



# Destinations Career Academy Student Handbook 2022-23

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*This handbook sets forth general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA). Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is a public charter school and is subject to the laws, rules, and regulations of all Georgia public schools. The charter school guidelines for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia are available online at <http://public.doe.k12.ga.us>. A copy of the GADCA District Student and Parent Handbook is posted on the school website at <https://gadca.k12.com>*

*Important: The District Student and Parent Handbook may be amended at any time and parents will be notified of changes by email. It is our parents' and learning coaches' responsibility to maintain correct and updated contact information to be apprised of changes.*

*Last amended 4-6-22*

## Welcome to Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA)!

*Dear Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Family,*

*Welcome to the 2022-23 school year at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. We are delighted you have selected our school for this portion of your academic journey. At Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA), we believe the relationship between the student, family and teacher is the heart of a successful school experience.*

*We are committed to putting students first and maximizing their potential to learn and achieve. With our online platform, students discover their unique potential at the right pace and, importantly, with the right tools.*

*Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is serving students across the state of Georgia. Our goals for this school year are for students to realize the highest levels of academic achievement while experiencing a strong, safe, and positive school community. The K12 Virtual Schools LLS (Stride K12) curriculum and our school programs are designed with these goals in mind. Our teachers are your strong partners, and they are eager to support and to assist you and your family throughout the school year.*

*Please keep this document on hand. This handbook contains important calendars, phone numbers, and descriptions of programs.*

*We have an exciting year ahead of us and are pleased that you have selected our school. We welcome your comments, concerns, and vision for our community. We look forward to a rewarding year for all!*

*Academically yours,*

*Dr. Darice Irby*

*Dr. Darice Irby*

*Head of School*

*Destinations Career Academy of Georgia*

*1700 Water Pl SE*

*Atlanta, GA 30339*

*dirby@gadca.org*

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## School Overview

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA) is an online public charter school that enables students to choose from industry-related career pathways in the areas of Business, Health Services and Information Technology.

GADCA's career-focused options enable students to relate their studies to the actual environment. This prepares students for future jobs and, for those who desire attendance at higher studies institutions, gives them a great opportunity to pave their path too.

Students will be able to attend industry aligned courses that will expose them to fundamental occupational structures. This will allow students the opportunity to explore and learn about industry related career fields and will serve as a benefit as they decide career readiness pathways that will be taken at the high school level.

## Our Mission and Vision

The mission of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA) is to empower all students to contribute positively to the communities in which they live by preparing them for high-demand careers that are relevant in Georgia.

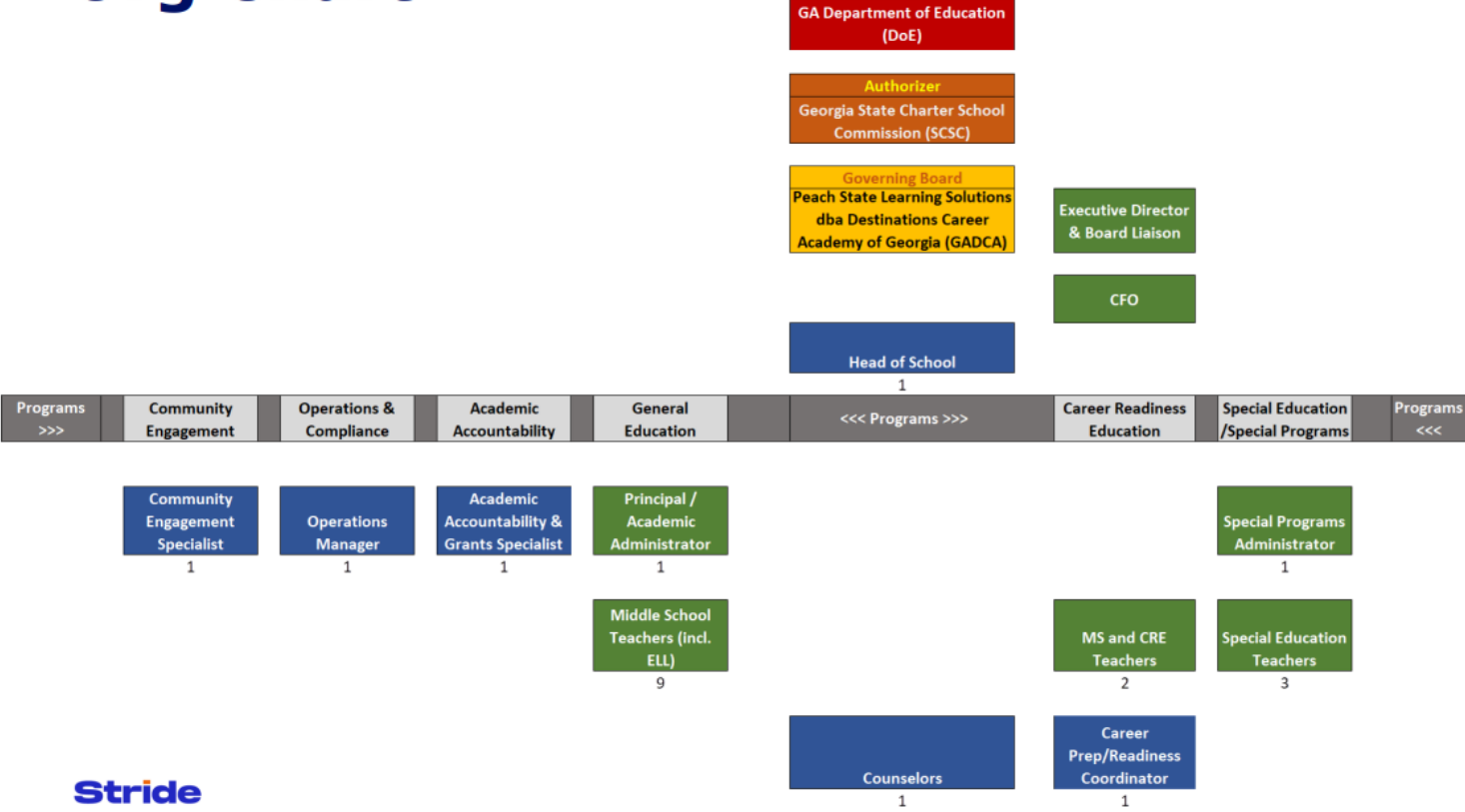
This mission has an expansive vision that intends to reach students throughout the state, including rural areas, and prepare them to graduate with the knowledge and skills to become productive and responsible citizens. GADCA students will develop as effective communicators, inquisitive learners, decision makers, and critical thinkers who develop tangible postsecondary paths that allow them to graduate competent in their chosen job skills or strongly prepared for further postsecondary endeavors.

The GADCA experience seeks to prepare students to meet the challenges of the 21st century as active, strong, and productive members of society by employing strategies that may include:

- Engaging them in a personally relevant and rigorous curriculum.
- Creating partnerships with postsecondary institutions throughout Georgia.
- Establishing hands-on career days and workshops; and
- Developing an annual speaker series with various industries

The vision of GADCA is that it will utilize an enriched online and offline learning environment to deliver core curriculum, engaging electives, World Languages, and High School AP courses; targeted instructional support by experienced certified teachers working in conjunction with learning coaches (usually parents or guardians but can be any caring adult that the parent or guardian selects); and extended support services and community partnerships to boost student achievement. We plan to offer a powerful model for effective public education that meets the unique needs of its students and families ensuring that every student has the opportunity to reach his or her true potential in accordance with the Georgia Academic Standards.

# Org Chart



## Where To Go with Questions or Concerns

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia staff recognizes that life at school does not always run smoothly. As problems arise, school personnel and parents must collaborate to seek solutions. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia staff also realizes that parents and students do not always know what to do or where to seek out answers. Parents often give up and become frustrated if problems remain unsolved. Please follow these procedures for general information or for assistance in resolving a problem:

**Step 1:** All concerns and issues should first be directed to the student's teacher. If a Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teacher cannot resolve the issue (e.g., materials and computer issues) he or she directs the parent/guardian to the appropriate contact for assistance. The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teacher will monitor the concern to ensure resolution.

**Step 2:** If the issue or concern is about the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teacher, parents are advised to contact the grade level principal/administrator as applicable.

**Step 3:** If the concern is not resolved at the teacher or lead teacher levels, parents/responsible adults are advised to contact the Head of School.

## Emergency Closings and Communication Procedure:

In the event of an emergency or if a scheduled outing or activity such as state testing must be cancelled, GADCA will notify families via email, our family Facebook page, and an "Autodialer" call via Blackboard Connect.

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Academic Calendar

GADCA will make educational services available to students in accordance with Rules and Regulations 160-5-1-.02 from the State of Georgia which equates to a daily average of 5.5 hours (330 minutes) of daily instructional time based on the 180-day school year. The school calendar provides 180 instructional days for students.

GADCA will afford students 24/7 access to the online school's curriculum and lessons throughout the school year. Students will be expected to log into the online school every official school day. Daily schedules may vary day to day contingent upon lesson length and individual student needs.

Attendance will be recorded based on log in, communications with teachers, completion of course work, and participation in class activities. In the event that a student has login and communications that do not substantiate sufficient lesson completion, the school will work with the learning coach, teachers, counselor, and academic administrator in place.



## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 2022-2023 Calendar

Date(s)	Event(s)
August 3, 2022	First Day of School
September 5, 2022	No School: Labor Day Weekend
October 5, 2022	End of Q1
October 6-7, 2022	Teacher In-Service
October 10, 2022	Start of Q2
November 21-25, 2022	School Closed: Thanksgiving Day
December 16, 2022	End of Q2/S1 (45-days)
December 19-20, 2022	No School: Teacher In-Service
December 21-30, 2022	School Closed: Winter Break
January 3, 2023	No School: Teacher In-Service
January 4, 2023	Students return for Winter Break
January 23, 2023	School Closed: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
February 20, 2023	School Holiday-School Closed
March 9, 2023	End of Q3/S2
March 10, 2023	No School: Teacher In-Service
March 13-17, 2023	No School: Spring Break
April 7, 2023	No School: School Closed
April 10, 2023	No School: Teacher In-Service
May 29, 2023	No School: Memorial Day
May 31, 2023	Last Day of School

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia | 2022-2023 CALENDAR

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## Discrimination Equal Educational Opportunity Policy

### Title IX Coordinator:

Academic Accountability & Grants Management Specialist, Elena Mincy

[emincy@gadca.org](mailto:emincy@gadca.org)

## Title IX Policy and Procedures

### Title IX: Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and discrimination based on sex

The Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in any federally funded educational program. This applies to all institutions receiving federal financial support and includes all educational experiences—academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities. The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) provides guidance and enforcement of the law with regard to sex discrimination, which includes sexual harassment and sexual assault.

