



Gateway Community Charter Schools

**Empowering Possibilities International
Charter School**



**GCC Family & Student Handbook
2026-2027**



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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 Varneulen, Principal

Community Collaborative Charter School (Connections Academy at Gateway)

3612 Madison Avenue (Suite 25), North Highlands
Kaela Varneulen, 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

Futures High School

900 Grace Avenue, Sacramento

Dr. Jerry Kosch, Principal

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

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

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

Vicente Luevano, Principal

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

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

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

GCC 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.

GCC 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.

GCC Core Values (SERVICE)

- **Student 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.
- **Excellence:** We relentlessly pursue excellence with a strategic focus on our vision, mission, values and beliefs, priorities, goals and outcomes.
- **Responsibility:** 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.
- **Valuing 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.
- **Integrity:** 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.
- **Collaboration:** We create a culture that maximizes individual contribution while leveraging the collective intelligence of everyone through regular and ongoing systems of meaningful participation.
- **Empowerment:** 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:

Seat-Based Tiered Re-Engagement

Under California law, a student may be considered truant if they are absent from school without a valid excuse for more than 30 minutes on three occasions during a school year, or any combination of unexcused absences and tardies that meet this threshold. When attendance concerns arise, GCC schools partner with families to identify barriers to attendance and provide early support to help students attend school consistently. GCC schools use a tiered approach to address attendance concerns. The process begins with communication and attendance notifications, followed by conferences with families and the development of an attendance support plan through a Student Study Team (SST) or IEP meeting, when appropriate. If attendance concerns continue, additional interventions may include support from the Community Engagement Department, home outreach, referrals to community resources, and finally a review by the GCC School Attendance Review Team (SART). If, after all required interventions have been exhausted, a student continues to have chronic attendance issues and the family does not comply with the attendance support plan, GCC will initiate the involuntary disenrollment process in accordance with applicable law, Board Policy, and the GCC Admissions Policy.

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 support 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, heels, 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.

SECTION 7

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Principal's Welcome

Welcome to the 2026-2027 School Year!

The EPIC team and I are committed to providing a high quality education for every EPIC student. Your student will receive an academically rigorous curriculum in all core areas along with an emphasis on technology and 21st century skills. EPIC also believes in developing the whole child as we strive to create students who exemplify the attributes of the Portrait of a GCC Graduate. We are very proud to be the only authorized International Baccalaureate school in West Sacramento, are WASC accredited, and have been recognized as a Capturing Kids Hearts National Showcase School for the past 7 years.

Our teachers and staff are dedicated to creating partnerships with our families. Parents are encouraged to get involved in our school by volunteering in classrooms and school events, chaperoning on field trips, or participating in advisory groups such as School Site Council (SSC), English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) and our Community Schools Advisory Group. EPIC is also very proud of our parent education program, where topics range from how to help your child's academics at home, to information sessions about International Baccalaureate.

Our teaching staff holds high expectations for the academic success of each student. Our curriculum is aligned to the California Standards and organized through the lens of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) and Middle Years Program (MYP). The EPIC instructional team prides itself on its use of research-based instructional practices such as Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) and Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC) for mathematics to create a connective and innovative learning experience for students. In addition to high-quality academics, you will find exemplary programs in the areas of art, music, and physical education at EPIC. I invite you to explore our website to learn more about the vast academic and extra-curricular opportunities that exist at EPIC school.

The faculty and staff at EPIC are proud of our school and accomplishments. We are committed to creating an environment where students feel welcome, appreciated and challenged to do their best each day. I look forward to working with you and my door is always open. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about EPIC school.

*Dr. Jerry Kosch
Principal
Empowering Possibilities International Charter (EPIC)*

EPIC Vision

To prepare our students for the competitive global economy, EPIC charter school will provide a safe learning environment that fosters students' risk-taking, inquiry and independent thinking skills.

EPIC Mission

All EPIC charter school students will acquire knowledge, concepts, and skills to succeed in their choice of college and career in order to positively contribute to both their local and global communities.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

EPIC is a fully-authorized International Baccalaureate school for Primary Years Program (PYP) and Middle Years Program (MYP). The California Standards are taught through IB principles and frameworks.

WASC Accreditation

EPIC is fully WASC accredited and periodically undergoes a rigorous and reflective self-study process regarding school improvement.

