

# GEORGE STEVENS ACADEMY

## Student-Parent Handbook

### 2021 - 2022

---



# GEORGE STEVENS ACADEMY

*Timothy J. Seeley, Head of School  
Rebecca Gratz, Assistant Head of School*

*“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.*

*GSA students come from dozens of towns and cities in Maine and other nations, and they bring with them different interests, talents, aspirations, experiences, and expectations of what a school community should be. Even while we nurture the individuality of each student as they strive to be the best possible version of themselves, we also aspire to create a strong sense of connection for all who choose to join our community. To that end, we present our Statement of Community and Community Values.*

## **Our Statement of Community**

George Stevens Academy is dedicated to providing a safe, equitable environment for all community members, one free from discrimination and all forms of bullying and harassment. We strive to create programs and services which result in an environment that welcomes and celebrates every member of our community, provides opportunities for all to contribute, and provides for the civil rights of all.

## **Our Community Values**

### ***We value diversity.***

Our students and staff come from different social, economic, cultural, political, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. We have different interests, talents, and aspirations. We embrace the opportunity to learn about our differences. Doing so enriches each of us and strengthens our community as a whole.

### ***We value empathy.***

To better understand the members of our diverse community, we are patient, we listen, we find a connection, and we help, not harm.

### ***We value respect.***

When differences of opinion arise within our learning community, we assume that everyone is acting from good intentions, we treat each other respectfully, and we avoid speaking or acting from anger.



# Table of Contents

Contact Us .....	5
Who Can Help with?.....	5
How GSA Communicates .....	6
General Information .....	6
Academic Policies and Services .....	9
Student Behavior .....	14
Dormitory Rules (Visitors) .....	21
Athletics Policies .....	22
Index .....	25

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 Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE).

This handbook is not a contract. The statements and policies herein are subject to change. This handbook, including any revisions or updates, is available at [www.georgestevensacademy.org](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org) in the Documents channel.

*Sept. 16, 2021*

© 2021 George Stevens Academy

## CONTACT US

**Main Office: 207-374-2808**

**Fax: 207-374-2982**

*Head of School*

Timothy J. Seeley

*Assistant Head of School*

Rebecca Gratz

*Executive Assistant to the Head of School*

Gail Strehan

*Front Office Receptionist*

Lydia Gray '10

**Advancement Office (207-374-2800)**

**Business Office (207-374-5081)**

Visit [www.georgestevensacademy.org/directory](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/directory) for a complete list of faculty and staff.

## WHO CAN HELP WITH ... ?

### 504 Plans

Contact 504 Coordinator Alexandra Wessel at 207-374-2808 or [a.wessel@georgestevens.org](mailto:a.wessel@georgestevens.org).

### Admissions

For local day admissions, contact Director of Day Admissions Jane O'Connor at 207-374-2808 or [j.oconnor@georgestevens.org](mailto:j.oconnor@georgestevens.org).

For domestic boarding or international student admissions, contact Director of Boarding Admissions Todd Eckenfelder at 207-374-2808 or [t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org](mailto:t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org).

### Advisory Program

Contact Assistant Head of School Rebecca Gratz at 207-374-2808 or [r.gratz@georgestevens.org](mailto:r.gratz@georgestevens.org).

### Athletics

Contact Athletic Director Larry Gray at 207-374-2808 or [l.gray@georgestevens.org](mailto:l.gray@georgestevens.org).

### Attendance

After reviewing the attendance policy on page 10, contact Attendance Clerk Lydia Gray at 207-374-2808 or [ly.gray@georgestevens.org](mailto:ly.gray@georgestevens.org).

### Business Office

Contact Director of Finance and Operations Seth Brown at 207-374-5081 or [s.brown@georgestevens.org](mailto:s.brown@georgestevens.org); or contact Assistant to the DFO Christie A. Snow '90 at 207-374-5081 or [c.snow@georgestevens.org](mailto:c.snow@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, to discuss your child's academic schedule, or to ask about cooperative ed and alternative

course contracts, contact Dean of Curriculum and Instruction David Stearns at 207-374-2120 or [d.stearns@georgestevens.org](mailto:d.stearns@georgestevens.org).

### College and Career Counseling

Contact Director of College and Career Counseling Peter Goss at 207-374-2120 or [p.goss@georgestevens.org](mailto:p.goss@georgestevens.org).

### Community, Equity, and Inclusion

Contact Coordinator of CEI Jane O'Connor at 207-374-2808 or [j.oconnor@georgestevens.org](mailto:j.oconnor@georgestevens.org).