*No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*

(Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students and staff are protected against sexual harassment by anyone in any school program or activity, including on the school campus, on the school bus, or off-campus during a school-sponsored activity.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior or communication that is sexual in nature when:

- A student or employee is led to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communications in order to gain something in return, such as a grade, a promotion, a place on a sports team, or any educational or employment decision, or
- The conduct substantially interferes with a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating or hostile educational or employment environment.

Examples that may constitute sexual harassment:

- Pressuring a person for sexual favors
- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature
- Distributing sexually explicit texts, e-mails, pictures, or videos
- Making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks
- Physical violence, including rape and sexual assault

Below is a list of individuals designated to handle inquiries regarding the school’s Title IX non-discrimination policies:

### Title IX Compliance Officer

Laronda Brown

[Lbrown@gadca.org](mailto:Lbrown@gadca.org)

470.317.3094 Ext-1500

<https://gadca.k12.com/>

### Title IX Grievance Policies & Procedures

**COMPLAINT OPTIONS: DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEX AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT** If you believe that you or your child have experienced discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment at school, you have the right to file a complaint. You can report discrimination and discriminatory harassment to any school staff member, the principal or the school’s Title IX Compliance Officer listed above.

Before filing a formal complaint, you can seek an informal resolution by discussing your concerns with your child’s principal or with the School’s Title IX Compliance Officer. You may also file a formal complaint through the procedures listed below.

**Step 1: Complaint to the School. Write Your Complaint.** In most cases, complaints must be filed within one year from the date of the incident or conduct that is the subject of the complaint. A complaint must be in writing. Be sure to describe the conduct or incident, explain why you believe discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment has taken place. Send your written complaint—by mail or hand delivery—to the school’s compliance officer.

**Step 2: School Investigates Your Complaint.** Once the School receives your written complaint, the compliance officer will give you a copy of the complaint procedures and make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The complaint will be conducted in cooperation with the Board if the alleged harasser is an employee. The investigation may include an interview with the charged party or parties, interviews with witnesses, if any, and an examination of any relevant documents or artifacts. The school compliance officer will respond to you in writing within 30 school days. If your complaint involves exceptional circumstances that demand a lengthier investigation, the school will notify you in writing to explain why staff need a time extension and the new date for their written response.

**Step 3: School Responds to Your Complaint** In its written response, the school will include a summary of the results of the investigation, notification that you can appeal this determination, and any corrective measures the school has taken. If you disagree with the compliance officer’s decision, you may appeal to the School’s Board of Directors. You must file a notice of appeal in writing to the Board within 10 school days of the date of the school’s response.

The Board will schedule an appeal meeting within 20 school days after receipt of your appeal. The Board will send you a written decision within 30 school days after the appeal meeting. If your appeal involves exceptional circumstances that demand a lengthier process, the Board will notify you in writing to explain why a time extension is needed and the new date for his written response.

Retaliation against an individual for filing a charge of discrimination, participating in an investigation, or opposing discriminatory practices is prohibited.

**Other Title IX Complaint Option:**

Office for Civil Rights, Atlanta Office U.S. Department of Education  
61 Forsyth St. SW, Suite 19T70  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8927  
Telephone: 404-974-9406 Fax: 404-974-9471  
E-mail: OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov

**DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION**

GADCA must provide name, title, contact information of the identified Title IX Coordinator on the school’s website. Further, the school shall notify applicants for admission and employment, students, parents/guardians of elementary

and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or other professional organizations with a collective bargaining agreement with the institution that it does not discriminate based on sex in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and its administrative regulations not to discriminate in such a manner. The notification shall be made in the form and manner required by law or regulation.

## Glossary of Terms

**Bullying** is conduct that meets all the following criteria:

- Is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress.
- Is directed at one or more Students.
- Is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means.
- Substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more Students.
- Adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,
- Is based on a pupil's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above) or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

**Cyber-Bullying** shall mean bullying that occurs by use of electronic devices through means of e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, discussion threads, mobile phones, chat messaging, pagers, and websites.

**Harassment** is conduct that meets all the following criteria:

- Is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress.
- Is directed at one or more Students.
- Is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means.
- Substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more Students.
- Adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the pupil, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,
- Is based on a pupil's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above) or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)** shall mean a support program for students in grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>. This program allows for the identification, intervention, and follow-up for students experiencing barriers to learning.

**Disability** shall mean a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual; a record of such impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment; or a specific disability such as: cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical impairment, other health impairment, speech and language impairment, early childhood developmental delays, specific learning disability, severe multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorder and deaf-blindness.

**Expulsion** shall mean the removal of a student from school for more than ten (10) days because the student has violated this code.

**IEP** shall mean an Individualized Education Plan to support a student with disabilities who requires specifically designed instruction and related services.

**Manifestation Determination** shall mean a review of the special education student's program and disability to determine if misconduct is related to the disability.

**Possession** shall mean physical control over property (whether lost, found, or stolen), such as clothing or bags and the contents contained therein.

**Suspension** shall mean the involuntary removal of a student from class attendance or school attendance for ten (10) days or less.

**Weapon** shall mean any tool or instrument used to inflict serious bodily injury of another person.

## Rights and Responsibilities for Students and Parents

### Responsibilities and Rights of Students:

All students share with the administration and staff a responsibility to develop a safe learning environment within school. Students shall have the responsibilities and rights to do the following:

- Be on time and attend school daily including all required ClassConnect sessions and Asynchronous work both offline and in the online school.
- Put forth a conscientious effort in all school assignments.
- Have knowledge of and conform to the school rules and regulations and applicable laws.
- Use appropriate speech refraining from indecent, obscene or foul language.
- Report incidents or activities that may threaten or disrupt the school to a staff member.
- Obtain a public-school education up to 21 years of age.
- Not be excluded from public schools or from school privileges because the students is married, pregnant, has a disability, is eligible for special education services and programs or because of race, gender, color religion, sexual orientation (known or perceived), or national origin;
- Not to be subject of corporal punishment.
- Be afforded discipline procedures as outlined in this document.
- Request and receive interpretation and translation assistance for school-related matters if English is not their primary language.

### Responsibilities and Rights of Parents/Guardians:

- Ensure that their children between the ages of 5 and 21 enrolled in Destinations Career Academy of Georgia attend school daily in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia.
- Follow the daily plan and log attendance daily in the Online School.
- Enroll their child in another school if he/she withdraws from Destinations Career Academy of Georgia;
- Present to the school administration any concern or complaint in a calm, reasoned manner.
- Work with their child daily to ensure that the student is completing assignments.
- Know the rules set forth in this code and review the contents with their child(ren);
- Ensure that their child complies with all required testing and assessments, including but not limited to required state tests (GA Milestones) and NWEA scheduled by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia;
- Ensure that the child has access to internet at all times. If the internet is out for more than 24 hours, travel to an alternative location such as a library will be required;

- Maintain a working email address and update with the school when it changes;
- Contact the teacher within 24 hours of a student absence;
- Ensure that their child receives the periodic health examinations and updates immunizations as required by law;
- Receive regular official reports of their child's academic progress;
- Inspect, copy, and challenge according to the appropriate guidelines any and all information contained in their child's records;
- Receive an explanation for the basis of any grade given by the teacher;
- Request a conference with the teacher and/or the principal;
- Receive translations and/or interpretations of any written or verbal communications regarding their child and their child's education;
- Appeal disciplinary actions;
- Receive reasonable accommodations for any disability to have access to participate in their child's education, to the extent all parents are permitted to participate, upon request for such accommodation and proof of medical necessity.

## Parent Involvement Policy

To meet our school-wide goals, GADCA will actively engage Learning Coaches, Parent, Staff and all Stakeholders to ensure student success.

GADCA will be governed by the definition of parental involvement as participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

GADCA will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement:

- Conduct formal surveys regarding parent/student satisfaction with the school's operations and academic and instructional programs.
- Parents Mentoring Parents
- Ongoing meetings for parent feedback on programs and practices
- Conduct ongoing communication at each academic level using print and digital communication formats: face-to-face and virtual meetings, newsletters, Stride K12 Parent Network, Annual Report, progress reports, email, and other means available.
- Request parental input from GADCA families.

GADCA will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of GADCA. The evaluation will seek to identify barriers to parental involvement. Particular attention will be given to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. GADCA will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise (if necessary and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

- Provide support and information to help students/families succeed.
- Conduct formal online surveys regarding parent/student satisfaction with the school's operations and academic and instructional programs and the parent involvement policies and programs.

- Provide parent involvement information using school communication tools and at various school activities when appropriate.
- Conduct virtual parent forums to review program improvements.

### **Title 1 Coordinator Responsibilities:**

- Oversee the Title 1 program.
- Ensure that the Parent Involvement Policy is implemented.
- Provide parents of Title 1 students with communication in the language and format that is easily understood.
- Ensure a meeting schedule is developed to allow parent involvement.
- Involve parents in the development, review and improvement of parent involvement activities and parent involvement policy.
- Provide an explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment and the proficiency levels expected.

### **Staff Responsibilities:**

- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Teach classes that are engaging and promote student achievement.
- Motivate students to learn.
- Set high expectations and assist every child in meeting the Georgia academic standards.
- Provide opportunities for parents to observe in the classroom.
- Participate in professional development that focuses on improving teaching and learning and supports the formation of partnerships with family and the community.
- Participate in collaborative decision making with parents and colleagues to make school accessible and welcoming to families

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Come to ClassConnects ready to learn and work hard.
- Come to ClassConnects on time and complete Online School lessons and assignments from the teacher.
- Communicate regularly with his/her parents and teachers about school experiences, lessons, and assignments so he/she can be successful.
- Know and followed the school rules.
- Respect the school, classmates and staff.

### **Parent and Learning Coach Responsibilities:**

- Provide a quiet place for the student to work.
- Ensure that the child attends school every day.
- Participate in surveys
- Regularly monitor child's progress in school.
- Participate as appropriate in decisions about child's education.
- Attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences.
- Read email every day and respond within 24 hours as needed.
- Respect the school, staff, students and other families.



