

GEORGE STEVENS ACADEMY

Student-Parent Handbook

2020 - 2021



GEORGE STEVENS ACADEMY

“George Stevens Academy has accomplished what many schools dream of—authentic community that unites all members sincerely in a single purpose: student success.”

New England Association of Schools & Colleges report, April 2011

Our mission says broadly who we are and what we do. Our vision sets out our bold goals for the future. We are well on our way to accomplishing some of these. Others will take longer. All are attainable with community support.

Our Mission

George Stevens Academy is a town academy on the coast of Maine. Founded in 1852, we are the high school for nearly all students from the seven towns in our rural community. We also enroll private-pay day and boarding students from around the world. Our students’ interests, talents, and aspirations reflect the diversity of the communities from which they come.

GSA provides a comprehensive and challenging education for all students, for those who will build futures in surrounding communities and for those who will make lives elsewhere in the world. Our many academic and experiential programs foster a love of knowledge, inspire creativity, instill self-confidence, encourage good character, and prepare each graduate for a purposeful life in a changing world.

Our Vision

We will be a vibrant learning community that proudly reflects the diversity of students from our surrounding towns, as well as those from elsewhere in the world, enabling them to thrive now and in the future.

We will provide all GSA students with an education that helps them pursue whatever jobs and career paths they choose, so that when they succeed, they and their communities will be the better for it.

We recognize that a GSA education is not just a matter of cultivating intellectual and creative strengths but also requires caring for students’ physical and emotional needs. Everything we do will be stamped with this conviction.

We will be seen as a community resource, in the belief that schools and their communities make each other stronger. We will expand school-community partnerships and real-world learning opportunities that engage students and community members in shared activities and projects for the benefit of both.

We will have a safe, attractive, functional, and cost-efficient facility that supports our current programming well and has the flexibility to adapt to changing needs in the future.

We will be financially sustainable, with the resources we need to maintain GSA’s facilities and provide for every GSA student’s needs. We will grow our endowment, meet more ambitious annual GSA Fund goals, and benefit from the support of sending towns that recognize the indispensable value of a strong high school in their community.

GSA’s mission and vision were approved by the Board of Trustees on April 25, 2019.

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George Stevens Academy is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC). GSA is a member of the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services. GSA is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the Independent School Association of Northern New England (ISANNE).

This handbook is not a contract. The statements and policies herein are subject to change. This handbook, including any revisions or updates, is available on the school's website at www.georgestevensacademy.org.

Sept. 1, 2020

The temporary conditions and challenges posed by the SARS-Cov-2 pandemic will make it necessary to revise some of the rules and information in the Student-Parent Handbook. As these changes are made, they will be listed in a pandemic supplement. Any part of the pandemic supplement that conflicts with part of the Student-Parent Handbook supersedes that part of the Student-Parent Handbook for as long as the pandemic supplement is in effect.

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ADMINISTRATION

Head of School

Timothy J. Seeley

Assistant Head of School

Libby Rosemeier '77

Executive Assistant to the Head of School

Gail Strehan

Athletic Director

Larry Gray '79

Attendance Clerk and Receptionist

Debbie Davis

Director of Maintenance

Chris Kowalski

Director of Food Services

Kristyn LaPlante

Student Services

Dean of Curriculum and Instruction

David Stearns

Dean of Students

Todd Eckenfelder

Special Education Department Chair

Lori Wessel '81

504 Coordinator

Alexandra Wessel '09

Director of College & Career Counseling

Peter Goss

Registrar and Assistant to Student Services

Elizabeth Macone

School Nurse

Nikki Jaffray '04

Admissions Office

Director of Admissions

Michael S. Foster

Admissions Officer

Christie A. Snow '90

Advancement Office

Director of Advancement

Rada Starkey

Director of Communications

Mark Messer

Director of the GSA Fund and Alumni Relations

Karen Brace

Advancement Special Projects

Liffey Thorpe

Advancement Associate

Maggie Garfield '77

Business Office

Business Manager

Fred Heilner

COMMUNICATING

Telephone (Front Office): 207-374-2808

Fax: 207-374-2982

Staff Email

Most GSA staff email addresses follow this pattern: first name initial, dot, full last name, @georgestevens.org, for example, m.messer@georgestevens.org. Most email addresses are online at www.georgestevensacademy.org/directory. If you cannot contact someone by email, call the Front Office.

Student Email

Every GSA student is given a GSA email address on enrolling. Students should check their email regularly.

Our Website

Our website, www.georgestevensacademy.org, has 11 sections: About Us, Academics, Athletics, Arts, Alumni, Documents, Admissions, Student Life, Community, Giving, and Useful Links. The back-to-school mailing is in the documents section. Profiles of our teachers and many of our staff can be found in the Our Faculty and Staff pages.

Friday eBulletin

Our eBulletin of news, events, and more for parents is emailed most Fridays during the school year to parent email addresses listed on the Emergency Contact form. If you do not receive the eBulletin and wish to, email Mark Messer at m.messer@georgestevens.org. If you do not wish to receive it, an unsubscribe link is in the eBulletin.

PowerSchool

Parents and guardians can access their child's current attendance records, as well as grades from completed terms, through PowerSchool. A link to PowerSchool is in the Useful Links section and on the front page of our website. PowerSchool access information is sent with our back-to-school mailing. If you need that access information again or are experiencing difficulties using PowerSchool, contact Elizabeth Macone, Registrar.

Canvas

Parents and guardians can access their child's current grades and assignments through Canvas. A link to Canvas is in the Useful Links section and on the front page of our website. If you need information on setting up your Canvas account, or are experiencing difficulty using Canvas, contact Debbie Davis, Attendance Clerk.

No Internet Access?

If you do not have internet access, contact Debbie Davis in the Front Office to arrange an alternative way to receive the eBulletin and other materials.

WHO CAN HELP WITH ...

Admissions

For local, domestic boarding, or international student admissions, enrollment, and course registration, contact Michael S. Foster, Director of Admissions, at m.foster@georgestevens.org.

Advisory

Contact Dean of Students Todd Eckenfelder at t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org.

Attendance

Review the attendance policy (p. 10). Contact Attendance Clerk Debbie Davis at d.davis@georgestevens.org.

Athletics

Contact Athletic Director Larry Gray at l.gray@georgestevens.org.

Classes

Questions or concerns about a class in which your child is enrolled, including questions about assignments, grades, or your child's performance, should be directed to your child's teacher or advisor by email or telephone.

For class schedules or to discuss your child's academic schedule, contact David Stearns, Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, by phone or at d.stearns@georgestevens.org.

College and Career Counseling

Contact Director of College and Career Counseling Peter Goss by phone or at p.goss@georgestevens.org.

Cooperative Ed and Alternative Course Contracts

Contact Dean of Curriculum and Instruction David Stearns by phone or at d.stearns@georgestevens.org.

Discipline

Contact Dean of Students Todd Eckenfelder by phone or at t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org.

Facilities Use

To reserve campus space for activities and meetings, contact Gail Strehan, Executive Assistant to the Head of School, by phone or at g.strehan@georgestevens.org.

Fundraising and Development

Student-parent fundraising on behalf of clubs, sports, and special events, such as bottle drives and bake sales, does not require special administrative approval. However, fundraising initiatives that involve asking for money or for significant material donations should be coordinated through Rada Starkey, Director of Advancement, by phone or at r.starkey@georgestevens.org.

Independent Study and Internship (ISIP)

Contact ISIP Coordinator Megan Flenniken at m.flenniken@georgestevens.org.

Infirmiry and Medications

Questions or concerns about your child's physical or emotional health should be directed to School Nurse Nikki Jaffray by phone or at n.jaffray@georgestevens.org.

Special Education

Questions about special education services, IEPs, and IEP meetings should be directed to Special Education Department Chair Lori Wessel by phone or at l.wessel@georgestevens.org.

Questions about 504 plans should be directed to 504 Coordinator Alexandra Wessel by phone or at a.wessel@georgestevens.org.

Website, Publications, and Communications

Contact Director of Communications Mark Messer by phone or at m.messer@georgestevens.org.