School Contact Information

Empowering Possibilities International Charter

(916) 286-1960

(916) 993-4110 (Fax)

2945 Ramco Street, Ste. 200

West Sacramento, CA 95691-5992

Website: www.epicib.org

Principal - Dr. Jerry Kosch

Vice Principal (Grades TK-5 PYP) - Nina Semeryuk

Vice Principal (Grades 6-8 MYP) - Micah Hancock

Office Hours

7:30 AM - 4:30 PM Monday-Friday

School Hours

Grades TK – 3 Schedule: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Grades 4-8 Schedule: 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Minimum Day School Schedule- 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Late Arrival

If a student arrives later than 8:45 a.m., he/she must check in at the office for a tardy slip before going to class. Tardiness is discouraged and is excused only for doctor and dental appointments, injuries, and illnesses. A note from the parent/guardian or medical office must accompany the student before returning to class. Students are responsible for making up any work missed when tardy.

Early Dismissal

All students are expected to have a pass when leaving the classroom during scheduled class time. Students may be asked to show passes at any time at the request of a school employee. Parent authorization is required for any student leaving school at times other than the normal dismissal time. Persons picking up a student during the school day must report to the office and sign out the student; they may not go directly to the classroom. Students are responsible to collect any missed work while away from the classroom.

If your student must leave during the school day, please do the following:

- Sign student(s) out at the office and get an early dismissal form.
- The teacher will be called to get the student(s) ready for dismissal. For Grades K-8, Student(s) will be sent to the office where parents will be waiting. For TK, parents are to walk to the classroom and pick up their student.
- At no time should parents pick up students early without checking students out, even if it is a minimum day. To ensure accountability and student safety, parents are not to pick up students out on the playground/PE class, please follow the check-out procedures and wait in the office.
- Only persons over the age of 18 who are listed on the school emergency card may pick up a student, and will be asked to provide proof of identification. Anyone not familiar to staff will be asked to provide identification before taking the student. The school must have an up-to-date home address, home phone number, cell phone numbers, and emergency numbers on file. Parents must keep the office informed of all changes during the school year.
- If students are arranging rides with persons other than those authorized, a phone call to the office and a note with parent permission is required to be turned in prior to pick up.

Dismissal

All students must be picked up promptly at the end of each school day by 3:15 p.m. (or 12:30 p.m. on Fridays) unless they are participating in an authorized school program or activity. It is imperative that children be picked up on time after school ends. Students who are still on campus after pickup time will be brought to the office and the parents/contacts will be called. If there is no response by phone from parents or emergency contacts, the school will call law enforcement.

Closed Campus

In an effort to keep all students safe and supervised, once a student arrives on the school grounds they must remain on campus until the end of the school day unless there is a note provided by the parent or guardian and permission has been granted by school office staff to

leave. If a student leaves school grounds without permission, the student is considered truant and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Parking

We need your help in keeping our students safe in the parking area. The speed limit in our parking lot is 5 MPH. Please refrain from parking in a drop off area or drop off zone and utilize a designated parking spot. The handicapped zone is reserved for those with designated permits. Parents arriving late with students must enter through the main EPIC entrance and sign in at the office.

Visitor Procedures

EPIC welcomes parent involvement and families are encouraged to come to EPIC during office hours to take care of school business. It is strongly encouraged that parents who wish to meet with an administrator call the school office or email the administrator to schedule an appointment. Also, parents are asked to provide 24 hours notice to teachers/staff members when wanting to meet for a conference. Parents who want to visit classrooms must contact the school and provide the teacher and appropriate Vice Principal 24 hours notice for the visit. All parent visitors are required to register at the main office and wear a Visitor's Badge.

Staff Directory

A complete listing of EPIC staff and email addresses can be found on our website at www.epicib.org

SECTION 8

SCHOOL PROGRAMS & PROCEDURES

School Work Policy

EPIC provides a rigorous educational experience and holds high expectations for every student. Students are expected to try their best on all assignments/assessments and complete them by the due date. Failure to complete school work will result in the student grade being lowered.

Homework Policy

Students are expected to complete all homework as assigned. The amount and types of homework vary by grade level. Failure to complete homework will result in the student grade being lowered. Teacher homework policies are posted on our school website on the teacher pages.

Grading Procedures/Report Cards

Grades for each class are based on classwork, homework, projects, and assessments. Students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of grade level knowledge, skills and concepts in each class. Report cards are issued on a trimester basis (about every 60 days). Progress reports are issued at the mid-point of each trimester. The final trimester grades are reported on transcripts and are used for our school awards program. Students will receive grades in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, world language, art/design (MYP only). Teachers are expected to clearly state their grading standards and policies through their course syllabus that is located on the teacher's website.