## Attendance

As a public charter school, GADCA is required to monitor student attendance in accordance with all applicable statutes and State Board of Education rules. GADCA's Student Attendance Committee monitors student attendance. All GADCA students must be legal residents of the state of Georgia and provide proof of residence at the time of enrollment, re-enrollment, and at any time during the school year if a change in residence occurs.

- Students are required to follow the school calendar, which includes one hundred eighty (180) school days.
- All students must log in to the GADCA Online School (GOLS) via ClassConnects every day.
- Six unexcused absences from required class sessions equals one (1) unexcused day of school.
- Students are considered present for class if they attend the entire session.
- Time spent in class will automatically be logged in ClassConnects.
- If a student's ClassConnects attendance records are less than half of the required hours for their grade band, they will be counted absent for that day.
- Homeroom attendance is required daily for all students.
- Per SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02, the minimum number of hours required per school day are as follows:
  - 6th – 12th Grade 5.5 hours per day

For more information:

[Student Attendance Protocol Committee website](#)

[State Attendance Rule](#)

[Georgia Attendance Laws](#)

Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law: [O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1](#)

## Attendance Responsibilities

Attendance is logged **daily** in the Online School by parent/guardian/ learning coach for any offline time spent learning. This includes Physical Education, Health, studying, workbooks, etc. Time spent in live ClassConnects and online course work is automatically logged for students. Instructional time can occur at any time during the day and on any day of the week. Instructional time must directly relate to lesson objectives which are aligned to the Georgia Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE).

### The following criteria are counted toward instructional time:

- Pupil attended a live lesson from the teacher
- Pupil logged into a lesson or lesson activity and the login can be documented
- Pupil and teacher engaged in a subject-oriented telephone conversation
- There is documentation of an email dialogue between the pupil and teacher
- There is documentation of activity/work between the learning coach and pupil
- Schedules may be blocked or flexible; however, attendance in each course needs to be logged each week.
- Approximately 5.5 hours daily must be logged to meet the state's hourly requirements.
- Extended family travel, except during normal school vacation periods, requires written notification and vacation contract approval by the Head of School or designee. This should be completed at least one week prior to the extended absence.
- All families must attend a Parent (Guardian) Orientation and the new students will attend the "Online Learning: Middle and High School" course via the online school.
- The family must maintain regular communication with the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teachers.
- Students and parents/guardians/learning coaches must check their email, and phone messages daily. Return

response should be within 24 hours or on the next business day.

- Students must attend all “Required” Live ClassConnect Sessions for direct instruction as directed by their teachers.

### Process for Attendance Monitoring

Students are required to follow the school calendar. Instructional time can be entered on any day (e.g., weekends, holidays, etc.). Students are expected to log into the Online School each scheduled school calendar day.

School days in which students are working 100% offline must be communicated to his/her homeroom teacher or advisor to ensure proper attendance verification.

### Truancy

A student is considered truant after accruing five (5) consecutive or non-consecutive unexcused absences. The truancy process continues throughout the school year. Truancy includes not attending school (as identified above), not attending required classes, and/or not having attendance logged in ClassConnects. Once a student has been determined truant, a Student Attendance Committee (SAC) Coordinator will notify the legal guardian of a required SAC Meeting with an Attendance Officer. In addition to being determined truant, a student with 10 consecutive unexcused absences may be withdrawn from Destinations Career Academy of Georgia due to non-attendance. Once a student is withdrawn from Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, the parent/guardian will be notified via e-mail. The local school district is also notified of the withdrawal, and it is reported to the local juvenile court for monitoring to ensure that the student has transferred their attendance to their local districted school, a private school, or to a homeschooling status. Truancy is based on SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02 that is specific to a student’s attendance during the school day.

**IMPORTANT:** By law, if a student withdraws or is withdrawn and no proof of transfer to another districted school, charter school, private school, or home school declaration is received by the records department within forty-five (45) days of withdrawal, then the student will be referred to DFCS (Department of Family and Children’s Services). Proof of 84 registration at another school or a homeschool declaration must be sent to [schooloffice@gadca.org](mailto:schooloffice@gadca.org) prior to forty-five (45) days to avoid referral to DFCS.

### Unexcused Absences

When students are absent for reasons other than those outlined in the Excused Absences section of the handbook, those absences are recorded as unexcused absences. In addition, if documentation is not submitted to the Attendance Specialist via ClassConnects within three (3) school days of the student’s return to school, regardless of the reason, the absence remains unexcused.

### Excused Absences

For an unexcused absence to be registered as excused, a legal guardian, or in specific cases a learning coach, must upload an excusal to Classconnect explaining the absence within three (3) school days of the student’s return to school. The Attendance Specialist may excuse a student’s absence from school for the following reasons (with appropriate documentation, as determined by the school district):

- Student illness or quarantine (Note: Three (3) or more consecutive absences due to illness requires a doctor's note. For five (5) or more consecutive absences due to illness or quarantine of the student, the doctor’s note should also include the student’s name and that the student is unable to attend virtual sessions from their home. Anything beyond five (5) non-consecutive days of illness requires a doctor's note.)

- Student's Medical or Dental services/care/visits/check-ups (Note: services/care/visits/check-ups/quarantine for student's family members are not excused. Three (3) or more consecutive absences due to illness requires a doctor's note. For five (5) or more consecutive absences due to illness or quarantine of the student, the doctor's note should also include the student's name and that the student is unable to attend virtual sessions from their home. Anything beyond five (5) non-consecutive days of illness requires a doctor's note.)
- Counseling and/or Related Service Sessions. (Note: These should be scheduled outside of live core content classes where possible. If it is not possible, please reach out to your Attendance Specialist for information on the required documentation to submit.)
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family (Note: A maximum of three consecutive days is allowed for bereavement leave. An ongoing illness of a family member does not warrant continued excused absences for the family. After three or more absences due to a family member's illness, documentation from the provider that specifically states that the student is unable to complete virtual classes and schoolwork will be needed in order for the absences to be excused.)
- A court order or an order by a governmental agency (regarding the student), including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
- Religious holidays\* (24-hour advance request only).
- Educational travel - (five (5) day advance request notice required– not guaranteed approval). Educational travel is defined as school sponsored trips, school sponsored activities, academic competitions, etc. These must be approved by the School Accountability Director unless it has been arranged or sanctioned by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Note: Trips should not be booked or scheduled until after approval is given to avoid monetary losses if the trip is denied. All travel requests scheduled during Interim Assessments, NWEA MAP assessments, final exams, high stakes testing, or state mandated testing periods will be denied. Cruises, train excursions, camping trips, family vacations, extended school holidays, etc. will be denied regardless of cited potential educational value. New students will not be granted approvals for at least the 1st semester, regardless of their proficiency level and school standing. Students should be in good standing and performing on-grade level to be granted requests to miss required classes.
- A student whose legal guardian or parent has been called to duty for military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or 85 combat supporting posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave.
- Internet and Technology Issues are limited to three days per school year. After three excused internet/technology issues, the family must provide documentation from the service provider regarding dates of the outage or the ticket number from customer support. If proper documentation is not submitted, this will be an unexcused absence.

\*Trips or activities that have a religious purpose ARE NOT religious holidays and ARE NOT excused if they can be taken at any time during an individual's lifetime or are an optional activity not required to be religiously observant per a person's cited faith on a given day. Religious holidays that extend for a period of more than one day must specifically preclude all work and activities on a given day during school hours for a student to be considered excused for that day. Travel days to another location to observe a religious holiday are not excused as the religious holiday can be observed where an individual resides.

### **Operations Manager Prior Approval Special Circumstances**

Educational leave- to prevent unexcused absences, families who wish to take educational leave must request permission from the School Accountability Director to be excused via e-mail at least five (5) days prior to

departure.

**Educational Leave:** Students may be excused for educational trips not sponsored by the school according to the Georgia School Code. Please understand that it shall be the family’s responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to determine what obligations must be met as a result of this proposed absence. Further understand that:

- No more than ten (10) days of absence will result.
- No absence will occur in the last ten (10) days of the school year.
- Experiences such as “long weekends” and “vacations” will not justify any request.
- Request must be submitted and approved 24 hours prior to the trip.
- Requests will not be approved for time off during the state testing window.

All travel requests scheduled during Interim Assessments, NWEA MAP assessments, final exams, high stakes testing, or state mandated testing periods will be denied. Cruises, train excursions, camping trips, family vacations, extended school holidays, camps, etc. will be denied regardless of cited potential educational value. New students will not be granted approvals for at least the 1st semester, regardless of their proficiency level and school standing. Students should be in good standing and performing on-grade level to be granted requests to miss classes.

Swapping school breaks- to prevent unexcused absences, families who wish to swap school breaks (with local school calendar, etc.) must request permission from the School Accountability Director to be excused via e-mail at least five (5) days prior to the days being requested. These requests are typically denied as it is difficult, if not impossible, to replicate live classes when the whole school is on break. However, in certain instances this can be done for students that have earned full flexibility and there is a valid reason that will not result in impeding a student’s successful academic progression and does not interfere with testing/exam/assessment/diagnostic administration windows. If the School Accountability Director approves the switch, the Learning Coach is responsible for making arrangements with teachers to complete work missed during any absence. Written approval from the School Accountability Director must be submitted in ClassConnects within the required timeframe.

Number of Unexcused Absences	Notification	Displayed on Portal Dashboard	Truancy Status
1	-	Yes	Approaching Truancy
2	System Alert	Yes	Approaching Truancy
3	Email Notification	Yes	Approaching Truancy
4	Phone Call	Yes	Approaching Truancy
5	Certified Letter	Yes	<b>Truant</b>
5 or 6	Conference Notification	Yes	<b>Truant</b>
7	Email Notification	Yes	<b>Truant</b>
8 or 9	Phone Call	Yes	<b>Truant</b>
10	Withdrawal	Yes	<b>Truant</b>

## Withdrawals

Parents with students in need of withdrawing from the school must contact their Family Engagement Liaison in writing via e-mail and complete a DocuSign form requesting the withdrawal. GADCA will arrange pick up or issue reclamation labels for materials, computer, printer, hotspot (if applicable), and equipment return if these items have been furnished to the student.