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours

The school day is from 7:30 A.M. until 2:30 P.M. Classes begin at 8 A.M. and end at 2:30 P.M. Students may not leave campus during class hours without permission from the Front Office. Parent permission is required for the Front Office to dismiss a student.

The Front Office is open during the school year from 7:30 A.M. until 4 P.M., Monday through Friday. The school library is usually open to students until the end of the school day.

Bus Trips

Students must travel to all off-campus school activities by an approved school bus except when the Assistant Head of School has given prior approval for alternative transportation. Students are expected to return from school activities on the bus, with their own parent or guardian, or with a faculty member. Any other arrangements must be made with the Assistant Head of School's approval prior to the activity. Guidelines and protocols for bus trips also apply to all activities sponsored by the boarding program.

Contacting Students during School Hours

Parents who need to speak with a student during the school day should contact the Front Office; they should not phone or text the student. Students who use their phones during class time to speak with their parents risk losing their phone for at least 24 hours.

Dormitories

The dormitories are closed to all students from 8 A.M. until 2:30 P.M. Dorm residents who need to return to a dorm during the school day must receive permission from the Front Office and from the dorm parent on duty or the Dean of Students.

Emergencies & Illness

Any accident or serious illness should be reported immediately to the Front Office. Students who are too sick to attend class should report to the nurse's office or to the Front Office. Students will be sent home once parent or guardian permission has been obtained. In an emergency, students will be transported to the hospital without a parent or guardian's permission. A parent, guardian, or other person designated on the GSA Emergency Card will be notified as soon as possible.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the School principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. [Optional] Upon request, the School

discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

[NOTE: FERPA requires a school to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Food and Drinks

- No soft drinks, sodas, or "energy drinks" (such as Red Bull, Extreme, Monster, etc.) are allowed on campus during school hours (7:30 A.M. until 3 P.M.).
- Only water in closable containers is permitted in classrooms. There are filtered water stations on campus.
- Coffee, tea, milk, juice, and other permitted drinks may be consumed only during break and during lunch.
- Students may eat food only during lunch and during break, and before the first bell or after the last bell of the day.
- Students may not eat in classrooms except as part of a class activity with the permission of a teacher or advisor, e.g. to celebrate a birthday or as part of a class cooking project.
- Students with certain medical conditions may be allowed to eat in classrooms. Permission requires the prior approval of the School Nurse.
- Students serving a lunch detention may eat in the detention classroom.
- Food that is not being eaten must be stored out of sight, e.g. in backpacks or lockers.
- Students are responsible for busing their dishes and cleaning tables, floors, and other areas after they finish eating. This includes collecting and disposing of all recycling and trash.

Health Insurance

Students may purchase school medical health insurance with broad coverage and at a very small cost. School medical health insurance or its equivalent insurance is mandatory for participation on an athletic team. All boarding students must have health insurance either by private arrangement, through their educational consultant, or through GSA.

Laptop Computers

Every GSA student receives a MacBook Air laptop for use at school and at home. Parents and students are required to sign the GSA Student Use Policy and pay the “shared risk” fee before students can receive their MacBook Air laptops. Copies of the policy may be picked up in the Front Office or downloaded from our website.

Library

The library collection includes 14,000 books, magazines, DVDs, videotapes, and CD-ROMs. Interlibrary loan is available. There are no fines charged for overdue books, but replacement costs will be assessed for lost books. Most items are available for loan for three-week periods, with renewals available as long as there is no hold on the item.

The library is open from 7:45 A.M. until the end of the school day.

Locker Rooms

- Students may request locks for gym lockers at the beginning of Physical Education classes or at the beginning of a sports season.
- Students may not use their own locks; they will be removed and discarded.
- Belongings are to be placed and locked in an assigned locker.
- The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property anywhere, including in the locker room.

Students may enter the locker room only at designated times, namely,

- at the beginning and end of their scheduled Physical Education class,
- before the first bell of the school day,
- after the last bell of the school day,
- at the time of early release from school for a scheduled athletic event.

Medical Forms

A parent or guardian must complete GSA’s medical form every year and notify the school when a student needs to take medication during the school day.

Prescription medication to be used by students during the school day must be brought to the School Nurse at the start of the school day. Students may bring to school only enough medication to meet their needs during the school day for one week at a time. A signature by the prescribing health care provider is required for long-term medications and for any nonprescription medications. All medication should arrive at school in the original prescription container. Short-term medications

contained in a prescription container do not require the prescribing health care provider’s signature.

Over-the-counter medication should be brought to the nurse’s office with a parent’s note explaining when it should be taken, the time frame for taking the medication, and the proper dosage. Note: Individuals with asthma may carry inhalers.

Ibuprofen and acetaminophen are available at the nurse’s office or in the Front Office if parental permission to dispense is noted on the student’s Emergency Contact form.

Parking Lot and Vehicles

Parking facilities at GSA are for the use of GSA students, staff, volunteers, and authorized visitors only.

- Vehicles must be registered with the Front Office.
- GSA has the authority to deny the use of parking facilities to any individual.
- During the school day, students may park only in the designated student parking lot.
- Students may not park their vehicles anywhere else on campus property.
- The school parking lot may be used between 8 P.M. and 6 A.M. for school activities only.
- Students may not return to their cars during the school day without written permission from the Front Office.

Students who drive irresponsibly on or near campus risk losing use of the school parking lot.

School Closings

We use the Alert Solutions system to give notice about school closings and other emergencies. This system sends SMS text and email messages to students and parents/guardians using contact information from our Emergency Contact form.

School-Sponsored Trips

All school trips must be approved by the administration. While on school trips, students must observe the rules and policies in this handbook. Students who miss other classes in order to participate in a school trip are responsible for completing all work missed during their absence. Students must have a signed permission slip on record and use transportation provided by GSA.

Searching Vehicles

All school rules concerning possession of illegal or inappropriate materials, including drugs, weapons, firearms, and other prohibited items, apply to vehicles parked on school property. The administration may

search student vehicles parked on school premises at any time for the purpose of enforcing school rules.

Senior Privilege

Seniors who maintain an average of 70 or better in all classes and who have the first and/or last period(s) of the day in Study Hall will be allowed to go home or to work with written permission from parents or guardians. Students must attend all advisor meetings, school meetings, and special programs, but may miss activity periods. Seniors must always sign in and out at the Front Office when arriving to school or leaving early.

Senior privilege is granted by the Assistant Head of School each year, and it is not effective until that announcement is made.

Textbooks & Return Policy

Textbooks do not belong to students; they are loaned to students for use in classes. Students are expected to keep textbooks clean, unmarked, and covered. The market replacement cost for a lost or badly damaged textbook will be charged to a student's family through the Business Office. Bills must be paid by the last day of school.

Seniors must return all materials before graduation.

Visitors

All visitors to GSA are required to sign in and out of the Front Office, where they will receive visitor identification tags. Visitors may be on school grounds only with administrative permission.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND SERVICES

The GSA Diploma

George Stevens Academy confers the diploma on students who have satisfactorily met the requirements described below at the time of graduation.

Yearlong courses at GSA earn one (1) credit. Semester-long courses earn ½ credit. All students are required to carry a minimum of six (6) courses each semester. Exceptions are granted on a case-by-case basis.

To receive a GSA diploma, a student must earn a minimum number of credits in the following study areas:

- 4 credits of English (includes Senior English)
- 3 credits of mathematics (includes Geometry and two years of Algebra)
- 3 credits of science
- 3 credits of social studies (includes U.S. History)
- 1 credit of physical education
- 1 credit of visual and performing arts
- ½ credit of health
- 6 ½ elective credits

- Ninth-Grade Seminar (1/4 credit)*

Total: 22 credits

**See page 12 for details.*

Adding and Dropping Classes

The first five academic days of the fall semester are an open add-drop period. Schedule changes made during this period will not affect student transcripts. The first five academic days of the second semester are also an open add-drop period for one-semester courses. Schedule changes after the add-drop periods can be made only in special cases, which must be approved by the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.