### Discipline

Contact Dean of Students Todd Eckenfelder at 207-374-2808 or [t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org](mailto:t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org).

### Facilities Use

To reserve campus space for activities and meetings, contact Executive Assistant to the Head of School Gail Strehan at 207-374-2808 or [g.strehan@georgestevens.org](mailto:g.strehan@georgestevens.org).

### Food Services

Contact Director of Food Services Kristyn LaPlante at 207-374-2808 or [k.laplante@georgestevens.org](mailto:k.laplante@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 Director of Advancement Rada Starkey at 207-374-2800 or [r.starkey@georgestevens.org](mailto:r.starkey@georgestevens.org).

### Health and Medications

Questions or concerns about your child's physical or emotional health should be directed to School Nurse Nikki Jaffray at 207-374-2808 or [n.jaffray@georgestevens.org](mailto:n.jaffray@georgestevens.org).

### Independent Study and Internship (ISIP)

Contact ISIP Coordinator Megan Flenniken via email at [m.flenniken@georgestevens.org](mailto:m.flenniken@georgestevens.org).

### Library

Contact Librarian Libby Edwardson at 207-374-2808 or [l.edwardson@georgestevens.org](mailto:l.edwardson@georgestevens.org).

### Residential Life

Contact Director of Residential Life Todd Eckenfelder at 207-374-2808 or [t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org](mailto:t.eckenfelder@georgestevens.org); or contact Assistant Director of Residential Life Bob Slayton at 207-374-2808 or [b.slayton@georgestevens.org](mailto:b.slayton@georgestevens.org).

### Special Education

Questions about special education services, IEPs, and IEP meetings should be directed to Lead Special Ed Teacher Lori Wessel at 207-374-2808 or [l.wessel@georgestevens.org](mailto:l.wessel@georgestevens.org).

### Website, Publications, and Communications

Contact Director of Communications Mark Messer at 207-374-2800 or [m.messer@georgestevens.org](mailto:m.messer@georgestevens.org).

## HOW GSA COMMUNICATES

### Canvas

Parents and guardians can access their child's current grades and assignments through the online course management system 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 Registrar Debbie Davis.

Announcements to students are made via the Canvas Global Announcement feature.

### 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](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/directory). If you cannot contact someone by email, call the Front Office.

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

### Emergency Alerts

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. Alerts are also posted on the front of our website and on Facebook.

### Friday eBulletin

Our eBulletin of news, events, and more for parents is emailed most Fridays during the school year. A link to sign up was included with the back-to-school forms. You also may email Mark Messer at [m.messer@georgestevens](mailto:m.messer@georgestevens) to sign up.

### 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 was mailed home in August and is necessary for filling out back-to-school forms online. If you need that access information again or are experiencing difficulties using PowerSchool, contact Registrar Debbie Davis.

### Social Media

We share news about GSA, the school community, our alumni, and more on Facebook (George Stevens Academy) and Instagram ([george.stevens.academy.gsa](https://www.instagram.com/george.stevens.academy.gsa)). Many of these stories also are shared on the GSA News page ([www.georgestevensacademy.org/News](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/News)).

### Website

Our website is a rich resource of news and information. Go to [www.georgestevensacademy.org](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org) for info about upcoming events, recent emails for parents, links to recent publications, emergency alerts, and more. Visit [www.georgestevensacademy.org/profiles](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/profiles) to find out more about our faculty and staff. Explore our About Us, Academics, Athletics, Arts, Alumni, Documents, Boarding, Day, Student Life, Community, Giving, and Useful Links channels.

### No Internet Access?

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

## 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.

## **Immunization Policy**

Regarding student immunizations, GSA follows the policies set forth by the Maine Department of Education. Visit [www.georgestevensacademy.org/Policies](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/Policies) to read that policy.

## 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 2:45 P.M.

## 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.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

George Stevens Academy does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran’s status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. Head of School Tim Seeley has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies.

## 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.

## Restraint and Seclusion Policy

GSA follows the policies governing physical restraint and seclusion set forth by the Maine Department of Education. Visit [www.georgestevensacademy.org/Policies](http://www.georgestevensacademy.org/Policies) to read that policy.

## 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. Seniors must always sign in and out at the Front Office when arriving at 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.

## Title IX Harassment Policy

### *Behavior of GSA Employees with Students*

All GSA employees, including teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators, staff, and volunteers, are expected to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their conduct and relationships with students.

Examples of inappropriate behavior with students include, but are not limited to

- Any type of sexual or sexually suggestive interaction with students, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, pressure to engage in sexual activity, physical contact of a sexual nature, and gestures, comments, or other physical, written, or verbal conduct that is sexually explicit.
- Any form of harassment, whether based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry or national

origin, or disability. Harassment may be written or spoken and may or may not include physical intimidation and/or threats.

- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship.
- Sexual banter, allusions, jokes or innuendos with students.
- Asking a student to keep a secret.
- Disclosing one's own personal, sexual, family, or employment concerns to students.
- Addressing students in an overly familiar manner, including the use of terms of endearment and pet names.
- "Friending" students or engaging in any other interactions on social networking sites (outside of any school-approved activity).
- Communicating with students on non-school matters via computer, text message, phone calls, letters, notes or any other means.

Harassment of students by school employees, including sexual harassment, is grounds for dismissal. The Title IX Coordinator will investigate complaints of harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator is Assistant Head of School Rebecca Gratz.

Visit [www.georgestevens.org/Policies](http://www.georgestevens.org/Policies) to read the complete Student Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure.

## Visitors on Campus

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. This policy is subject to change based on COVID-19 protocols.

# 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.

Semester-long courses at GSA earn one (1) credit. Quarter-long courses earn ½ credit. All students are required to carry a minimum of three (3) 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 (1/2 credit)\*

Total: 22 credits

\*See page 13 for details.

### **Adding and Dropping Classes**

The first three academic days of each quarter are an open add-drop period. Schedule changes made during this period will not affect student transcripts. 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. Seniors must have their spring semester schedules set by Dec. 1.

### **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 AP4ME, which enables students to take distance-learning AP courses.

Students enrolled in AP courses must take the AP exams.

### **Advisory Program**

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 program, which is coordinated by the Assistant Head of School.

### **Alternative Course Contracts (ACC)**

An Alternative Course (AC) 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 three other courses per quarter. Students may earn up to three (3) AC credits while at GSA. AC proposals must be written and approved before the beginning of each new semester. Students and parents must sign an Alternative Course Contract upon approval and enrollment.

### **Alternative Courses may include**

- self-designed courses,
- online courses,
- AP4ME courses or courses taken through college programs such as Explor EC.
- one semester of work at a nontraditional limited purpose private school approved by the Maine Department of Education.

### **Attendance Policy (Updated 9-1-21)**

The purpose of the GSA attendance policy and review process is to ensure that students attend school regularly and consistently. There is a great deal that happens each day—both in and outside the classroom—to nurture and support our students. As we learned in the 2020-2021 school year, there is truly no substitute for the daily in-person interactions we share in school. Individualized Education (IEP) and 504 Plans will be taken into consideration in the implementation of this attendance policy.

In order to best support students who are absent from school, we have established an Attendance Review Committee. This committee, led by the Assistant Head of School, will meet weekly to review student attendance. Students who have been absent for four (4) or more school days each quarter will meet with the Assistant Head of School and parents will be notified. If a student continues to be absent after the initial meeting and contact, the parents and student will meet with the Assistant Head of School and one or more members of the Attendance Review Committee with the goal of getting the student to school every day.

Students who are absent from school (for a non-school reason) are ineligible for extracurricular activities for that day.

If a student is in quarantine for COVID-19, those absences will NOT count toward their cumulative total. The teachers will work with the student and the family to ensure that learning continues throughout the term of absence.

### **Attendance Committee Review**

At the end of each semester, if a student has missed more than eight (8) school days, there will be no grade penalty, but the student may not receive credit for the courses they have taken and will need to repeat the courses. Students in this situation will meet at the end of the semester with the Attendance Review Committee with their parent or guardian present, to determine whether credit will be granted. Attendance documentation, student grades and conduct, along with parent communication and other mitigating factors that impacted the student's attendance, will be reviewed and will factor into the determination to withhold or issue credit for the course. The student's teachers will also be consulted as part of the review process. It is our expectation that early intervention and

frequent communication will prevent most students reaching this point.

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, visits to colleges/on campus college programs, 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. Absences due to illness also include those due to the student's mental health. Parents should notify the school about the absence and follow up with a written note on the student's return. Parents should provide a doctor's note or other documentation about the absence, illness, appointment, etc. For minor illnesses, a medical note may not be necessary. However, if a student is frequently absent for reasons of illness, parents should be in communication with the student's healthcare provider and the school nurse, who can help manage the student's physical or mental health.

### ***Planned Absences***

Students who plan to be absent from school (like for family vacation) should complete the planned absence form as soon as possible before missing school. Students must collect work from their teachers and complete their missed work and learning promptly. Please note that planned absences count towards the absence limits, but documentation, preparation, and follow-up will be reviewed if there is a hearing.