**IMPORTANT:** By law, if a student withdraws or is withdrawn and no proof of transfer to another districted school, charter school, private school, or home school declaration is received by the records department within forty-five (45) days of withdrawal, then the student will be referred to DFCS (Department of Family and Children’s Services). Proof of registration at another school or a homeschool declaration must be sent to [schooloffice@gadca.org](mailto:schooloffice@gadca.org) prior to forty-five (45) days to avoid referral to DFCS.

**Technology:** Learning Coaches must submit a Tech Ticket number for technology issues related to Stride K12GADCA Systems and Technology concerns. 1-866-K12-CARE. Other technology concerns may be excused pending administrative approval.

**Makeup Work:** Remember that regardless of the absence reason, students are expected to make up work in the OLS/LMS.

**Pregnancy:** Pregnant students are expected to attend classes daily as assigned unless they have a doctor’s note to indicate other needs. A team meeting will be planned prior to the student’s due date to prepare a return plan to transition the student back to classes within an acceptable amount of time with attention being paid to the unique needs of student mothers.

**No Internet Access or Power Outage:** Students who are unable to log into school or have a power outage must have an alternative plan to go to a public library/public location with computer access to do their schoolwork. If the student does not have a back-up plan and cannot go to the library, the student must notify his or her teacher in order to legitimize the reason for the absence.

## Enrollment Probation Individualized Contract

This contract is created by the Student Attendance Specialist during a meeting with the learning coach and student. It is meant to help the truant student to become re-engaged in their classwork and attending live class sessions. Student and learning coach must follow the plan or face possible withdrawal.

## State of Georgia Required Testing

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, a Georgia public school, must follow the rules set by the Georgia Department of Education (GDOE) in observance of state law. According to GDOE, all students in grades 6-8 are **required** to participate in state testing. Being a part of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia means that some travel will be required for testing. Travel includes going to and from testing locations. The 2022-2023 testing schedule is below. Dates are subject to change.

## Standardized Testing Attendance

Testing will be conducted at a variety of sites around the state. Efforts will be made to locate a testing site within an hour of your home. In certain cases, it may be necessary to travel longer than an hour. These tests are given over a multi-day period depending on a student's grade level. Attendance is mandatory for GADCA Virtual Academy students. Students unable to attend state testing due to medical concerns must provide a doctor's note.

Specific testing dates and locations will be published no later than two weeks prior to the testing window. The school cannot guarantee that the student's assigned teacher will be the test proctor.

Georgia Department of Education Assessment Schedule		
Grades 6-8	STAR360 Reading and Math BOY Testing	8/9/2022 - 8/11/2022
Grades 6-8	STAR360 Make-up Testing	8/9/2022 - 8/11/2022
Grades 6-8	WIDA Screener	8/31/2022
Grades 6-8	Interim Assessment #1	9/12/2022 – 9/16/2022
Grades 6-8	Gifted Testing	9/26/2022 – 9/29/2022
Grade 8	PSAT/NMSQT	10/12/2022
Grade 8	CogAT	10/20/2021
Grades 6-8	Interim Assessment #2	10/24/2022 – 10/28/2022
Grades 6-8	STAR360 Reading and Math MOY Test	11/28/2022 – 12/2/2022
Grades 6-8	STAR360 Make-up Testing	12/5/2022 – 12/15/2022
Grades 6-8	Interim Assessment #3	1/30/2023 – 2/3/2023
Grades 6-8	ACCESS for ELLs 2.0	2/21/2023 – 3/31/2023
Grades 6-8	EOY STAR360 Reading and Math Test	2/28/2023 – 3/2/2023
Grades 6-8	Interim Assessment #4	4/17/2023 – 4/21/2023
Grades 6-8	GAA 2.0	4/17/2023 – 4/8/2023
Grades 6-8	GA Milestones Spring Administration	5/8/2023 – 5/19/2023
Grades 6-8	GA Milestones Make-ups	5/23/2023-5/25/2023

## Standardized Testing Score Reporting

Georgia Milestones Test Scores are sent directly to GADCA Virtual Academy office. Scores will be distributed upon receipt to the parent/legal guardian on record via US Mail.

## Attendance FAQs

**Q:** When can I log attendance?

**A:** You are able to log attendance from your first day of school until the last day of school.

**Q:** How can I report an absence?

**A:** You can email the office: [schooloffice@gadca.org](mailto:schooloffice@gadca.org) or email your student's advisor.

**Q:** Where do I need to log my child's attendance and how often?

**A:** Student attendance hours are logged in the attendance screen on the parent's OLS and must be entered daily.

**Q:** Why should I log attendance?

**A:** In addition to meeting the legal attendance requirements for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia and the Georgia School Code, logging attendance provides you and your child with a log of the work accomplished.

**Q:** What are supplemental hours?

**A:** Provided that the child first completes the Stride K12 coursework, attendance time may be logged if the child engaged in activities related to the course objectives. Contact your teacher before entering supplemental attendance time to ensure the additional activity you wish to include satisfies course objectives.

**Q:** What should I do if I forgot to log my child's supplemental hours?

**A:** You can go back to add hours after initially entering attendance. If you have already entered hours for the specified day and clicked the "submit" button, your teacher must add the hours for you. Contact your teacher for assistance in entering your supplemental hours.

**Q:** How many hours should my child log if he or she enrolled after the start of school?

**A:** Hours are prorated based on a student's start date. Students who start after the first day of school should follow the daily or weekly attendance guidelines outlined in the Instructional Time section of this handbook. Your teacher will also provide you with a prorated schedule. Students need an average of 180-days or equivalent (59,400 minutes - SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02 / 990 hours - SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02) to meet the state requirement of instructional time.

**Q:** Do I log attendance for the actual time the lesson took or just the default time that comes up on the OLS?

**A:** You must log the actual amount of time it took for the student to complete the lesson(s) each day. If you consistently observe your student completing lessons before he or she accumulates the required amount of time, you may benefit from setting a time limit to each subject, rather than just expecting one lesson per day.

## Academic Programs

### Physical Education and Technology Grades 6-8 (Code: IDB 160-4-2-.12 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program Plan)

(2) REQUIREMENTS. (a) The local board of education shall develop and implement an accurate, comprehensive health and physical education program that shall include information and concepts in the following areas. 1. Alcohol and other drug use 2. Disease prevention 3. Environmental health 4. Nutrition 5. Personal health 6. Sex education/AIDS education 7. Safety 8. Mental health 9. Growth and development 10. Consumer health 11. Community health 12. Health careers 13. Family living 14. Motor skills 15. Physical fitness 16. Lifetime sports 17. Outdoor education 18. Fitness assessment

#### Health:

(c) Each school containing any grade 6-12 shall make available instruction in health and physical education.

For additional information regarding GADOE Health and Physical Education Policy: [160-4-2-.12 COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM PLAN](#)

If you have any questions, please contact your child's PE/Health teacher:



## 6-8 Health/PE Teacher

Cassie Parker

[cparker@gadca.org](mailto:cparker@gadca.org)

470.890.6001 Ext-1510

GADCA teachers will maintain contact with students via telephone conferences, Class Connect online lessons, face-to-face conferences, GADCA gatherings, and during standardized testing participation. Through these contacts the teacher will develop clear instructional learning goals for each student and monitor progress towards these goals throughout the school year.

As expected, students identified as “at-risk” will hold a higher priority of contact as determined by the teacher and the parent. Students with IEP’s will also require more interaction. The regular and special education teachers will work in cooperation to ensure the increased interaction.

## Curriculum

Students will be placed into general education grade level curriculum based on a variety of qualitative and quantitative prior year metrics (i.e., Georgia Milestone Assessment Measures, NWEA/MAP, Attendance, etc.).

- Students falling in the 0-69<sup>th</sup> percentile will be assigned the core curriculum as well as 4 weekly class connect sessions in ELA and Math. The core curriculum targets the priority state standards and allows time for students to attend weekly class connect sessions for focused content instruction.
  - The core curriculum will have missing lesson numbers (ex: lesson 1.1, lesson 1.2, lesson 1.4, lesson 1.6) this is not an error but rather the function of the Online School.
- Students falling in the 70<sup>th</sup>-100<sup>th</sup> percentile will be assigned the core curriculum along with additional lessons to allow for deeper investigation into the priority state standards. 2 weekly class connect sessions in ELA and Math will be assigned.

Academic achievement through content and standard mastery is the cornerstone of GADCA and the Stride K12 curriculum. The Stride K12 curriculum is rigorous, broad and offers optional extension activities in the lessons. Students who need additional challenges are encouraged to complete all extension activities. Students who achieve a score in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or above, during NWEA testing in the Fall will be placed in enrichment Class Connect sessions to help supplement the grade level content. Supplemental material will be suggested by the teacher for students to complete at home with the Learning Coach. Advanced students are encouraged to complete 2-3% weekly progress supplementing as necessary.

It is imperative that all students attend each scheduled “required” live ClassConnect session, individual teacher conferences, and participate in all assessments – either face-to-face and/or Live Class Connects. As their progress is monitored, students may be asked to attend supplemental tutoring sessions for additional instructional support. These are integral tools for gathering information about individual strengths and weaknesses and monitoring ongoing progress to ensure student success. These measures also help in determining mastery levels which will be reported on the student’s progress reports. Promotion or retention for the next grade level will be determined as the cumulative results of the student’s progress and achievement for the school year are analyzed at the end of the academic year. Our goal is not to make all children alike, but to foster individual strengths and help each child develop to his or her fullest potential. Please note, if your child is receiving special education services, the learning goals that have been created and recorded on the student’s IEP for him/her will supersede this list of grade level standards; however, assessment on grade level standards may still occur.

If you have any questions, please contact the SPED Academic Administrator/Principal:

**Franeka Colley**

[fcolley@gadca.org](mailto:fcolley@gadca.org)



## GADCA's Middle School Program (Grades 6-8)

In grades 6-8 the focus begins to shift towards more independent learning for students.

- Students are expected to take on more accountability and responsibility for their learning.
- Student and teacher interaction increase with teachers continuing to provide instruction directly.
- Students are expected to develop more independent study skills and to submit more assignments to be evaluated or graded to their teachers.