Advanced Placement Courses and Exams

GSA offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses. AP exams are administered at GSA in May. Students may sign up to take AP exams at GSA in other subject areas, even when GSA does not offer an AP course in the subject. (For example, a student could take the AP Spanish test even though GSA does not offer an AP Spanish course.) GSA is also part of AP4ALL, which enables students to take distance-learning AP courses.

Students enrolled in AP courses must take the AP exams.

Advisories

Each student is assigned an advisor on enrolling. Faculty members and administrators serve as advisors to 10 to 12 students to assist them in their academic, social, and emotional development. Advisors meet with students weekly to help with scheduling, parent communication, and academic planning. Strong student-advisor relationships are built through the advisor system, which is coordinated by the Dean of Students.

Alternative Course Contracts (ACC)

An Alternative Course Contract (ACC) provides an opportunity for a student to take a course not offered in GSA's regular curriculum. A student, in consultation with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and a member of the GSA faculty, may design the curriculum and write a course proposal that includes a description of the course and its goals and objectives. Alternative courses are usually taken in addition to six academic credits. Students may earn up to three (3) ACC credits while at GSA. ACC proposals should be written and approved before the beginning of each new semester.

Alternative Course Contracts may include

- self-designed courses,
- online courses,
- AP4ALL courses or courses taken through college programs such as Rural-U.

With advance approval, GSA also may award credit for

- one semester of work at a nontraditional limited purpose private school approved by the Maine Department of Education.

Attendance Policy

GSA's attendance policy focuses on the number of absences in any one particular class during a semester.

- A student who is absent from a class 8 times in one semester will receive a maximum grade of 70 for that class in that semester.
- A student who is absent from a class 12 times in one semester will receive a maximum grade of 60 for that class in that semester.

When a student has been absent 5 times in the semester, the student and the student's parents will be notified by the school, reminding them of the terms of this policy.

For purposes of this policy, all absences, no matter the reasons, count toward the absence limits stated above except for classes missed for an approved school activity (field trip, sports dismissal, etc.); these do not count towards the absence limits.

Absence documentation

When a student is absent from school or tardy for any reason, parents should notify the school on the day of the absence and then provide written follow-up on the day the student returns to school.

Absences due to illness

GSA encourages students who are sick to stay home, rest, and get necessary medical attention. Parents should notify the school about the absence and follow up with a written note on the student's return.

When possible, parents should provide a doctor's note or other documentation about the absence, illness, appointment, etc. For minor illnesses, a medical note is not necessary. However, if a student is frequently absent for reasons of illness, parents should be in communication with the school nurse, who can help manage the student's physical health.

Planned absences

Students who plan to be absent from school should complete the planned absence form as soon as possible before missing school. Students should collect work from their teachers and complete their missed work and learning promptly. Note, however, that even planned absences count towards the absence limits.

Appealing the absence limits

In special situations, students and parents may appeal the absence limit. Appeals must be made in writing to the Dean of Students. Typically, all or most of the following will describe the circumstances of such an appeal:

- The appeal is based on firmly documented evidence about the reasons for the absences. The absences in question are most likely to fall under the following categories: (1) illness documented by a health professional, including the school nurse; (2) medical or legal appointments; (3) religious holidays; (4) family emergencies.
- The appeal is proactive. The student and parents know that their student's attendance is going to go over the limit, and they appeal in anticipation of needing an exception.
- The appeal is not about the one particular absence that put the student over the limit, it is about the whole pattern of absences throughout the semester. The student should have a responsible attendance pattern overall, with few, if any, questionable absences.
- The student and parents have been in consistently good communication with the school about absences.
- The student shows evidence of responsible learning (prompt and effective make up of missed material, appropriate grades) despite the absences.

College and Career Counseling

George Stevens provides a challenging and multifaceted academic program designed to prepare all students for college, specialized training, or entry into the workforce or military service.

Juniors and seniors in good academic standing have the opportunity to explore a particular career interest through the Independent Study and Internship Program (ISIP), which runs for two weeks after February vacation and culminates in an evening display of every student's project or internship.

Throughout 11th and 12th grades, students meet frequently with the Director of College and Career Counseling to formulate a post-graduation plan. For most students at GSA, this means applying to college and seeking financial support to attend; thus, a great deal of time is spent junior and senior year exploring college options and completing the necessary application forms for admission and financial aid. Each of these steps requires experienced and knowledgeable counsel, which is provided to every GSA student and parent.

Standardized tests (the SAT or ACT) are required by most, but not all, colleges. All juniors take the PSAT at school in October as practice for the SAT, which is given at GSA in April. Both of these tests are provided at no cost to 11th graders; 10th graders who wish to take the PSAT may do so for a modest fee. Seniors are strongly encouraged to retake the SAT or take the ACT early in the fall as part of the college application process.

Students who do not wish to apply to college or who wish to take a gap year before entering higher education are encouraged to meet with the college and career counseling director in the spring of junior year or early senior year to explore other options and develop a workable plan. Each year, about 15% of GSA seniors decide to enter the workforce, join the military, or take a gap year before entering college. The success of these ventures depends a great deal on having a realistic plan and well articulated goals; properly conceived, they greatly enhance a student's education and preparation for adult life.

Commencement and Class Night

Participation in graduation ceremonies is reserved for those students who have completed all requirements at the time of graduation, but all members of the twelfth grade may participate in Class Night.

Commencement Speakers

Each year, top-ranked seniors are selected to speak at the commencement ceremony as valedictorian, salutatorian, first honor essayist, and second honor essayist. To be awarded one of these honors and a speaking part at graduation, a student must attend GSA for a minimum of four (4) semesters, three semesters by the time the final GPA is calculated. Valedictorian and salutatorian are determined using weighted grades. Other honor parts are determined using unweighted grades.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

GSA offers ESOL for students whose first language is not English. The aim of this program is to help students understand and communicate in English, support them in their regular content courses, and prepare them for the TOEFL. Nonnative English speaking students, regardless of grade level, must take designated English proficiency tests when they arrive on campus. Based on the results of those tests, they will be placed in the appropriate ESL courses or into mainstream English courses.

Exam Exemption Policy (Seniors)

Seniors in yearlong (not semester-only) courses with an average of 90 or above are not required to take a final exam. If, however, the final assessment is an individual or group project, the exemption does not apply. Seniors should check with their teachers to see if they are eligible for this exemption.

Exams

All courses, whether semester or yearlong, are required to have a final exam, project, or culminating experience as a way to assess a student's understanding of the course material. Final exams or projects count for 20% of the final grade for both semester and yearlong courses.

Grades and Performance Standards

George Stevens Academy uses numerical grades:

| | |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| 90-100 | (equivalent to an A) |
| 80-89 | (equivalent to a B) |
| 70-79 | (equivalent to a C) |
| Below 70 | (equivalent to an F / no credit) |

Grade Point Average and Class Rank

Grade point average (GPA) is calculated with George Stevens Academy credits only, using numerical end-of-course grades. Averages are rounded to the nearest tenth. Both weighted and unweighted GPAs are reported only after completion of the student's 11th-grade year and appear on 12th-grade transcripts.

Weighted grades are calculated by adding 10% to all Honors and AP course grades. Individual grades are not weighted on student transcripts but are adjusted when GPA is calculated.

It should be noted that for courses completed during the spring semester of 2019-2020, students were offered two options: Credit/No Credit or a numerical grade. None of those results are included in GPA calculations.

George Stevens Academy does not rank its students. All official documents (transcript, school report, school profile, etc.) state, "GSA does not rank." When a class rank is required by an outside institution (college admission, scholarship program), the Director of College and Career Counseling provides a decile ranking only.

Grades Online

Parents and students have access to grades online through PowerSchool and Canvas. The aim is to keep families better informed of their student's academic progress and performance, particularly when a student may be having difficulty in a class or is neglecting to complete assignments. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers as soon as problems appear. Teachers are required to update their students' grades at least every two weeks. Questions about individual assignments or assignment grades should be directed to the class teacher either by email or phone.