### ***Skipped Classes Policy***

GSA students are expected to attend all classes while on campus. If a student skips class, their absence will be recorded and reported as part of the attendance process. The classroom teacher will be informed when a student skips the class. Parents and advisors will be notified when a student skips class. Students who regularly skip classes will be referred to the Dean of Students and Assistant Head of School, who will follow up with the student and the family to determine consequences.

## **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. The PSAT is provided at no cost to 11th graders; 10th graders who wish to take the PSAT may do so for a modest fee. Juniors are strongly encouraged to take the SAT in the spring, and seniors are encouraged to retake the SAT or take the ACT in the fall.

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.

## **Culminating Assessments**

All semester-length full-credit courses at GSA will have a culminating assessment. Teachers may choose to have a culminating assessment in semester-length or semester-length half-credit courses. All culminating assessments are

worth 10% of the course grade. The grade will be reported as a separate grade on report cards (but not transcripts) for semester-length courses; it will be part of the quarter grade for quarter-length courses.

A culminating assessment is a capstone assessment at or near the end of a course. This may be an in-class exam or it may be a significant piece of work such as a project, essay, presentation, or portfolio. This assessment will be closely aligned to the course curriculum and objectives, with the skills, knowledge and presentation method all having been developed in the course before the culminating assessment. Seniors with a 90+ average in a course are exempt from the culminating assessment for fourth quarter assessments only, unless those assessments are a core element of the course curriculum, such as a project or essay which covers part of the curriculum itself, in addition to being a culminating assessment.

### **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 ESOL courses or into mainstream English courses.

### **Grades**

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)

### **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.

### **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.) say "GSA does not rank." When a class rank is required by an outside institution (college admissions, scholarship program), the Director of College and Career Counseling provides a decile ranking only.

### **Honor Roll**

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

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

### **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. Parent-teacher conferences will be held during the first and third quarters.

### **Hancock County Technical Center**

GSA students may enroll in courses at Hancock County Technical Center (HCTC) <https://www.ellsworthschools.org/o/hancock-county-technical-center>. GSA issues up to four (4) elective credits for up to two (2) years of student participation in the HCTC program.

### **Home-School Credits for GSA Students**

GSA students who are candidates for a GSA diploma may be awarded credits towards graduation for home-schooling. In order to receive credit for home-school courses, the parent or guardian must provide documentation that the student has completed and demonstrated learning for the course content based on the standards established by the Maine Department of Education. Please refer to the information on the MDOE website for specific requirements. <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/schoolops/homeinstruction/requirements>.

### **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 one course each quarter. 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.

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.

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.

### **Homework**

Students are responsible for

- keeping track of what their teachers assign,
- completing assignments when they are due,
- finding out what classwork and 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.

### **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.

### **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.

#### *ISIP Seminar*

Students who do not participate in the off-campus ISIP must attend school each day for the two weeks of the program. Those students will participate in ISIP seminar; a specially designed, interest-based program run by teachers of 11th and 12th grade students.

### **Ninth-Grade Seminar**

Every ninth-grade student is required to take Ninth-Grade Seminar for two (2) quarters during the year. Students who complete both quarters receive .5 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.

### **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 Lead Special Education Teacher.

## 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).

*\*This policy is under review and will be updated.*

## Withdrawing from a Course

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the open add-drop period will receive a grade of W. Notations of W 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.

If a senior's grades have been submitted to a college prior to withdrawing, 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 may not withdraw from a course after Dec. 1. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction may approve exceptions in extraordinary circumstances.

## Withdrawing from GSA

If a student intends to transfer to another school, the parent or guardian must begin by contacting the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. Student records, including transcripts, will be released only with parental permission and only after all school obligations have been met.

# STUDENT BEHAVIOR

George Stevens Academy is a learning community and as such we have established a mission, vision, and values that guide our work together. All members of the community are expected to be part of maintaining our collective mission, vision, and values. The purpose of the Student Behavior section of the handbook is to set clear expectations for student behavior; every member of this community is equally valuable and the behavior expectations protect the learning environment for all. The expectations laid out in this section of the handbook are not arbitrary or personal; they support our school and community and provide the clarity and consistency necessary to maintain a safe learning environment for all.

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.

## Academic Dishonesty

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. 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 for Academic Dishonesty*

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 dismissal.

### **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 dismissal.

### **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!

## 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 Canvas 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.

### **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 dismissal.

### **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 dismissal.

#### *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 dismissal (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 dismissal.

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.

### **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 dismissal. 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 dismissal.
- 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 dismissal 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 dismissal 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 Dismissal**

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.