Stride K12 utilizes their Learning Management System (LMS) to provide the online school campus and courses. The school campus site features school announcements, messages from the administration, access to important documents, club and organization information, guidance counseling resources, and courses- all combined into one interactive and easy to use interface. The student calendar, which shows assignments and due dates for all courses in one easy to use tool, helps students to stay on focus in every course. Courses provide dedicated tools, like a teacher syllabus and announcements, a Raise Your Hand area to ask course-related questions for their teachers, easy to use online assessments, and an electronic drop-box for assignment submission. These all work together to provide a rich course experience for students.

Courses are delivered by semester. Year-long courses are comprised of two semesters. Courses consist of multiple units, lessons, and activities. Teachers may deliver lectures live or online, but most of the time students work through expertly designed lessons online which allows students to follow their own personal daily schedules. They serve to instruct, to provide practice and exploration and to assess student learning daily, based on a minimum pace and a schedule that fits each student. Teachers post announcements and indicate the lessons, activities and assessments to be completed each week on the course calendar. All work assigned for a single week must be received on the dates indicated but may be accepted up until midnight on the Sunday of that week without penalty.

GADCA's Middle School program is a blend of synchronous and asynchronous work – students work according to their own individual daily schedules. Teachers provide asynchronous and synchronous.

– live support. Course activities may include:

- Reading online text and transcripts;
- Viewing moving and static images and streaming video;
- Listening to audio recordings and pronunciations.
- Linear and interactive animations and simulations.
- Hands-on and virtual activities;
- Threaded discussions with teachers and fellow students in a section, cohort, or group;
- Teacher announcements;
- Online self-check exercises; or
- Teacher-created instructional materials

Student learning will continue to benefit from close relationships among parents, students, advisors, teachers, and other support personnel. For students to achieve mastery of high school level courses, the instructional component will rely heavily upon skilled subject-specific teachers who will serve as coaches and guides through a clearly defined, high-quality curriculum. Learning coaches will still be crucial as mentors and coaches; however, students' academic success in virtual high school will depend upon the student's level of engagement with the curriculum and interactions with their teachers.

### **Students are Required to:**

- Attend daily sessions virtually and synchronously;
- Log in daily;
- Communicate with teachers and other staff (school email, IM, phone, etc.);
- Follow course calendar and announcements;
- Complete assignments on (or before) due dates before the end of each day;
- Spend 60-75 minutes in each course each day;
- Submit assignments on or before the due date directly to their teacher via the “drop- box” in each course;
- Read teacher feedback and use it to improve their work on future assignments; and
- Communicate directly with the teacher when they have any questions or problems related to the curriculum, or if they need a due date extension.

### **Learning Coaches are responsible for:**

- Confirming attendance daily to live classes;
- Ensuring internet connectivity;
- Reporting/resolution of any technical issues or missing materials as quickly as possible;
- Ensuring that students are completing required assignments daily and submitting assignments on time;
- Assisting student with assignments, to the extent that they are comfortable doing so;
- Ensuring that students take advantage of all of the resources available to them to succeed in school; and
- Communicating with GADCA teachers when a concern or need presents itself.

### **Licensed Teachers:**

Every student has an expert teacher for each course. Teachers are state certified in the subject area they teach and may be assisted by partner teachers who are experts in a particular curriculum area. Teachers set due dates for assignments, and then grade, provide feedback, and return assignments to students. Teachers answer student questions via email and phone and hold weekly live content sessions during which students and parents can attend for more clarity on difficult topics. Teachers provide one-on-one and small-group instruction to students who are experiencing difficulty with certain topics. Teachers communicate directly with students and Learning Coaches regarding the student’s progress and missing/late assignments. Special Education teachers ensure that students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) receive the accommodations and adaptations required to ensure their success and compliance with their IEP.

### **Middle School Grading Policies:**

Graded activities will be assigned points. A student’s final grade will reflect the actual points earned, compared to the total points possible. Teachers will use these points to assign letter grades, according to their grading policies. Students and learning coaches can access the current grades for all courses by viewing their accounts in the LMS or the My Info area, at any time during the semester.

### **Graded activities may include:**

- Online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets;
- Quizzes;
- Exams (e.g., Unit, Semester, Final);
- Threaded discussions;
- Essays, research papers, and other writing assignments;

- Project Based Activities
- Presentations

Assignments will be teacher-graded or computer-graded, depending on the assignment. During the semester students can view their grades in the Student Progress Report. Your teachers, administrators and parents also have access to your grade information.

Students are responsible for their own work on unit tests and final exams. Students are not allowed to use notes, quizzes, or textbooks on unit tests and final exams, unless indicated in an IEP. Students are not allowed to share work with other students on unit tests or final exams. Unless otherwise noted, tests and quizzes are not “open-book” assignments. If a student does not complete his own work or shares his work with others on unit tests and/or final exams, he/she will not receive credit for the work. He/she will also face the risk of suspension or expulsion.

Students must cite sources in all assignments, tests and exams. Students will not receive credit for work that does not appropriately cite sources. If a student uses information from a source, but does not cite the source, the student will receive a zero for that assignment and may be suspended or expelled.

### Late Work Policy:

- Graded assignments must be completed and submitted no later than midnight on the due date. Teachers will post late work policies in their courses. They may choose to assign a penalty for late work of up to 20%.
- A zero will be entered the Monday after an assignment is due.
- Students will be able to submit late assignments after a zero is assigned; however, teachers may choose to give an alternative assignment or award partial points.
- For computer-scored **quizzes** that are late, **the student** will need to contact the teacher before they will be allowed to take the quiz.
- For computer-scored **tests** that are late, **the learning coach** will need to contact the teacher before they will be allowed to retake the test.

Teachers are willing to discuss the late submission of work past the above-listed deadlines. Please contact teachers directly as soon as possible to find out if this is an option. Teachers will grant due date extensions on assignments under some circumstances. You should never assume that teachers will automatically grant these requests; however, due date extensions must be requested before the due date of the assignment and on a school day. Requests received on or past the due date, or on a non-school day will most likely not be granted.

### Source Citation:

Many courses require written work in which you will need to cite sources. Any direct quotations from your textbook can simply be cited as (author, page number). Any quotations from outside sources require full citations, including author, title, publisher, date of publication, and page number. If you are citing information found on a website, provide the complete web page or site title, URL, author (if known), page number (if applicable), and publication date of the site (if available).

### Academic Dishonesty Policy/Plagiarism:

Academic integrity is highly valued at GADCA Virtual Academy. Incidents involving plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that warrant immediate administrative attention. Students are required to submit original work. They are obligated to cite the sources of all references they use. See also Student Rights and Responsibilities Behavior Guidelines for additional information regarding this policy.

**Non-citation infraction:**

- 1st incident = grade of zero on assignment
- 2nd incident = grade of zero on assignment and administrative review.

**Citation Infraction**

- 1st incident = counseling on correct use of citations
- 2nd incident = grade of zero on assignment
- 3rd incident = grade of zero on assignment and administrative review

Note: Turnitin.com may be used per teacher request to ensure plagiarism does not occur within assignments.

**Grading Scale:**

<b>A=90-100 = 4.0</b>	<b>C=74-79 = 2.0</b>
<b>B=80-89 = 3.0</b>	<b>D=70-73 =1.0</b>
<b>F= 69 or below</b>	

**Progress Updates/Report Cards:**

Students in grades 6-8 will receive an email each week with current progress. At the end of Semester 1 and 2, (Quarter 2 & 4) report cards will be mailed.

**Grade Appeals:**

Questions regarding all grades should be directed to the Teacher of Record for the course initially to resolve questions. If unresolved, questions should be directed to the Principal for further investigation and final grade awarded. The final grade, if changed, will be adjusted on the student transcript by the School Counselor. The Principal will adjust and reissue the report card/transcript if adjustments are made. Grade appeals must be done within 6 weeks of the end of term.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Student Code of Conduct: Grades 6-12**

The goal of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is to provide the best possible educational experience for each student. The instructional program, partnership of parents and teachers, clubs, outings, and competitions help to increase student success. Coupled with the advantages of these educational opportunities is the need for students to assume personal responsibility for their behavior.

Students share with the school community responsibility for developing Destinations Career Academy of Georgia into a school that exemplifies high standards and excellence. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's Code of Student Conduct is based upon this responsibility. Understanding the information that follows is an essential responsibility of each student. The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Student Code of Conduct shall apply in all environments: home and community, during the school day and at any school function that goes beyond these hours.

**Student Infractions and Consequences**

Disciplinary procedures shall be consistent with applicable requirements of the Georgia Code and IDEA. Student offenses dictate the severity of the consequence Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will impose. In addition to the specific offenses set forth below, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia has the right to discipline any student who engages in conduct that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of others or disrupts the learning environment. The appropriate consequence will be determined at the sole discretion of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia in

accordance with the law. A student has the right to certain discipline procedures as outlined in final section of this code.

<b>Rule</b>	<b>Possible Consequence or Intervention for Infraction</b>
<p><b>Prohibition of Disruption of School</b></p> <p>Students shall act in a courteous manner toward all members of the school and shall not disrupt any education or school-related program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a student fails to obey directions; uses beepers, cell phones, or telephonic devices during school function or in class; or fails to attend class without a valid excuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> <li>• Failure to attend school without a valid excuse also holds student to truancy violations. These are outlined in the Attendance Policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compliance with Dress Code</b></p> <p>Students shall dress in accordance with the standards described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shirt must be worn at all times unless at an activity involving swimsuits</li> <li>• Pants must be worn on the waist so no undergarments are showing.</li> <li>• No halter tops, strapless garments, or garments revealing midriff may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• No garments that reveal undergarments or that are see through may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• No hats, stocking caps, doo rags, bandanas may be worn inside buildings at school events</li> <li>• No clothing that has profanity, drug or offensive slogans may be worn to school events</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This section is enforced for students when attending a school function such as testing, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia outings, web-cam usage, orientations, or other face-to-face events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prohibition of Offensive Language</b></p> <p>Students shall not use offensive language. Violation of this includes but is not limited to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curses, uses vulgar or obscene language</li> <li>• Sending, forwarding offensive, sexually oriented, or threatening messages, pictures or symbols of offensive nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mandate of Academic Honesty</b></p> <p>Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their work. Violation of this includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copying work from another person</li> <li>• Plagiarizes work of another</li> <li>• Using answer keys provided for learning coach</li> <li>• Copies work from internet sources without proper citations</li> <li>• Forges notes</li> <li>• Shares test questions with others</li> </ul>	<p><b>First Incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express concerns and provide concrete examples of dishonesty.</li> <li>• (K-8) Allow students to redo assignment and resubmit for a grade. (9-12) Citation submissions can be resubmitted. Any others receive a grade of zero (0).</li> </ul> <p><b>Second Incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student and staff members.</li> <li>• All second incident assignments receive a zero (0) with no opportunity to make up.</li> </ul> <p><b>Third Incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a face-to-face disciplinary meeting to discuss ways to eliminate academically dishonest behaviors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Abuse of Computer or Internet Privileges</b></p> <p>Students shall respect the computer privileges granted to them.</p> <p>Violations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives his/her password to another individual or uses another individual's account.</li> <li>• Illegally downloads copyrighted materials from the internet.</li> <li>• Visits sites on the internet which contain sexually explicit material.</li> <li>• Harms or destroys data of another student or person, the internet or other networks.</li> <li>• Creates, downloads, or uploads computer viruses; or</li> <li>• Violates any rule outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to above measures students will be required to pay full restitution for acts of deliberate damage or graffiti. Costs for damage to school district property will include labor, materials, consulting fees and other costs associated with replacing or restoring the damaged property.</p>
<p><b>Prohibition of Threats</b></p> <p>A student shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, any threat to another member of the school community that places him/her in fear of injury, pain, or ridicule. Serious threats to life or safety are included in the Bullying Policy and will result in zero tolerance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul> <p>If the threat is serious to an individual's life or safety, a student could be presented to the Board for expulsion.</p>
<p><b>Prohibition of Fighting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff</li> </ul>