The grading scale is as follows:

A	Deep mastery of the knowledge, skills and concepts contained in grade level standards. A+ 98%-100% A 94%-97% A- 90%-93%
B	Solid mastery of the knowledge, skills and concepts contained in grade level standards. B+ 88%-89% B 84%-87% B- 80%-83%
C	Approaching mastery of the knowledge, skills and concepts contained in grade level standards. C+ 78%-79% C 74%-77% C- 70%-73%
D & F	Not demonstrating the knowledge, skills and concepts contained in grade level standards. D+ 68%-69% D 64%-67% D- 60%-63% F 0%-59%

Online Grade Reporting

EPIC teachers are expected to update grades regularly. Parents of students in grades K-8 can access student grades online through the AERIES Parent Portal. Information about accessing the Parent Portal is sent home annually with students. For more information about the Parent Portal please contact our main office.

EPIC AWARD PROGRAMS

The award programs at EPIC are intended to acknowledge student academic excellence. Specifically, it acknowledges individual high achievement in grade level standards and curricula, which in turn, encourages each child to maximize their potential.

Frequency: Principal's List and Honor Roll students will be each school trimester.

Principal's List Requirements - EPIC students who receive all A's on their report card and have no "N" or "U" citizenship marks.

Honor Roll Requirements - EPIC students who receive all A's and B's on their report card and have no "N" or "U" citizenship marks.

Biliteracy Attainment Recognition Award

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. Parents/Students will receive information about this award annually in class as well as via Parent Square.

Promotion/Retention

Students who do not demonstrate mastery of the grade level standards may be at risk for retention. This will be determined through the Student Study Team (SST) process which is a collaborative effort between administration, the teacher(s), and the parent/guardian. Students who are struggling academically will be offered appropriate academic interventions.

Extra-Curricular Activity Participation

EPIC strives to provide extended learning and athletic opportunities for students through extra-curricular activities, however, participation in them is a privilege and not a right. Students with F academic grades, U citizenship grades, and suspensions may be ineligible for extracurricular activities such as field trips, assemblies, and athletics.

8th Grade Promotion Ceremony

8th Graders who are in good standing will be invited to participate in the promotion ceremony at the end of the school year. Students who have F academic grades, U citizenship grades, suspensions, or have not repaid all financial obligations to the school may not be eligible to participate in the promotion ceremony or related end of the year activities. The principal may deny the privilege of participating in the promotion activities based on the student's conduct and behavior per GCC Board Policy CI 5127.

Parent/Student Conferences

EPIC prides itself on excellent home school communication. Parent-teacher conferences are held on an ongoing basis before and after school. Teachers are expected to schedule conferences with parents as needed. Translators can be made available for conferences by request. To schedule a conference, please email your student's teacher(s).

PE Participation

All TK-8th grade students are expected to participate in physical education at EPIC. If your student needs to miss PE due to an occasional illness/injury contact must be made with the student's teacher in advance. If your student is ill or has a condition that requires being excused from physical education activities for more than 5 days, an explanatory note is required from your child's health advisor. Athletic shoes must be worn during PE class. Failure to do so will result in the student not being allowed to participate and receiving a reduced grade.

Short-Term Independent Study Policy

EPIC offers Short-Term Independent Study (IS) as an optional educational alternative for students who must be absent from in-person instruction for specific, school-approved reasons.

Note: Independent study is intended for students who are ill or must leave town for some type of family emergency. It is NOT intended to replace regular attendance for families who are on vacation.

Eligibility & Duration

- Independent Study is generally offered for absences of three (3) or more consecutive school days.
- Upon request, IS may also be approved for fewer than 3 days, depending on the circumstances and instructional planning needs.
- Per GCC Board policy, the school may require the student to participate in additional instructional support while on independent study, such as online instruction and meetings.

Request & Notification

- If you expect your child to be absent for three or more days, please contact the school office to request IS and begin the process.
- Families must provide at least five days advance notice so that assignments and instructional planning can be coordinated.

Student Expectations

· Students are expected to complete and submit all assigned work upon one week of their return to earn academic credit and maintain attendance records. If the school work is late or incomplete, then students will have missing assignments toward grades and absences given.

EPIC 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. Before/After School Program

EPIC offers a free before and after school program Monday-Friday to all enrolled students. The before school component runs from 6:00 a.m. until school starts. The after school component runs from dismissal to 6:00 p.m. This is not a drop-in program and students must register and attend consistently. Students who are participating in tutoring/Attendance Recovery must stay for the full hour of instruction. After school activities include our music program, tutoring/attendance recovery, outside activities, clubs such as cooking, craftmaking, etc. Programming is subject to change.

EPIC Capturing Kids Hearts

We are extremely proud of the outstanding school culture that we have at EPIC - it truly is a special place for learning and student growth. Our school culture is grounded in Capturing Kids' Hearts and we have been recognized as a National Showcase School for the past 7 years. From the moment you enter EPIC you will be welcomed and greeted. You will see Social Contracts all over the school that our staff and students follow. You will hear "good things" and affirmations and launches as you walk our campus. This combined with strong schoolwide and classroom based positive incentive systems eliminate the need for much discipline at EPIC.

IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes (EPIC) is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB learners strive to be: Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk-Takers, Balanced, Reflective.

EPIC is a Safe and Caring School

We believe that all students have a right to a safe, healthy and nurturing learning environment. At EPIC we are committed to providing all students with a safe and caring school environment where everyone is treated with respect. EPIC will not tolerate behaviors that infringe on the safety and emotional well-being of any student.

Safety of Self and Others

In order to ensure that EPIC is a place where learning is a priority; the school must be safe at all times. Any student action or intention that can be deemed as violating the safety of one's self or others can result in serious consequences. Examples of violations include but are not limited to –bullying, verbal abuse of others, intentionally hurting another student, defiance of playground safety rules, fighting, leaving school grounds, etc.

Progressive Discipline/Classroom Behavioral Interventions

EPIC follows a system of progressive discipline and consequences escalate if students don't learn from poor behavioral choices. All EPIC teachers manage their classroom through Social Contracts that allow students to have significant input, and therefore buy-in into expected classroom behaviors. Our school's discipline plan is based on the premise that teachers are here to teach and students are here to learn. Therefore, no student will be allowed to stop the teacher from teaching or interfere with the learning of other students.

When a student makes a deliberate choice to disobey an established rule or their classroom Social Contract, some or all of the following interventions may be used at the teacher's discretion:

- ☐ Refocus/Reflection Form
- ☐ Conference with student
- ☐ Time-out/Visiting another classroom
- ☐ Call parent/guardian
- ☐ SST Level 1 - Parent/Student/Teacher Conference
- ☐ Written behavioral contract with positive incentives
- ☐ Classroom visitation by the parent

Students who are frequently disruptive to learning or who commit a major disciplinary offense will be referred to Administration for further action. Consequences issued by the main office for classroom/school disruptions or major disciplinary offenses may include:

- ☐ Time-Out/Reflection on Behavior
- ☐ Parent Contact/Meeting/SST Level 2
- ☐ Campus Beautification
- ☐ After-School Detention
- ☐ In-School Suspension
- ☐ Home Suspension
- ☐ Expulsion

School rules apply at all school events and functions, such as field trips, after school programs, during special class activities, and traveling to/from school.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Cell phones/technology must be used responsibly in a way that does not disrupt learning and school activities. Students are not to use cell phones/technology at any time while inside the EPIC building without permission from an EPIC staff member. Students MAY use cell phones/technology while outside of the EPIC building when not in class or after school clubs/activities.

EPIC is NOT RESPONSIBLE for lost or stolen personal electronic devices! You bring them at your own risk!

Students who violate this policy will receive the following consequences:

1st Offense- Verbal warning from teacher/administrator and documented.

2nd Offense- Phone confiscated, student must pick it up from the office, parent contacted, documented.

3rd Offense- Phone confiscated, parent must pick it up from the office, student detention, documented.

4th Offense/Beyond- Phone confiscated, parent must pick it up from the office, student detention, documented.

Work Permits

Work experience can be a valuable complement to a student's educational experience. Minors, ages 14 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)

Textbooks/School-Issued Technology

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.

Celebrations, Class Parties, and Food Guidelines

We realize that birthdays and other holiday celebrations are an important part of our culture. For celebrations at school, teachers must be given 24 hours notice when treats are brought to school. All food items must be store bought. If you are having a party at home, any invitations should be distributed outside of classrooms.

Lost & Found

Mark all your personal belongings with your full name. Students who lose items should check the lost and found racks on the playground and in the hallway outside of class time. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each trimester, which will be announced on Parent Square.

***EPIC is not responsible for any lost/stolen items of any type - **leave valuables at home!**

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/EPIC 2026-2027 School Year Calendar

Gateway Community Charters - EPIC

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	



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

EPIC Minimum Days

All Fridays
May 24-May 28
12:30 p.m. Dismissal

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		

89

91

Total Service Days: 180
BOARD ADOPTED: 1/13/2026

Empowering Possibilities International Charter School

Three – Way School Pledge

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 of 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, completed assignments and homework.
- Know and follow school and class 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, video games and screen time and instead study or read every day after school.
- Respect the school, classmates, staff and families.
- Follow the Social Contracts

Family/Parent Pledge ~ I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Provide a quiet time and place for homework and monitor TV viewing, video game playing, and 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.

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.
- Communicate regularly with families about student progress.
- Provide a warm, safe, and caring learning environment.
- Provide meaningful, daily homework 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.
- Follow the Social Contracts

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date