### *Dismissal*

"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 dismiss 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 dismiss a student from GSA. Students may be dismissed 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 dismissed from GSA for repeated violations and/or misbehaviors. A student who is dismissed 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 dismissed 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 dismissal.
- 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:

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

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.

### **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.

### **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 125. 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.

### **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.

### **Sports Travel**

Students must travel to all off-campus school activities by an approved school bus except when the Athletic Director 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 Athletic Director prior to the activity.

### **Varsity Letter Requirements**

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

# Index

## **CONTACT US 5**

### **WHO CAN HELP WITH ... 5**

- 504 Plans 5
- Admissions 5
- Advisory Program 5
- Athletics 5
- Attendance 5
- Business Office 5
- Classes 5
- College and Career Counseling 5
- Community, Equity, and Inclusion 5
- Discipline 5
- Facilities Use 5
- Food Services 5
- Fundraising and Development 5
- Health and Medications 5
- Independent Study and Internship (ISIP) 5
- Library 5
- Residential Life 5
- Special Education 5
- Website, Publications, and Communications 5

### **HOW GSA COMMUNICATES 6**

- Canvas 6
- Email 6
- Emergency Alerts 6
- Friday eBulletin 6
- PowerSchool 6
- Social Media 6
- Website 6
- No Internet Access? 6

### **GENERAL INFORMATION 6**

- Bus Trips 6
- Contacting Students during School Hours 6
- Dormitories 6
- Emergencies & Illness 7
- FERPA 7
- Food and Drinks 7
- Health Insurance 7

- Immunization Policy 7
- Laptop Computers 8
- Library 8
- Locker Rooms 8
- Medical Forms 8
- Non-Discrimination Policy 8
- Parking Lot and Vehicles 8
- Restraint and Seclusion Policy 8
- School Closings 8
- School Hours 6
- School-Sponsored Trips 9
- Searching Vehicles 9
- Senior Privilege 9
- Textbooks & Return Policy 9
- Title IX Harassment Policy 9
- Visitors to Campus 9

### **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND SERVICES 9**

- Adding and Dropping Classes 10
- Advanced Placement Courses and Exams 10
- Advisory Program 10
- Alternative Course Contracts (ACC) 10
- Attendance Policy 10
  - Attendance Hearing 10*
  - Absence Documentation 11*
  - Absences due to Illness 11*
  - Planned Absences 11*
  - Skipped Classes Policy 11*
- College and Career Counseling 11
- Commencement and Class Night 11
- Commencement Speakers 11
- Culminating Assessments 11
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) 12
- GSA Diploma/Credit Requirements 9
- Grades 12
  - Grades Online 12*
  - Grade Point Average and Class Rank 12*
  - Honor Roll 12*
  - Report Cards 12*

Hancock County Technical Center 12  
Home-School Credits for GSA Students 12  
Home-School Policy 12  
Homework 13  
Honors Courses 13  
Incomplete Work 13  
Independent Study and Internship Program (ISIP) 13  
Ninth-Grade Seminar 13  
Special Education Services 13  
Study Abroad and Other Schools 14  
Summer School — Credit Recovery 14  
Withdrawing from a Course 14  
Withdrawing from GSA 14

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR 14**

Academic Dishonesty 14  
    *Cheating 14*  
    *Plagiarism 14*  
    *Consequences for Academic Dishonesty 15*  
Assault and Battery 15  
Cell Phones 15  
Damage to School Property and Vandalism 15  
Detention 15  
Displays of Intimacy 15  
Dress Code 16  
Extracurricular Eligibility 16  
Fighting 17  
Harassment and Bullying 17  
    *Definitions 17*  
    *Process 18*  
    *Consequences 18*  
Hoax Fire Alarms and Bomb Threats 18  
Internet and Technology (Appropriate Use) 18  
Lighters, Matches, and Arson 19  
Searches 19  
Skateboarding 19  
Smoking & Tobacco Use 19  
Snowballs 19  
Stealing (Theft) 19

Substance Abuse Policy 19  
Suspension and Dismissal 20  
Weapons and Other Threats of Violence 21

**DORMITORY RULES (VISITORS) 21**

**ATHLETICS POLICIES 22**

Absence from School 22  
College Recruitment 22  
Conflicts with Other Extracurricular Activities 23  
Dropping or Transferring Sports 23  
Eligibility Requirements 22  
Eliminating (Cutting) Student Athletes from Teams 23  
Equipment 23  
Goals 22  
Interscholastic Sports 22  
Missing Practice 23  
Parent-Coach Communications 23  
Risk of Participation 24  
Sports Travel 24  
Suspensions 22  
Varsity Letter Requirements 24