<p>Students shall refrain from mutual confrontations involving physical contact with any members of the school community.</p>	<p>members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prohibition of Tobacco Products and Paraphernalia</b></p> <p>A student may not possess or use any tobacco product, cigarette lighters, matches, rolling papers, pipes, or other such paraphernalia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• Discuss incident with student.</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prohibition of Drugs or Alcohol for Personal Use</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members.</li> <li>• Refer to Student Assistance Team.</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges.</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective.</li> <li>• Follow up with the SAP team to get invention measures in place.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prohibition of Bullying and Cyberbullying and Serious Threats</b> Bullying of a pupil, whether by other students, staff, visitors, parents, guests, contractors, or volunteers, is prohibited. All students are protected under this policy, and bullying is prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.</p> <p>Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more Students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students</li> <li>2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.</li> <li>3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health; or</li> <li>4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.</li> <li>5. Assuming a false identity online to deceive</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First Offense or Minor Infraction:</b> A disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members will be held to discuss the incident. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.</li> <li>• <b>Second Offense or Minor Infraction:</b> The student will be suspended from school privileges. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.</li> <li>• <b>Third Offense or Severe Infraction:</b> Repeated infractions or severe infractions may result in the student being assigned to an alternative school.</li> </ul> <p>Determination of the severity of an infraction is at the discretion of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's Administration.</p> <p>To learn more about cyberbullying, visit the following websites:</p> <p><b>To learn more about cyberbullying, visit the following websites:</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html">https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cyberbullying.html">http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cyberbullying.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://cyberbullying.org/">http://cyberbullying.org/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org/experiencing-">https://www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org/experiencing-</a></p>

<p>others.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Spreading lies and/or rumors about victims.</li> <li>7. Deceiving people into revealing personal information.</li> <li>8. Sending or forwarding mean text messages.</li> <li>9. Posting pictures of victims without their consent.</li> </ol> <p>Effects of Cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student.</li> <li>2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm.</li> <li>3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.</li> <li>4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education opportunities.</li> </ol> <p>For Learning Coaches: If your student comes to you and reports being bullied (physical and/or Cyber), please report it to your child’s Academic Administrator or Head of School immediately. If the accused is a student at GADCA, school administration will investigate the accusation. If the accusation is proven true, the school discipline matrix will apply. If the accused is not a student at GADCA, school administration will help the victim and the family contact local authorities and/or the local school district.</p>	<p><a href="#">bullying/cyber-bullying/</a></p>
<p><b>Prohibition of Sexual Harassment</b></p>	



Students shall not harass members of the school community. Sexual Harassment is defined by, but not limited to, demanding sexual favors, threatens, intimidates or creates a hostile environment because of someone's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation (known or perceived), national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs.

- **Student Consequences**
- **First Offense or Minor Infraction:** A disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members will be held to discuss the incident. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.
- **Second Offense or Minor Infraction:** The student will be suspended from school privileges. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.
- **Third Offense or Severe Infraction:** Repeated infractions or severe infractions may result in the student being assigned to an alternative school.

Determination of the severity of an infraction is at the discretion of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's Administration.

*O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.7(a) - The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.*

Student Reporting of Alleged Sexually Inappropriate Behavior **(a)** Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school. **(b)** Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Head of School or the Academic Administrator. **(c)** Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19- 7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as

	<p>designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division. "Sexual abuse" means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5</p>
<p><b>Prohibition of Possession of a Weapon</b> Destinations Career Academy of Georgia has a zero-tolerance policy on weapons violations.</p> <p>Students shall not possess any weapon as defined in this code's glossary. A student violates this rule even if he/she did not intend to use such thing as a weapon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in possession of a weapon will go to an expulsion hearing.</li> </ul>

**Search and Seizure Policy**

To maintain order and discipline at school functions and protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student's backpack or student automobile in certain circumstances and may seize any illegal or unauthorized materials discovered during the search.

**Disciplinary Meetings and Action**

Referrals to the administration are reviewed individually, consistent with the Code of Student Conduct. Discipline problems are best resolved expediently and closest to their source by the parties most directly involved. Most discipline issues are resolved with minimal administrative intervention. In the best interests of the student and the school, several disciplinary options are available.

**Discipline Appeal:**

In the event the student and parent(s), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) disagrees with any disciplinary measures they should address, in writing, any concern or grievance to the Head of School. The Head of School responds within ten (10) working days. If the concern or grievance is not resolved by the Head of School, the parent(s), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) may, within ten (10) working days of the Head of School's response, request a meeting (via phone or in person) with the Head of School to discuss the concern or grievance. The Head of School shall investigate and respond within ten (10) working days. If the family's concern is not resolved at the meeting with the Head of School, the family may file a complaint with the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Board of Directors.

**Procedures for Suspensions of 3 Days or Less:**

Students who are suspended shall be afforded a conference with the administrator of the department before being suspended. During the conference, the student shall be:

- Informed of the alleged violation and any of the surrounding circumstances examined;
- Given an opportunity to respond to the accusations if he/she has not already done so;
- Informed of the recommended remedial measure; and
- Informed of the consequences of future infractions.

After the conference with the student, the administrator shall implement the recommended remedial measure and send the parent a disciplinary letter to inform them of the student's violation, the length of the suspension, and the day on which the student and parent/guardian are permitted to return to class.

### **Procedure for Suspensions of More than 3 Days:**

Students who are suspended for more than 3 days shall be afforded an informal hearing. Parents/guardian(s) of the students must be notified in writing when the suspension is between 3 and 10 days. The notification must afford the parent time to attend the hearing. When the suspension is in regard to health, safety and welfare the student may be suspended immediately. The hearing allows the students to meet with the appropriate official(s) to explain why he/she should not be suspended. During the hearing the student will be:

- Informed of the alleged violation and any of the surrounding circumstances examined;
- Given an opportunity to respond to the accusations if he/she has not already done so;
- Informed of the recommended remedial measure; and
- Informed of the consequences of future infractions.

### **Expulsion:**

By definition, expulsion is any exclusion from school for a period of more than 10 days. Written notice describing the misconduct and containing specific reference to the rules and setting the time and place of the hearing must be sent to the student's parent or guardian. A formal hearing must be held and should be private unless requested by the parent or guardian to be public. The student:

- May be represented by an attorney;
- Has the right to have the information on the prosecution's witnesses;
- Has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf; and
- Has the right to appeal to the appropriate judicial authority

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

If a student violates the Code of Student Conduct, before consequences or punishment are imposed, it must be considered whether the student has a disability evidenced by evaluation documents current or pending. While all students may be disciplined, it is unjust to punish a child when the offense is directly related to his/her disability or when the IEP is not implemented. Disciplinary actions give students with disabilities extra legal protections when the discipline constitutes a change in placement.

A "change in placement" is a legal term that applies to the following situations:

- The removal is for more than 10 consecutive days; or
- The student has been subjected to a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern

If the offense and subsequent suspensions do not exceed 10 consecutive days nor constitute a pattern or suspensions using the Documentation of Pattern planning form, then it is not a change in placement and the student may be subject to the same consequence that applies to all students who violate the Code of Student Conduct.

If the offense is a change in placement, the school team (including the parent or guardian) must hold a Manifestation Determination Review meeting within 10 days of the decision to remove the student to

determine two issues:

- Was the student’s misconduct caused by or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability; or
- Was the student’s misconduct a direct result of the school’s failure to follow the child’s IEP?

The parent/guardian must be provided a copy of the Special Education Procedural safeguards. If the team answers “yes” to either question, then the student’s behavior is a manifestation of his or her disability. The student may not be suspended, expelled, or transferred to a remedial disciplinary school as a punishment for misbehavior. The team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and create a behavior plan addressing ways that the school can help a student with the conduct at issue. If the student already has a behavior plan, the plan must be reviewed and modified to address how the school can better assist the student with the conduct at issue.

If all team members agree that the student’s conduct was not a manifestation of his disability, then the student may be subject to the same consequences as all students. However, during the period of expulsion or transfer to an alternative placement or remedial disciplinary setting, the student must continue to receive special education services prescribed by his IEP and a Behavior Plan must be created or revised to address the offending conduct.

If a student:

- Possesses illegal drugs;
- Is selling prescription drugs;
- Carries a weapon; or
- Causes serious bodily injury to another either at school or during a school related activity.

The school may immediately remove the student for up to forty-five (45) school days to an alternative or remedial disciplinary setting because drugs, weapons, and serious bodily injury are so dangerous to a safe school regardless of whether a child has a disability or even if the team believes that the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability.

To comply with the law, a 45-school day emergency removal for serious bodily injury must be serious, i.e. requiring medical treatment, etc. During the forty-five (45) school day period, the school must convene a manifestation determination meeting. If the school determines that the conduct is a manifestation, the school may have the child re-evaluated, create or revise an existing behavior plan, or hold an IEP meeting to consider a more intensive special education placement upon the expiration of the 45-day alternative placement or sooner. If all team members determine that the conduct was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, then the 45-school day emergency placement may proceed to a disciplinary proceeding afforded to all students.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the team’s decision that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the parent or guardian may request a due process hearing to challenge this finding. If the hearing officer agrees with the parent or guardian, the student will remain in the school where the offense was committed unless the parent or guardian and the school agree otherwise.

