with their counselor and IEP/504 team before beginning a college course. College accommodations are handled through the college's disability services office, not through GCC, but GCC staff can help guide students and families through the process.

GCC will cover required textbooks, materials, tuition, and fees for approved courses that students take for dual credit. Nonconsumable textbooks and materials purchased by GCC remain school property and must be returned when the course ends or if the student leaves the course or school.

Work Permits

Work experience can be a valuable complement to a student's educational experience. Minors, ages 12 through 17, are required by law to possess a work permit to be employed. Students must present the following items to obtain a work permit:

- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, state I.D. card, or immigration card)
- Proof of school enrollment (last quarter report card, letter of verification, or computer printout)
- Student must sign their work permit in the presence of issuing authority

Each school site will issue work permits only as allowed by law and only to the extent that outside employment does not significantly interfere with schoolwork. Contact your school when requesting a work permit during the school year. You may contact Student Services at 916-286-5129 when requesting a work permit during the summer. (*EC* § 49110)

Biliteracy

GCC awards the Biliteracy Attainment Recognition Award to eligible students in grades 5 and 8 who apply for and successfully meet the established criteria for their grade level. These criteria are based on state recommendations and are designed to assess bilingualism in a developmentally appropriate manner. This recognition celebrates students' achievement, commitment, and growth in multilingualism. Its purpose is to encourage students to continue their world language studies and ultimately work toward earning the State Seal of Biliteracy in high school. For more information about the Biliteracy Attainment Recognition Award and its requirements, please contact your student's school.

State Seal of Biliteracy

GCC awards the State Seal of Biliteracy to eligible graduating students in accordance with criteria established by the California Department of Education. The State Seal of Biliteracy recognizes students who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in English and one or more world languages. The State Seal of Biliteracy is affixed to the diploma of each qualifying student and is noted on the student's official high school transcript. In recognition of this achievement, GCC also presents qualifying students with a medallion and/or honor cord to wear during commencement ceremonies.

Textbooks

Each student is provided with instructional materials in accordance with applicable law. Students are expected to exercise reasonable care in the use of school-issued materials and to return all borrowed materials upon request and in good condition, excluding normal wear and tear. Pursuant to California Education Code section 48904 and applicable school policies, a student and/or parent/guardian may be held responsible for the replacement cost of school property that is not returned or that is lost, damaged, or defaced, as permitted by law. The school will provide notice and an opportunity to resolve any claims for lost or damaged property.

Graduation Ceremonies

Seniors who have met the graduation requirements by the last calendar day of any given school year are invited to participate in the graduation ceremony at the school of their attendance. Students who have not met all the graduation requirements may not participate in the graduation ceremony. The principal may deny the privilege of participating in graduation ceremonies and/or promotion activities based on the student's conduct and behavior per GCC Board Policy CI 5127.

School Communication

- **School Website:** The school website serves as a central location for important announcements, calendars, resources, policies, and school information.
    - https://www.cccs-sacramento.org/
- **ParentSquare:** ParentSquare is the primary communication platform for school announcements, classroom messages, reminders, and urgent notifications. Families should ensure their accounts are activated and updated to receive important communications.
- **Aeries Parent Portal:** Families can access student grades, attendance information, and academic progress through the Aeries Parent Portal.
- **Social Media:** School updates, celebrations, events, and community highlights may be shared through official school social media accounts, including Instagram and Facebook.

APPENDICES

GCC and Community Resources

GCC Community Engagement Department

Phone: (916) 286-5128
Email: gcc-ced@gcccharters.org

The GCC Community Engagement Department is dedicated to building strong relationships among schools, families, and the community to create opportunities that help students and families thrive. Grounded in the GCC Portrait of a Graduate and the Community School Strategy, our team works to remove barriers to success, promote equity, and support the academic, social, and emotional well-being of all students and families.

How We Support Students and Families

Our services include:

- **Family Support**: Connecting families with community resources, services, and guidance to address needs such as food assistance, housing, healthcare, transportation, mental health services, and other basic needs.
- **Student Support:** Creating meaningful opportunities, programs, and events that help students grow, lead, and stay engaged in their school community.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborating with local agencies, organizations, and businesses to expand access to valuable services and supports for GCC students and families.

Family Resources
The GCC Community Engagement Department provides access to the GCC Family & Community Resource Guide, which includes information about local food assistance programs, housing resources, healthcare services, mental health supports, utility assistance, childcare, and other community resources available throughout Sacramento County and surrounding areas.

Families can also access support through:

- Sacramento 2-1-1, a comprehensive directory of local health and human services.
- FindHelp.org, a free online resource that connects families with food, housing, healthcare, financial assistance, childcare, education, and other support services.
- Sacramento Food Bank Food Locator, a directory of food distribution sites by ZIP code, including food pantries, meal programs, and other food assistance resources.

Immigration Resources

Gateway Community Charters is committed to ensuring that all students and families feel safe, welcomed, and supported, regardless of immigration status. GCC provides access to information and referrals related to educational rights, legal protections, immigration legal services, family preparedness planning, mental health support, and community advocacy resources.

Available supports include:

- Know Your Rights information and educational materials for immigrant families.
- Information regarding California laws that protect immigrant students and families, including protections related to school access and student privacy.
- Family preparedness resources, emergency planning guides, and legal rights ("Red") cards.
- Referrals to immigration legal service providers and community-based organizations.
- Rapid Response Network information and community support resources.
- Mental health and emotional wellness resources for students and families impacted by immigration-related concerns.

Additional immigration resources are available through the Immigrant Family Resources page on the GCC website.

Requesting Assistance

Students, families, and staff may request support by completing the:
GCC Student & Family Support Request Form

A member of the Community Engagement Department will follow up to connect families with appropriate resources and services based on their individual needs.

For additional information, questions, or concerns, please contact the GCC Community Engagement Department at **gcc-ced@gcccharters.org or (916) 286-5128**.

Gateway Community Charters 26/27 School Calendar

Gateway Community Charters
2026 -2027 School Calendar

JUL '26 — 0

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

AUG '26 — 19

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

SEP '26 — 20

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCT '26 — 21

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

NOV '26 — 15

M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

DEC '26 — 14

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

89

Key Calendar Dates

First Day of School, 8/5/2026
Last Day of School, 5/28/2027

Non Student Days

Teacher in Service, 8/3 - 8/4/2026
Teacher in Service, 10/5/2026
Teacher in Service, 1/4/2027
Teacher in Service, 4/5/2027

Holidays 2026-27

Jul 3 Independence Day (Observed)
Sep. 4 School Recess
Sep. 7 Labor Day
Nov. 11 Veterans Day
Nov.23-27 Thanksgiving
Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 Winter Break
Jan.18 MLK Jr. Holiday
Feb.15-19 President's Week
Mar 26 - April 2 Spring Break
May 31 Memorial Day
Jun 18 Juneteenth (Observed)

End of Grading Periods

Trimester 1 - (60 Days) 10/30/2026
Trimester 2 - (60 Days) 2/24/2027
Trimester 3 - (60 Days) 5/28/2027
Semester 1- (88 Days) 12/18/2026
Semester 2- (92 Days) 5/28/2027

JAN '27 — 18

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

FEB '27 — 15

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

MAR '27 — 19

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

APR '27 — 19

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

MAY '27 — 20

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

JUN '27 — 0

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

91

Total Service Days: 180

BOARD ADOPTED: 1/13/2026