Home-School Policy

GSA accepts home-school students as part-time students. Home-school students enroll for a full year and must take a minimum of two courses each semester. Students may participate in one extracurricular activity each season. Half-time tuition will be paid by the sending town, or the family if not from a choice town.

A maximum of four home-school students may attend GSA at a time. At the time of application, students must provide documentation from their superintendent's office that they are registered in good standing as home-

school students. This documentation must be renewed annually.

Home-school students register for classes at the discretion of the Registrar, and they may not take a course spot from a full-time student. For classes with prerequisites or honors requirements, home-school students must show evidence they meet the prerequisites or standards required for the course. Home-school students must pass all of their GSA classes in any given quarter to remain eligible for extracurricular activities; they must pass all of their GSA classes each semester to stay enrolled at GSA.

All school rules will apply to home-school students. They must leave campus when they are not in a class or in an extracurricular activity. They must sign in and out as they arrive and leave.

Honors Courses

Most departments at GSA offer courses designated as "Honors." Honors courses challenge students to pursue a subject more deeply, more intensively, and more rigorously than is usually possible in a College Prep (CP) course. Honors course enrollment policies are as follows

- New (entering) students should discuss the suitability of an Honors course with Admissions.
- A student enrolled in an Honors course must achieve a final grade of 80 or better in order to enroll in the next appropriate Honors course in that department. (Exception: If the next appropriate course is an Honors level course and no alternative non-Honors course is available, a student may enroll in the Honors course without having achieved a grade of 80 or better.)
- A student who earns a final grade of 90 in the second semester of a College Prep (CP) course may enroll in an Honors course in the next appropriate course in that department if the student's average in that course for the year is 87 or higher.
- A student who was eligible to take an Honors course but who began the year in a non-Honors course may, during the first semester and with the teacher's recommendation and administrative approval, move into the corresponding Honors course.

Honor Roll

Honor rolls are announced at the end of each quarter. To be eligible for honor roll, a student must carry five credits. Honor rolls are published quarterly in local papers.

High Honors = 90-100 in all subjects
Honors = 80-100 in all subjects

Incomplete Work

All classwork should be completed by the end of the academic quarter. In some circumstances, at the teacher's discretion, students will be allowed up to five more school days to complete work. In extraordinary circumstances,

the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will supervise extensions of incompletes beyond this period.

Independent Study and Internship Program (ISIP)

GSA's Independent Study and Internship Program (ISIP) offers every eligible junior and senior the opportunity to explore an academic or vocational interest through a self-designed, two- or three-week course of study. ISIP encourages interdisciplinary skills and connected knowledge as students investigate a specialized area of interest with the assistance of an ISIP advisor and an off-campus advisor (for off-campus projects).

A full description of ISIP is given to students in the fall and is published on the website. Participation in ISIP requires parent consent.

Students who are failing more than one course at the end of the first semester (and are therefore on academic probation during the second semester) are not permitted to participate in ISIP. Students who do not participate in ISIP must continue to attend school during the period of ISIP.

Ninth-Grade Seminar

Every ninth-grade student is required to take Ninth-Grade Seminar in the fall semester. Students who complete the course receive .25 credit. This class provides a structured learning environment where students develop the skills and habits needed to be academically successful and independent. Topics include

- keeping track of assignments,
- organization,
- time management,
- study skills,
- test preparation,
- note-taking,
- self-advocacy.

Report Cards

Grades and course information viewed online or printed off PowerSchool are for the convenience of parents and students; they may not be final and are not official. Official report cards are distributed to students in their advisories and mailed home four times a year, at the end of each quarter. Parents and students should review report cards and speak with the student's advisor or the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction about any questions or concerns. Note: Official GSA transcripts are issued only by the Registrar.

Special Education Services

GSA strives to provide support for each student in the least restrictive environment appropriate for that student as required by special education regulations.

Support includes: direct English/language arts and math instruction, guided resource room support, classroom modifications, one-on-one support, and standardized test modifications. For further information on our special education services, please contact the Special Education Department Chair.

Study Abroad and Other Schools

Students who attend other schools for a semester or more before they have graduated from GSA will be unenrolled from GSA during the time they are attending school elsewhere. They will be re-enrolled when they return to GSA. GSA usually accepts credits earned at other accredited high schools in the U.S. and abroad. For details, contact the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.

Summer School — Credit Recovery

GSA offers summer classes for English 9 and English 10, Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and other classes, depending on need. These courses focus on essential core content and skill development so that students who pass will, at a minimum, be prepared to advance to the next level in September. As a guideline, students who achieve a year-end minimum average of 55% in these courses are eligible to take summer classes. Students whose year-end grade falls below this threshold need to repeat the entire course. Students bear the cost of courses.

Students who successfully complete a course during summer school will receive a grade of P (Pass) on their GSA transcripts; the original failing grade will, however, continue to be part of the official transcript and will be included in the calculation of GPA and RIC (rank in class).

Transfer Student Requirements

A transfer student is a student who has attended another high school and is seeking admission to GSA for the first time. A student who has attended GSA in the past and has taken an approved leave is a returning student, not a transfer student. Returning students are held to the graduation standards in effect when they left.

Withdrawing from a Course

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the open add-drop period will receive a grade of WP (withdrew passing) if the course work to date was passing, and a WF (withdrew failing) for failing work. These grades will not count toward a student's grade point average; however, a WF will be treated as a failing grade as it regards eligibility for extracurricular activities. Notations of WF and WP will not be recorded for transfers between sections of equivalent courses, such as when a student changes from an Honors section of a course to a College Prep (CP) section of the same course.

Once a senior's grades have been submitted to a college, the Office of College and Careers will promptly send the college a revised transcript reflecting any significant change in the student's schedule and grades.

Seniors are expected to remain in full-year courses as represented on their college applications. A senior who chooses to drop a full-year course after the first semester should know the following

- First semester grades will not be calculated in their GPA.
- They will receive no credit for work done in the first semester.
- Mid-year reports sent to colleges will reflect the change as a "withdrew passing" (WP) or "withdrew failing" (WF).

Withdrawing from GSA

Students who intend to transfer to another school should inform the Assistant Head of School. A withdrawal form must be signed by classroom teachers, the librarian, the advisor, the Business Manager, and the Director of Admissions. Student records, including transcripts, will be released only with parental permission and only after textbooks and the laptop computer have been returned.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOLS

Academic Integrity — Cheating and Plagiarism

Each student's education is the product of his or her own effort and participation in the process of learning. Therefore, it is a violation of school rules and personal responsibility to submit work that is not one's own or to interfere with the participation of others in the learning process. Two of the most serious forms of academic dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating

Cheating is an attempt to take credit for someone else's work. It includes the unapproved use of notes or answers during tests; giving or receiving unauthorized help on homework or other assignments; submitting someone else's work (paper, lab report, or other assignment) as if it were one's own. Helping friends cheat is also cheating. It is cheating to write friends' papers for them, do their assignments, or share test answers with them. The consequences of helping others cheat are the same as for cheaters themselves.

Cheating on homework, including sharing or copying another student's homework, will incur the same consequences as any other form of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is making substantial use of someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging the true sources

by using proper citation. We represent ourselves as being the author of words or ideas when, in fact, we are not. Plagiarism is intellectual deception. It is a form of cheating, and it is as wrong as smuggling notes into an exam or copying from someone else's test. It is wrong even if the author has given permission to use his or her work without attribution.

Consequences

It is important to learn the difference between appropriate help or collaboration and the dishonest use of others' work. Students are encouraged to ask teachers for help in learning proper citation practices.

The consequences of even a single instance of academic dishonesty (including any form of cheating and/or plagiarism) are serious and may become a permanent part of a student's GSA record. When a teacher believes a student has cheated or plagiarized, the following steps will be taken:

- The teacher will notify the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.
- The teacher will meet with the student, possibly along with the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.
- The teacher will communicate to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and to the student's parents a description of the infraction and the penalty to be assessed.
- The student who plagiarized/cheated will receive a zero on the assignment or test.
- A record of the incident will be kept on file to check for future infractions, and a copy of the record will be sent to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction and to the student's advisor.