## **Emergency Hearing for Dangerousness**

If a school has solid reasons to believe that keeping the student in his current school is “substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others”, the school will consult with the Special Programs Director who may request an emergency hearing to ask a hearing officer to transfer the student to an alternative setting for up to 45 school days. Dangerousness may exist even if there is no Code of Conduct violation. It is a consideration based on serious safety concerns for the student and/or the school community.

## **Bullying and Cyber Bullying**

## Anti-Bullying Policy

The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA) Board of Education recognizes that a school that is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all students and staff, promotes good citizenship, increases attendance and engagement, and supports academic achievement. The GADCA Board of Education expects students and staff to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes positive relationships and school climate with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors.

To protect the rights of all students and staff for a safe and secure school environment, the board of education prohibits acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with both a school's ability to educate its students and a student's ability to learn. All administrators, faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, coaches, and students are expected to refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment and will demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil. It is especially important for adults to model these behaviors (even when disciplining) in order to provide positive examples for student behavior.

"Bullying" or "harassment" is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., cyberbullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed and used by students) that is perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress and may be motivated either by bias or prejudice based upon any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based upon association with another person who has or is perceived to have any distinguishing characteristic. Bullying or harassment also include forms of retaliation against individuals who report or cooperate in an investigation under this policy. Such behaviors are considered to be bullying or harassment whether they take place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle or at anytime or place where a child's imminent safety or over-all wellbeing may be at issue.

"Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- is perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- is directed at one or more students;
- is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students;
- adversely affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the student in fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,
- is based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above) or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

"Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- repeated or continuing unwanted contact perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- is directed at one or more students or staff;
- is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or

- more students or staff;
- adversely affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's or public school's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as perceived by the student is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,

- is based on a student or staff's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above) or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

The scope of this policy includes the prohibition of every form of bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying/harassment, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, when a student is traveling to or from school (portal to portal), or at a school-sponsored event, whether or not held on school premises. Bullying or harassment, including cyberbullying/ harassment, that is not initiated at a location defined above is covered by this policy if the incident results in a potentially material or substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more students or staff and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of any school or school program.

The GADCA Board of Education believes that a comprehensive health education curriculum, within the whole school, whole community, whole child framework helps students attain skills and knowledge vital to school success, a productive and healthy workforce, and good citizenship. Critical skills include anticipating consequences of choices, making informed decisions, communicating effectively, resolving conflicts, and developing cultural competency.

The GADCA Board of Education recognizes that in order to have the maximum impact, it is critical to provide a minimum of annual training for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students on school policies and procedures regarding bullying and harassment to help promote a positive school climate. Training will provide school employees with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the necessary skills to fulfill them. (Examples of appropriate trainings include, but are not limited to, age-appropriate strategies for immediate and effective interventions to stop incidents; internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying; and fostering an understanding of, and respect for diversity and differences.)

The GADCA Board of education believes that standards for student behavior must be set through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, staff, and community members of the school district, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline and their ability to respect the rights of others. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, parents, and community members.

The GADCA Board of education believes that the best discipline for aggressive behavior is designed to (1) support students in taking responsibility for their actions, (2) develop empathy, and (3) teach alternative ways to achieve the goals and the solve problems that motivated the aggressive behavior. Staff members and volunteers who interact with students shall role model respectful behavior apply best practices designed to *prevent* discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline and make better choices in the future. School employees who exhibit bullying or harassing behavior that is directed toward school employees, volunteers, parents, or students will also be held accountable. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the local School Board or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and taking any necessary steps.

Since bystander support of bullying and harassment can encourage these behaviors, the district prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage students *not* to be

part of the problem; *not* to pass on the rumor or derogatory message; to constructively attempt to stop them; to report them to the designated authority; and to reach out in friendship to the student who is being bullied or harassed. Regular classroom meetings should be conducted to help promote a positive and connected classroom. Informal classroom discussions and activities designed to provide awareness and increase student connectedness promote a positive shift in peer norms that will support empowered bystanders. This meeting time can be used to teach students how and when to respond to incidents of bullying and harassment. When bystanders do report or cooperate in an investigation, they must be protected from retaliation with the same type of procedures used to respond to bullying and harassment.

While investigating reports of bullying and harassment, consider the following questions:

- What is the history between the kids involved? Have there been past conflicts?
- Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the child being bullied feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
- Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
- Have the students dated? There are special responses for dating violence.
- Are any of the students involved with a gang? Gang violence has different interventions.

The GADCA Board of Education requires its school administrators to develop and implement procedures that ensure *both* the appropriate consequences *and* remedial responses to a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of bullying and harassment. The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators in the development of the procedures for determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment or bullying.

#### *Factors for Determining Consequences*

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm (physical and/or emotional distress)
- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Relationship between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- Prior to suspending or expelling a student, consideration of the following factors are included:
  - The pupil's age
  - The pupil's disciplinary history
  - Whether the pupil is a student with a disability
  - The seriousness of the violation or behavior committed by the pupil
  - Whether the violation or behavior committed by the pupil threatened the safety of any pupil or staff member
  - Whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior committed by the pupil
  - Whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior committed by the pupil



In order to ensure students' perception of fair and impartial treatment, a student's academic or athletic status is *not* a legitimate factor for determining consequences. Consequences must be perceived as fair and impartial.

### *Factors for Determining Remedial Measures*

#### *Personal*

- Life skill competencies
- Experiential deficiencies
- Social relationships
- Strengths
- Talents
- Traits
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Classroom participation
- Academic performance

#### *Environmental*

- School culture
- School climate and lack of connectedness
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student
- Level of consistency in staff responses to bullying or harassing behaviors
- Level of consistency in application or severity of consequences given to students
- Staff-staff relationships witnessed by students
- General staff management of classrooms and other educational environments
- Staff ability to prevent and de-escalate difficult or inflammatory situations
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Social relationships
- Community activities
- Neighborhood culture
- Family situation
- Range and number of opportunities (beyond academics and athletics) for student engagement, involvement, and recognition for achievement.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who engages in one or more acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of a student, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee, as set forth in the board of education's approved code of student conduct or employee handbook. School employees will also be held accountable for bullying or harassing behavior directed toward school employees, volunteers, parents, or students.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying and harassment shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the board of education's approved code of student conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: *correct the problem behavior; prevent another*

occurrence of the behavior; and *protect the victim* of the act. Effective discipline should employ a school-wide approach to adopt a rubric of bullying offenses and the associated consequences. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

#### *Example of Consequences*

- **First Offense or Minor Infraction:** A disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members will be held to discuss the incident. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.
- **Second Offense or Minor Infraction:** The student will be suspended from school privileges. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's file.
- **Third Offense or Severe Infraction:** Repeated infractions or severe infractions may result in the student being expelled from school.

Determination of the severity of an infraction is at the discretion of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's Administration.

To learn more about cyberbullying, visit the following websites:

- <https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/index.html>
- <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cyberbullying.html>
- <http://cyberbullying.org/>
- <https://www.pacerteensagainstbullying.org/experiencing-bullying/cyber-bullying/>

#### *Examples of Remedial Measures*

##### *Strategies for Individual Behavioral Change:*

- Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem or reach a goal. The adult assists the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem or meet the goal.
- Restitution and restoration
- Transformative conferencing/restorative justice practices
- Supervised peer support group
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive discipline to increase accountability for the bullying offense
- Supportive interventions, including participation of an Intervention and Referral Service team, peer mediation, etc.
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to a Child Study Team, as appropriate
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
- Involvement of school disciplinarian
- Student counseling
- Parent conferences
- Student treatment
- Student therapy

##### *Strategies for Environmental Change (Classroom, School Building, or School District):*

- Activities or strategies designed to help the student who engaged in bullying or harassment reflect on the offending behavior, maintaining an emotionally- neutral and strength-based approach
- Implementation of school-wide positive behavioral supports (PBIS) and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)

- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to school culture and climate, including harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- Improvement in school culture and climate, conditions for learning, and instructional pedagogy (incorporation of brain-compatible strategies)
- Adoption of research-based, comprehensive health education curriculum that includes bullying prevention and needed skills
- Modifications of schedules
- Adjustments in hallway traffic
- Modifications in student routes or patterns traveling to and from school
- Increased supervision and targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, bus)
- General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff
- Professional development plans for all staff
- Disciplinary action and/or additional professional development for school staff or volunteers who may not have appropriately addressed the issue
- Parent conferences
- Referral to family counseling
- Increased involvement of parent-teacher organizations
- Increased involvement of community-based organizations
- Increased opportunities for parent input and engagement in school initiatives and activities
- Development of a general bullying/harassment response plan
- Peer support groups
- Increase communication with and involvement of law enforcement (e.g., school resource officer, juvenile officer)
- Engage in community awareness events and planning sessions

The GADCA Board of Education requires the principal and/or the principal's designee at each school to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school staff and volunteers are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action *may not* be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The GADCA Board of Education requires the principal and/or the principal's designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal and/or the principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made. The parents of the students involved shall receive written notice from the school on the outcome of the investigation (in compliance with current privacy laws and regulations). All reports on instances of bullying and/or harassment must be recorded by the school for annual data review.

The GADCA Board of Education prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

The GADCA Board of Education prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying or harassment. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a *person* found to have falsely accused

another as a means of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a *school employee* found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment shall be in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements.

The GADCA Board of Education requires school officials to annually disseminate the policy to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on a school bus. The chief school administrator shall develop an annual process for discussing the school district policy on harassment and bullying with students and staff. The school district shall incorporate information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into each school employee training program and handbook.

### **Informal Complaint Process**

Anyone may use informal procedures to report and resolve complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. At the building level, programs may be established for receiving anonymous complaints. Such complaints must be appropriately investigated and handled consistent with due process requirements. Informal reports may be made to any staff member, although staff shall always inform complainants of their right to, and the process for, filing a formal complaint. Staff shall also direct potential complaints to an appropriate staff member who can explain the informal and formal complaint process and what a complainant can expect. Staff shall also inform an appropriate supervisor or designated staff person when they receive complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, especially when the complaint is beyond their training to resolve or alleges serious misconduct.