Additional consequences, such as detention or suspension, may attach to an infraction, as well as the loss of credit for the assignment.

Repeated acts of cheating or plagiarism may result in suspension, academic probation, or expulsion.

Homework

Students are responsible for

- keeping track of what their teachers assign,
- completing assignments when they are due,
- finding out what homework they missed while absent ("being absent" is a reason for finding out what one has missed; it is not an excuse for coming to class unprepared),
- making up missed homework assignments,
- talking to teachers about missed work and ways to make it up.

Parents or guardians may telephone the Front Office and arrange to pick up homework assignments when their child cannot be in school.

Some teachers post homework assignments on course or teacher web pages, making it easier to find out what a student has missed.

Extracurricular Eligibility

The eligibility probation process applies to all time-intensive extracurricular activities at GSA. Time-intensive activities include all athletic teams, Jazz Band and extracurricular jazz combos, drama productions, math team, and other similar activities.

For all students participating in time-intensive activities, there are regular grade checks throughout the activity season, usually on a Monday, usually every two school weeks. Sometimes, such as at the beginning of a new quarter, or around exams, the time between grade checks may be longer, because there otherwise wouldn't be enough opportunity for students to improve their grades. The exact dates for grade checks will be communicated to students at the beginning of each season. When the grade check is on a Monday, students will be notified of their status on Tuesday, and any resulting consequence will begin on Wednesday

- *Step 1:* Any student with any failing grades on their previous report card will start their activity season on Step 1. Any student with any failing grades in PowerSchool on the day of a grade check during their activity season will also be placed on Step 1. Students on Step 1 may participate fully in their activity.
- *Step 2:* Any student on Step 1 with any failing grades at the next grade check will be placed on Step 2. Students on Step 2 may practice, but may not participate in games, contests, or performances.
- *Step 3:* Any student on Step 2 with any failing grades at the next grade check will be placed on Step 3. Students on Step 3 will be removed from their activity for the duration of the activity season.

Notes:

1. Students on Step 1 or 2 who are passing all their classes at the next grade check will come off probation. If they have failing grades at a later grade check they will re-enter at Step 1.
2. At each grade check, a failing grade in any class counts, not just a failing grade in the class the student was failing at the previous grade check.
3. A student placed on Step 1 or Step 2 normally remains on that step until the next grade check, even if their grades become passing soon after the grade check. However, in unique circumstances students may come

off certain steps early. If, for example, there are more than two weeks between grade checks, students will not remain on Step 2 for more than two weeks if all their grades have improved to passing.

4. Participants in time-intensive activities must have the permission of the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction to withdraw from a class with a failing grade (either on the last quarter report or during the quarter). This applies to students who want to withdraw from a course during their participation in an activity, as well as students who withdraw from a course during the grading period before an upcoming season begins.

5. Students are responsible for their grades according to the normal rhythm of the course grading, determined by the teacher. Teachers will make a reasonable effort to grade work promptly, and will have grades reasonably up to date at each grade check. However, teachers will not have to change the timing of assignments, accelerate routine grading, or offer extra credit specifically to help students be ready for the next grade check.

6. The Athletic Director will track grades for athletic activities, communicating with the students, parents, and coaches as needed. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction will track grades for non-athletic activities, communicating with students, parents, and activity advisors as needed.

7. A student or parent may appeal placement on Step 1, 2, or 3. The appeal must be made in writing and submitted to the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. A recommendation will be made to the Head of School, who will make the final decision.

Skipped Classes Policy

A student who skips one or more classes in a school day will meet with the Dean of Students. The penalty for one skipped class is two detentions. Students who skip two or more classes will be suspended for up to three days. The Dean of Students will determine additional consequences and future expectations.

STUDENT CONDUCT

In addition to formulating and administering consequences when a student breaks school rules, George Stevens Academy reserves the right to formulate and administer consequences when a student violates municipal, state, or federal laws, independent of the outcome of the legal process.

Assault and Battery

Both threatening physical harm (assault) and doing deliberate physical harm (battery) are illegal. A student who assaults or commits battery on another student, or on any person while on school property or during school

events, will be suspended from school and may face expulsion.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use is prohibited during classroom instruction unless it is specifically authorized by the classroom teacher. Cell phones may be confiscated at any time at the discretion of any faculty or staff member who works at GSA. Confiscated phones will be returned no later than the end of the academic day. Students also may be asked to leave their cell phones at home or to turn them in at the start of the academic day to be returned after the last bell.

Damage to School Property and Vandalism

The intentional or careless destruction or damage of school property, including graffiti, is prohibited by law. Students are responsible for repairing or replacing any property they have damaged or destroyed, and they may be assessed reasonable costs. Students also will face disciplinary action ranging from detention through suspension. The school may notify law enforcement agencies of property damage or vandalism.

Detention

Detentions usually occur after school but also may be assigned during lunch. Detentions may be assigned by classroom teachers to be served with them in their classroom, or by the administration at a designated location with a specific teacher. Parents will be given 24-hour notification for all after-school detentions. It is the responsibility of the student to coordinate transportation home from a detention. Failure to have adequate transportation home does NOT excuse the student from detention. Students assigned detention by the administration or a teacher must observe these guidelines:

- General detention begins at 2:45 P.M. and ends at 3:45 P.M. and consists of supervised study hall or activity.
- Students must arrive before 2:45 P.M. Students who are late for detention will make up the time at the next scheduled detention.
- Students must come prepared with academic work or reading material.
- Students in detention may be asked by the supervising faculty member to do some jobs such as straightening classrooms or the library.
- Students must not leave the detention room once they arrive.
- Students are not allowed to use phones or other electronic devices while in detention. Laptops are permitted for academic work only.
- Students are expected to be quiet and not converse with other students during detention.

Displays of Intimacy

Prolonged physical contact of an intimate or sexual nature between two or more students is not permitted on school property or at school functions and activities. This includes kissing, grinding, extended hugging, lying on someone, sitting on laps, fondling. Students should not share chairs in the cafeteria, classrooms, or library.

Students who violate this policy may receive disciplinary action, including detention or, in extreme or repeated cases, suspension, and parents or guardians will be notified.

Dress Code

The purpose of the school dress code is to establish what is appropriate to wear during the school day and what is not. These policies are active between 7:30 A.M. and 3 P.M. with the exception of sport uniforms and athletic attire for practice. The code guides students and staff to dress accordingly and comfortably during school so that learning may commence. All members of the school, students and teachers alike, should feel welcome to dress fashionably within these guidelines. Students whose clothing does not conform to the dress code will be asked to change their clothes. Repeat offenses may result in one or more detentions.

- Midriffs must be covered when shirts are in a neutral position.
- Sleeveless shirts (muscle, spaghetti, and tank tops) are allowed given that pectorals and breasts are covered.
- Mini skirts/short dresses are permitted if paired with any underlayer such as athletic shorts or tights.
- Shoes must be worn at all times with the exception of being seated outside during break or lunch.
- Hats should not be worn during assemblies. They may be worn in classrooms only with that teacher's permission.
- Rear ends must be covered at all times, including when bending down.
- Underwear and boxers should not be seen.
- Bras and other garments: Students will not be penalized if their sports bra, bra, or bralette straps are visible. The rest of the piece should not be seen.
- Leggings and workout pants are allowed so long as they are solid and do not expose one's underwear.
- See-through garments are permitted provided that a solid underlayer is paired with it.
- Shorts should be longer than three fingers beneath your rear end.

- Chest: the entire "bra" region must be concealed on both genders.

Clothing may not display

- messages or images relating to alcohol, tobacco, or drugs;
- sexually suggestive messages or images;
- profanity;
- racist, sexist, or otherwise harassing messages or images;
- messages or images that could threaten a person's sense of safety and community.

Self-expression channeled through fashion can still exist in a school environment and should not compromise anyone's education or teaching. Studying can be stylish!

Fighting

Fighting or causing a fight on school property, while in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, or at any time or place so as to interfere with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school, is a major violation of school policy. Disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion.

Harassment and Bullying

Bullying and harassment are not tolerated at George Stevens Academy, and all instances will be investigated and responded to with the goals of addressing both the victim and the perpetrator by providing restorative justice to the person bullied or harassed, and to our community, and by outlining consequences for the perpetrator, including opportunities for education and change of attitude as well as behavior.

Harassment and bullying behaviors are determined more by the perception of the victim than by the intent of the person accused of harassing or bullying. These behaviors may be written, spoken, or drawn. Electronic or online harassment or bullying is just as unacceptable and will incur the same disciplinary responses. We take all accusations of bullying or harassment seriously.

Harassment and bullying are not the same thing, although there is overlap in the behaviors. Depending on the circumstances, harassing behaviors might or might not constitute bullying. Both are generally connected to repeated, ongoing behavior, as opposed to a single incident. In particular, bullying has a specific definition in Maine educational law, which is outlined below. Disciplinary action for both may include suspension or expulsion.

Definitions

“Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or based on a student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Harassment can include some or all of the following:

- unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, comments, or contact,
- threats of physical harm,
- offensive jokes,
- ridicule, slurs, and derogatory actions or remarks,
- making a deliberately false accusation of harassment, which will be treated as harassment.

“Bullying” is different from being mean or unpleasant, even extremely so. It has a particular, legal definition in schools. While all instances of mistreatment of another are wrong and will be addressed by the school, not all constitute bullying. At GSA, following Maine education law, “bullying” is defined as follows:

- “Bullying” includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:
 - (1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:
 - (a) Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property; or
 - (b) Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student’s property;
 - (2) Interferes with the rights of a student by:
 - (a) Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or
 - (b) Interfering with the student’s academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school; or
 - (3) Is based on a student’s actual or perceived characteristics identified in Title 5, section 4602 or 4684-A of Maine law, or is based on a student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other distinguishing characteristics and that has the effect described in subparagraph (1) or (2).
- “Bullying” includes cyberbullying. “Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images,

sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device, including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device, and personal digital assistant.

- “Retaliation” means an act or gesture against a student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. “Retaliation” also includes reporting that is not made in good faith on an act of bullying.
- “School grounds” means a school building; property on which a school building or facility is located; and property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction, or training. “School grounds” also includes school-related transportation vehicles.

Reports of bullying or harassment normally should be made to the Dean of Students but can be made to any adult at school. These reports cannot be kept confidential—any adult who suspects or is told of a potential instance of bullying must report it to the Dean, and the Dean will investigate all claims. While it may be possible to keep the maker of the report confidential, no anonymous accusations will be investigated.

Process

All claims of bullying or harassment will be investigated by the Dean of Students or the Dean’s designees. Investigations can be completed quite quickly; they also can take days to do well and thoroughly. The results of the investigation, and any further actions to be taken, will be shared with the person who made the allegation.

Consequences

If the claim is verified, depending on the specific circumstance, there are a number of different potential consequences. These range from suspension (for less severe, and first instances of bullying or harassment), to expulsion (for more severe, or repeat instances). In some cases, there may be a referral to law enforcement.

GSA is a school, and so also seeks to change any behavior that results in bullying, and therefore, substantial time may be invested in educating the student engaged in bullying.

At his discretion, for severe cases of bullying, the Dean of Students may consult with various members of the faculty and staff, including, but not limited to, the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, or a student’s advisor, in determining the proper response.

Hoax Fire Alarms and Bomb Threats

Hoax fire alarms and writing notes threatening the detonation of devices are both crimes. Each event will be investigated by the school administration and will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Disciplinary action ranges from suspension to expulsion.

Internet and Technology (Appropriate Use)

Student access to and use of computer technology and the internet is a privilege and is limited to educational use during the school day and on the school network. The use during classes of any electronic device, website, or application for purposes other than learning may result in suspended access to the school network and computers.

- School administrators may examine files and hard drives of any computer, laptop, or other electronic device owned by the school. Administrators will cooperate in providing information and device access to law enforcement authorities when appropriate.
- In classrooms and other teaching settings, no form of electronic communication may be used without a supervising teacher's permission.
- Online bullying, cheating, libel, or copyright infringement, whether done on a school computer or a personal computer used at school, will result in disciplinary action ranging from detention to expulsion. Criminal activity may involve the appropriate law-enforcement agency. Students should be aware that defamation (both slander and libel) is not protected by the First Amendment.
- Posting comments to, or forming, social networks that seek to demean or damage the reputation and image of the school, its faculty, staff, or school designees, that negatively affect school climate, or that disrupt school is also a violation of acceptable computer use subject to disciplinary action. GSA reserves the right to act should a student's posted comments be deemed in violation of policy, and these actions may include contacting law enforcement officials, detention, suspension, or expulsion.
- Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued to protect the security of the GSA computer system and to respect its resource limits. In particular, computers and related devices brought in by students must be updated with security patches and virus protection. Students may be asked to limit internet usage during times of limited available bandwidth.

When using or accessing the school's computers,

- no student will deliberately or willfully cause damage to computer equipment or software or assist others in so doing;
- no student will deliberately access inappropriate materials or show others how to do so;
- no student will attempt to bypass the system's content filters;

- students will not attempt to view, alter, or damage other students' computer files without the owner's permission;
- students will respect and uphold copyright laws;
- students will follow any other regulations posted in the computer lab or other room where computers are in use;
- students will follow the directions of the person in charge of the computer lab or other room where computers are in use;
- the network administrator or school administrator has the right to inspect any and all files stored on school-owned equipment.

Lighters, Matches, and Arson

Students are not allowed to possess any type of lighter or matches at school. A student found in possession of a lighter or matches will have the item(s) confiscated. Parents will be notified, and the student will face disciplinary action ranging from detention to in-school suspension. The use of a lighter or matches will result in suspension from school. Setting a fire on school grounds or at a school activity is arson and a crime, and it will be reported to a law enforcement agency.

Searches

A school administrator who has reason to suspect that a student is in possession of, or under the influence of, an illegal substance or tobacco product, object, or any other prohibited item on school property may search book bags, bags, wallets, lockers, jackets, dorm rooms, or vehicles parked on school property, and random searches by law enforcement officials and/or police dogs may occur at any time.

Students may be asked to empty their pockets and remove their shoes to show reasonable evidence that they are not in possession of any illegal or prohibited items. These searches may be done without prior parental notification or consent; however, parents will be notified after a search is conducted. Refusal to comply with a search will be grounds for suspension. Any prohibited or illegal items found will be confiscated and may be reported to the appropriate law-enforcement agency.

Skateboarding

Skateboarding on GSA property is not allowed.

Smoking & Tobacco Use

- GSA is a smoke-free and tobacco-free campus.
- Electronic cigarettes ("vaping") are also prohibited at school.
- Under Maine law, possession, use, or distribution of tobacco products by anyone under eighteen years of age is illegal.

- A student caught smoking or in possession of tobacco or vaping products on school property, during school hours, or at school-sponsored activities will be suspended from school for three days.
- If the student is under eighteen, the appropriate law-enforcement agency may be notified.

Snowballs

Throwing snowballs (or any object that can cause injury) is prohibited and may result in consequences ranging from detention to suspension.

Stealing (Theft)

Stealing (theft), or taking someone else's belongings without their explicit permission, whether the intent is to keep the items or not, is wrong. A student who is caught stealing or taking things without permission will be suspended, and his or her parents or guardians will be notified. Depending on the items stolen, law enforcement officials also may be notified. Repeat offenses, or instances of high-value stealing (theft), may result in expulsion from GSA.

Substance Abuse Policy

George Stevens Academy encourages all students to develop safe, healthy behaviors. We know that substance abuse by adolescents creates or exacerbates behavioral, cognitive, and developmental problems that directly and indirectly affect a student's ability to perform well in school. Therefore, we prohibit recreational substance use, not only because it is illegal, but because it is unsafe and unhealthy for teenagers.

Substance abuse includes, but is not limited to, the use, misuse, possession, or distribution of alcohol, nicotine, prescription or over-the-counter drugs, or illegal drugs, in all forms. GSA prohibits the abuse or misuse of any substance that is harmful to GSA students.

Any violation of our substance abuse policy will lead to suspension or dismissal and may include notification of the authorities. The following are guidelines to which the Dean of Students will refer in administering consequences to students who break the GSA substance abuse policy.

*First Offense on School Grounds, Self-Report***

Mandatory substance abuse evaluation and potential continued counseling. Also, see athletic department policy.

First Offense on School Grounds or on a School-Sponsored Event

Three to five-day suspension (on or off campus) and a mandatory substance abuse evaluation before returning to school.

Second Offense

Five-day suspension, mandatory counseling, and educational element, and a mandatory substance abuse evaluation before returning to school.

Third or Additional Offense

Intervention with school administrators and parents/guardians of student. Length of suspension and/or separation from the GSA community will be considered.

The Extracurricular Penalty

It is a privilege, not a right, for students to participate in an extracurricular activity in which students represent or are associated with the school in any public forum outside the traditional school day. Students who are enrolled at GSA and who participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, or teams, including, but not limited to, athletic teams, music groups, theater groups, Chess Team, Student Council, and the like, may not ILLEGALLY use, buy, sell, possess, or give away alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products (e-cigarettes, vaporizers, chewing tobacco) at any time.

Students who knowingly participate in activities, events, or functions at which others are illegally using, selling, buying, or giving away illegal substances will be viewed as supporting and enabling prohibited behavior and, as such, may be subject to the same penalties and consequences as if they were themselves using, buying, or giving away the illegal substances.

When George Stevens Academy administration is made aware of the substance abuse violation, the following consequences will apply.

*First Offense on or off School Grounds, Self-Report***

Participation in GSA-approved drug and alcohol assessment program, two assessments required. No loss of events.

First Offense on or off School Grounds

Participation in GSA-approved drug and alcohol assessment program, two assessments required. No events until completion of assessments.

Second Offense

Participation in GSA-approved drug and alcohol assessment program, two assessments required. No participation in extracurricular activities for a calendar year.

Time Frame for Offenses

Following a first offense, if two full years has elapsed without another offense, a subsequent substance abuse offense will be treated as a first offense.

**Self-Report: Students who make poor choices are encouraged to immediately recognize their mistakes and accept the consequences. Participants in time-intensive

extracurricular activities who report their violations within 24 hours, and prior to the school being made aware by other parties, will be considered under the Self-Report.

Suspension and Expulsion

There are two types of suspensions: out-of-school and in-school.

Suspension — Out-of-School

- A student receiving out-of-school suspension will be notified by the Dean of Students, and a parent or guardian will be called to pick up the student.
- A formal written notice will be mailed to the parent or guardian and to the superintendent of the school from the student's sending town explaining the reasons for the suspension and the terms of the suspension.
- During suspension, the student may not be on school property and is ineligible to participate in all extracurricular activities.
- Assignments will be provided by teachers during this time and may be picked up in the Front Office.
- HCTC students who are suspended from GSA are also automatically suspended from HCTC.
- Before returning to school, the student and a parent or guardian will make an appointment with the Dean of Students to review the conditions under which the student will be able to return.
- In certain instances, a disciplinary contract between George Stevens Academy and the student will be requested by the school and signed by all parties.

Students and parents should be aware that a disciplinary suspension becomes a permanent part of a student's GSA record, and that most colleges require us to report and explain a student's out-of-school suspension as part of the college application process.

Suspension — In School

- A student who receives in-school suspension will be notified by the Dean of Students, and a parent or guardian will be notified.
- A written notice will be mailed to the parent or guardian explaining the reasons for the suspension and the term of the suspension.
- Before the end of the suspension period, the student and the parent or guardian may be asked to make an appointment with the Dean of Students to review the student's behavior and to plan appropriate remediation.
- HCTC students who receive in-school suspension from GSA also may be suspended from HCTC.

- In certain instances, a disciplinary contract between George Stevens Academy and the student will be requested by the school and signed by all parties at the conclusion of the suspension.

Expulsion

"Enrollment at George Stevens Academy is a privilege, not a right. To remain in good standing, students must comply with behavior guidelines and all policies of GSA, including but not limited to those defined in the Student-Parent Handbook. The Head of School may expel a student for committing a major offense or for habitually unsatisfactory conduct," (Approved by the Board of Trustees March 24, 2004).

Only the Head of School has the authority to expel a student from GSA. Students may be expelled from GSA for significant violations of GSA policy, for crimes or offenses not specifically noted in the Student-Parent Handbook, as well as for inadequate academic progress toward graduation. Students also may be expelled from GSA for repeated violations and/or misbehaviors. A student who is expelled from GSA will not be permitted to return to campus for any reason without specific permission from the Head of School. A student who has been expelled from GSA may apply for readmission.

Weapons, and Other Threats of Violence

- Possession or use of items commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm, or to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person, is prohibited. Examples of such items include, but are not limited to, firearms, BB guns, pellet guns, airsoft guns, or any other kind of gun, ammunition, explosives, cross-bows, brass knuckles, knives (including pocket knives, box cutters, utility knives), switchblades, chains, clubs, Kung Fu stars, and nunchucks.
- Use of any object to inflict bodily harm or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person is not allowed. Examples of such items include but are not limited to bats, belts, picks, pencils, compasses, objects capable of ignition (e.g. matches, lighters), files, tools of any sort, and replicas of weapons (including toys).
- Violent or threatening behaviors including, but not limited to, fighting, assault, battery, taking hostages, threats to commit violence against persons or property (e.g. oral or written death threats), threats of bodily harm, or bomb threats are not tolerated by GSA.
- Oral or written statements (including those made electronically) that threaten, intimidate, or harass others, or that intend to incite violence or disrupt the school program, are prohibited.

- George Stevens Academy may request a psychological evaluation of any student who seems to pose a risk to school safety. All evaluations will be conducted by a licensed professional and performed at the school's expense. Refusal to comply with this request invites the school to draw inferences from the student's behavior concerning the risk that is posed for purposes of determining appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.
- Violations of state and federal laws and any other conduct that may harm persons or property, or violate school policy, and/or the bringing of firearms to school, will be reported to the appropriate law-enforcement agency.

DORMITORY RULES

GSA's dormitories are home to the school's boarding students and staff. As such, the guidelines and rules that apply in the dormitories are meant to foster an environment of safety, academic success, and respect and care for others. These rules, much like the entire residential life curriculum, have been designed to reflect the ideals and mission of the school.

Guests are welcome by invitation during open visiting hours. Anyone who is not a resident of the dorm to which they have been invited is required to check in with a dorm parent on entering the dormitory and to check out when leaving. Dorm parents have the ultimate discretion regarding who may visit a dormitory. If a dorm parent is not available in person, guests are not permitted in the building.

Respect for dormitory spaces and the individuals in them is required at all times. Students are expected to be considerate of those around them and to clean up after themselves. Guests are welcome in common areas but are not permitted in the hallways or rooms without permission from the dorm parent on duty.

No students are allowed in the dormitories during the school day.

The dormitories are closed during after-school activities from 3:00-4:30 P.M. Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Visiting Hours:

Monday: 4:30-5:30 P.M.

Tuesday: 4:30-5:30 P.M.

Wednesday: 2:35-5:30 P.M.

Thursday: 4:30-5:30 P.M.

Friday: 2:35-10 P.M.

Saturday: 12-10 P.M.

Sunday: 12-5:30 P.M.

For the complete boarding program rules and guidelines, please refer to The Residential Life Handbook in the Documents section of the GSA website.

ATHLETICS POLICIES

GSA offers a rich array of competitive sports at both the varsity and junior varsity levels. Students should understand that, like all extracurricular programs, participation in GSA athletics is a privilege, not a right, and a student may lose that privilege by failing to abide by the policies and expectations outlined in this handbook, including all rules about substance use, tobacco use, and academic probation. Student athletes who are boarding students are also expected to abide by all Residential Life Program rules and policies. Student athletes (and their parents) should understand that breaking school rules or failing to meet academic requirements can directly affect a student's athletic eligibility.

Goals of GSA's Athletic Program

A properly controlled, well-organized sports program supports students' self-expression, resiliency, mental toughness, and physical growth, and nurtures and reinforces their personal integrity and sense of fair play. The rules and guidelines in this section of the handbook are designed to promote a full range of qualities in our student athletes, not only their athletic prowess and talents, but the character and conduct that are the hallmarks of a true champion.

We encourage a competitive spirit, but always balanced with a sense of fairness, good sportsmanship, a desire to improve, and an ability to enjoy the game.

We remind our athletes that their high visibility in the community invites others—particularly younger students—to look up to them as role models, and they will try to emulate not only our students' athletic accomplishments, but their overall behavior.

The GSA student athlete bears a responsibility not only to his or her teammates, but to the school's reputation as well as to his or her own reputation.

Interscholastic Sports

We offer twelve interscholastic sports: baseball, softball, girls' and boys' Basketball, girls' and boys' cross country, girls' and boys' golf, girls' and boys' indoor track, girls' and boys' outdoor track, sailing, girls' and boys' soccer, girls' and boys' tennis, volleyball, and girls' and boys' swimming. Athletes may participate in only one interscholastic sport at a time.

As well as the policies and rules that apply to all GSA students, there are policies, rules, and expectations that pertain specifically to students who are participating in an interscholastic sport, as follows:

Dropping or Transferring Sports

Students who are selected as squad members or managers of an athletic team will be considered members of the team through the end of that regular sports season unless they are removed for disciplinary reasons, academic ineligibility, or through mutual agreement between player and coach. All squad members who complete the season will participate in Athletic Awards Night. There are occasionally good reasons why an athlete will need to drop a sport, or transfer from one sport to another. In such cases, the student should discuss the situation with his or her immediate coach, then with the head coach, and then with the Athletic Director. Students who must drop a sport, or students who are removed from a team, must return all equipment to the coach without delay.

Equipment

School athletic equipment checked out by the student athlete is his or her responsibility. Athletes are expected to keep all equipment clean and in good condition. It is the athlete's responsibility to pay for lost or carelessly damaged equipment.

Missing Practice

Athletes are expected to attend all practices and games, and consequences for missing practices or games without a coach's permission will be administered by the coach. In case of sudden illness or other emergency, the athlete or the athlete's parents should notify the coach as soon as possible.

Sports Travel

Students must travel to all off-campus school activities by an approved school bus except when the Assistant Head of School has given prior approval for alternative transportation. Students are expected to return from school activities on the bus, with their own parent or guardian, or with a faculty member. Any other arrangements must be approved by the Assistant Head of School prior to the activity.

College Recruitment

A student athlete who is contacted directly by a college recruiter has an obligation to work through his or her GSA coach and the Athletic Department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is in the Athletic Office.

Conflicts with Other Extracurricular Activities

Students who participate in extracurricular activities will occasionally face a conflict of obligations. GSA's Athletic Department realizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in extracurricular activities; therefore, we do our best to schedule athletic events to minimize these conflicts. Students also have a responsibility to try to foresee

and avoid continual conflicts, which includes limiting activities to prevent inevitable conflicts. Students are also responsible for notifying extracurricular faculty advisors immediately when a conflict does arise. Advisors will try to work out a solution so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, then the Head of School will have to make the decision about how to resolve the conflict. A student athlete will not be penalized for acting on this decision.

Athlete Absence from School

A student athlete who is absent from school, either for all or any part of a day, may not participate in that day's game or practice without a written explanation from a parent or physician.

Athlete Suspensions

Student athletes who are suspended from school, including in-school suspension, will not be allowed to practice or participate in athletics during the period of suspension.

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

- An athlete must be under age 20 at the time of participation.
- An athlete's parental permission form must be current, signed, and on file in the Athletic Office.
- An athlete must have passed a current year physical exam, and the exam record must be on file in the Athletic Office.
- An athlete's emergency medical form must be current, signed, and on file in the Athletic Office.
- An athlete must meet all academic eligibility requirements in order to participate in sports. These requirements are exactly the same as for all students who participate in other extracurricular activities
- Mandatory preseason meeting: An athlete must attend the mandatory preseason meeting in order to participate in a sport.

Eliminating (Cutting) Student Athletes from Teams

Currently, in the following sports, student athletes are not eliminated based on specific numbers of participants: girls' soccer, boys' and girls' cross country, boys' and girls' indoor track, boys' and girls' outdoor track, sailing, boys' and girls' tennis, and golf. This means that every student who meets the eligibility criteria (see above) and who tries out automatically becomes a member of one of these teams, but automatic membership does not alter the obligation of all athletes to follow general training rules and specific rules for that sport prescribed by the coaching staff. It may at some future point become necessary to limit the number of participants on each team.

In the remaining sports, student athletes may be eliminated or denied the privilege of participation because the sport prescribes a specific number that may participate. The following teams may need to limit the number of participants: boys' and girls' basketball, and baseball. The number in each sport is prescribed by the coach of that team, with the help of the head coach in that sport, based on many criteria. Among the criteria used to determine the size of the team are the talent and work ethic of the students trying out, the number of students trying out, the optimum number determined by the coach to conduct productive practices and insure adequate substitutes.

Our coaches realize that, as difficult it is for them to cut a student, it is much more difficult on the student athletes. We expect coaches to let these students know that we understand their disappointment, that this is not a personal decision, and that we are supporting them in the future. We ask our coaches to put themselves in the place of the athlete. Coaches are expected to be especially reluctant to eliminate a senior who has been loyal to the program. Coaches are encouraged to involve parents in defusing problems resulting from cutting of student athletes.

Coaches follow these guidelines when cutting student athletes from specific teams.

Before the first day of tryouts, the coach will provide in writing a list of criteria by which student athletes will be judged, for example, "The student must be able to make lay-ups with either hand."

Tryouts must last at least three full practice sessions, and the student will be informed of the length of that tryout period in advance.

Cut lists will not be used. Student athletes will be told by the coach, with as much empathy as possible, the reasons he or she is eliminated. If large numbers of student are being cut, a group meeting may be arranged, but only with the approval and oversight of the Athletic Director.

Varsity Letter Requirements

Criteria for earning a letter will be given to each athlete by his or her coach at the preseason meeting.

Risk of Participation

Athletes and their parents should understand the risk of serious injury resulting from athletic participation. George Stevens Academy takes the following precautions to reduce or eliminate injury.

- We conduct a mandatory parent-athlete meeting prior to the start of the season to fully explain the athletic policies and to advise, caution, and warn parents and athletes of the potential for injury.

- We require coaches to keep up to date on techniques and skills to be taught in their sport.
- We teach all student athletes about the dangers associated with a particular sport.

Parent-Coach Communications

The success of our athletics program depends largely on the support of our athlete's parents and guardians, and their support, in turn, often depends on good communication with the student's coaches. We offer the following guidelines for parent-coach communications:

You should expect your child's coach(es) to keep you informed about

- the time and place of practices, matches, and games;
- the coach's philosophy;
- what the coach expects of his players, and of your child in particular;
- participation requirements, including fees, special equipment, and off-season conditioning;
- any injury your child suffers while participating;
- any discipline your child receives.

You are encouraged to talk to your child's coach(es) about

- the treatment of your child, mentally and physically;
- your child's skill improvement and development;
- concerns about your child's behavior.

Avoid questioning your child's coach(es) about

- playing time,
- team strategy,
- play calling,
- other student athletes.

Coaches expect you as parents to

- notify the coach of schedule conflicts well in advance,
- support the program,
- ensure your child attends all practices on time,
- support your child in being well-prepared for games and matches and encourage your child to eat well and get enough sleep before a game.

After speaking with a coach, if you still have concerns, you should speak directly with Larry Gray, Athletic Director, at extension 122. The Athletic Director may then arrange a meeting with the coach to resolve the issue. The Athletic Director will work with you and the coach to find a resolution to issues and concerns.

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