Informal remedies include an opportunity for the complainant(s) to explain to the alleged perpetrator that the conduct is unwelcome, disruptive, or inappropriate either in writing or face-to-face; a statement from a staff member to the alleged perpetrator that the alleged conduct is not appropriate and could lead to discipline if proven or repeated; or a general public statement from an administrator reviewing the school harassment, intimidation and bullying policy without identifying the complainant, parent, guardian, or because Destinations Career Academy of Georgia believes the complaint needs to be more thoroughly investigated.

### **Formal Complaint Process**

Anyone may initiate a formal complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying, even if the informal complaint process is being utilized. Complainant(s) should not be promised confidentiality at the onset of an investigation. It cannot be predicted what will be discovered or what kind of hearing may result. Efforts will be made to increase the confidence and trust of the person making the complaint. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will fully implement the anti-retaliation provisions of this policy to protect complainant(s) and witnesses. Student complainants and witnesses may have a parent/guardian with them, if requested, during any school initiated investigatory activities. The Head of School or designated compliance officer (hereinafter referred to as the "compliance officer") may conclude that the school needs to conduct an investigation based on information in their possession regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint. The following process shall be followed:

1. All formal complaints shall be in writing. Formal complaints shall set forth the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to have occurred that may constitute harassment, intimidation or bullying. The compliance officer may draft the complaint based on the report of the complainant, for the complainant to review and sign.
2. Regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint, the compliance officer may conclude that the district needs to draft a formal complaint based on the information in the officer's possession.

3. The compliance officer shall investigate all formal, written complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying, and other information in the compliance officer's possession that the officer believes requires further investigation.
4. When the investigation is completed the compliance officer shall compile a full written report of the complaint and the result of the investigation. If the matter has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the Head of School shall take further action on the report.
5. The Head of School or designee, who is not the compliance officer, shall respond in writing to the complainant and the accused within thirty days, stating that Destinations Career Academy of Georgia intends to take corrective action; or that the investigation is incomplete to date and will be continuing; or that Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying, harassment or intimidation occurred.
6. Corrective measures deemed necessary will be instituted as quickly as possible, but in no event more than thirty days after the Head of School's written response, unless the accused is appealing the imposition of discipline and the school is barred by due process considerations or a lawful order from imposing the discipline until the appeal process is concluded.
7. If a student remains aggrieved by the Head of School's designee's response, the student may pursue the complaint as one of discrimination pursuant to The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Grievance Policy.

Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention harassment, intimidation or bullying, and their rights and responsibilities under this and other district policies and rules at student orientation sessions and on other appropriate occasions, which may include parents or guardians.

Parents/guardians shall be provided with copies of this policy and procedure and appropriate materials on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

For additional information: [Georgia Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations](#)

## **Grievance/Complaint Policy**

Parent Complaint Response/Due Process Procedure:

The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is interested in achieving and fostering student/family satisfaction. The following procedure ensures that student/family grievances are addressed fairly by the appropriate people in a timely manner. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia prohibits discrimination against students/families on the basis of disability, race, creed, weight, color, gender, national origin or religion.

The student and parent(s), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) should address in writing any concern or grievance to the Head of School. The Head of School responds within ten (10) working days. If the concern or grievance is not resolved by the Head of School, the parent(s), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) may, within ten (10) working days of the Head of School's response, request a meeting (via phone or in person) with the Head of School to discuss the concern or grievance. The meeting request must be in writing. The Head of School shall investigate and respond within ten (10) working days. If the family's concern is not resolved at the meeting with the Head of School, the family may file a complaint with the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Board of Directors. The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia governing body may address the complaint directly, or the family may file a complaint with the Georgia Superintendent of Public Instruction (information can be found on the Georgia Department of Education website).

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort is made to maintain the confidentiality of students who attend Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Parent/guardian permission is required for a student's name or picture to be displayed in a public manner. Confidential student information is encrypted before being transferred over the internet. The encrypted information can only be decrypted by another party authorized by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Student files are accessible only to authorized employees of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia who have an interest in the education of its students. Adults and students should not share their STRIDE Online School (OLS) username and password with any unauthorized individuals.

Whenever a parent/guardian or teacher believes the security of the OLS has been compromised, the parent can use the tools provided in the OLS to change usernames and passwords. Parents/guardians are advised to avoid using personal information in e-mails. Using the child's first initial rather than full name is preferred.

## Health Policy

All students must comply with the requirements of the State Immunization Code. The only exemptions to the school laws for immunizations are for medical reasons or philosophical or religious beliefs. For a child to be exempt from immunization on religious grounds the parent or guardian must furnish the school with a notarized statement, and it must meet the following criteria: (A) state that their religious beliefs conflict with immunization requirements; (B) the statement must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian; (C) the statement must be notarized, dated, and signed by a Notary Public; (D) the statement should be submitted to the school in lieu of an immunization certificate (form 3231); (E) the statement does not expire. The completed exemption form may then be submitted to Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Any exemption forms which contain alterations or otherwise do not meet strict State of Georgia requirements may be rejected. Immunization records must be delivered to the school prior to acceptance for enrollment. Parents should request their child's health records from the previous school prior to starting school at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Please contact the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia office with any questions regarding health requirements.

## Change of Home Address

In the event you change addresses after initial enrollment, please send an email to office administration or your teacher verifying the updated address. Be sure to include the names of all children associated with your household. You are to include in your Email:

- Previous address and new address (Required)
- New phone if applicable
- Effective date of address change (Required)
- Proof of residency

In addition to the email, you are required to submit the following documents to our office within ten days of receipt of this letter. Please be advised, the documents are state mandated for all enrolled students. Failure to submit the documents will cause your child to be out of compliance with state requirements.

Change of Data Form (complete and sign the form and submit one per child).

Proof of Residence (please see below for acceptable documentation of residency). Submit ONE of the following:

- Valid driver's license
- Valid non-driver's license
- Current utility bill (gas, water, electric, sewage, cable and land line phone)
- Current mortgage statement
- Current residency card

- Deed, vehicle registration
- Property tax bill
- Current credit card bill

**School Address:**

1700 Water Pl SE  
Atlanta, GA 30339

## Withdrawing From Destinations Career Academy of Georgia

Parents/guardians wishing to withdraw their children from the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia must contact their teacher or advisor and complete a withdrawal form in order to fully process the withdrawal. The teacher will notify school officials of their decision. The Operations Manager or designee will confirm withdrawal date once the form has been received and arrange for the return of all school equipment and materials. Failure to return all school equipment and materials in satisfactory condition may result in a collections action.

Families choosing to withdraw to homeschool their children will be asked to fill out a Homeschool Intent form.

## Supplemental Activities

Parents/guardians seek to provide a fuller education for their child by enriching their child's curriculum with extra activities and family trips. These activities may be logged into the student's daily schedule and counted toward his or her mandatory hours of instruction if the activity directly relates to lesson objectives. It is necessary that the learning coach first discuss their supplemental activities with their students' assigned Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teacher(s). This discussion must be before notifying the teachers of the hours that will be logged. This ensures that the supplemental activities are recorded in the appropriate area(s) of the curriculum.

## Use of School Property

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia provides materials, computer, printer, books and other curricular supplies. All provided materials are school property and must be kept in good condition. Parents/guardians are responsible for the repair or replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged school property. A list of property that must be returned is provided to parents. All property and equipment must be returned in good, working condition upon withdrawal from the program. All printed materials are copyrighted. Unauthorized copying of those materials is a copyright infringement. Materials cannot be sold or transferred. Materials are to be used solely by the student in his or her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents/Guardians are to comply with this policy and all the terms and conditions of the Use of Instructional Property Agreement submitted with the enrollment materials.

## Webcams

All laptops and desktop computers provided to students will include a webcam. Eventually, GADCA intends to increase the ability for all participants in a Class Connect session to collaborate with webcams enabled. While increased webcam exposure can enhance the collaborative and interactive nature of live instruction, it can also pose challenges with respect to proper webcam etiquette and disciplinary action based on webcam usage or misuse.

Use of a webcam can be limited or prohibited at any time if proper webcam etiquette or behavior is not followed. The webcam should be used for educational purposes and academic collaboration only. The GADCA student code of conduct policy applies to all webcam interactions. In addition to common sense etiquette, the following guidelines must also be followed.

### Dress Code for interaction on Web Cam

GADCA will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance,



except when their choices interfere with the educational program of GADCA. The Board authorizes the Head of School to establish a reasonable dress code to promote a safe and healthy school setting and enhance the educational environment. The Head of School is permitted to establish such dress code guidelines as are necessary to promote discipline, maintain order, secure the safety of students, and provide a healthy environment conducive to academic purposes. Such guidelines shall prohibit student dress practices which:

- A. present a hazard to the health or safety of the student or to others in the school.
- B. materially interferes with schoolwork, creates disorder, or disrupts the educational program;
- C. cause excessive wear or damage to school property.
- D. prevent the student from achieving his/her educational objectives.

Clothing must be appropriate for a learning environment even when exhibited on a webcam. The following should not be worn.

- Distracting clothing
- Revealing clothing
- Clothing with content relative to drugs, alcohol or any other controlled substance
- Clothing with content relative to explicit language or inappropriate content, such as weapons
- Gang attire
- Costume masks
- Head coverings (such as inappropriate hats and beanies) or sunglasses worn in a building during school hours; no bandanas (all colors), do-rags (all colors), hairnets, surgical/shower caps
- (Exceptions will be made for religious or medical reasons.)

Placement of Webcam: Efforts should be made to locate the webcam in an area that meets the following suggestions:

- Limit background noise
- . A quiet area without distractions
- Area where other people or animals are not visible – siblings, pets or other people in the home should not appear on camera

**Webcams cannot be enabled without the student’s knowledge and can only be enabled for educational purposes.**

The student/parent has the option of disabling or covering the webcam, unless the webcam is required to be engaged and visible for attendance confirmation, course requirements or other educational purposes. Certain courses or assessments (such as NWEA or Reading Assessments) may require face-to-face interaction via webcam. A student not wishing to engage on a webcam may seek an alternative by contacting their teacher or principal.

### **Internet Service Provider (ISP) Reimbursement Program**

Families at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will receive ISP reimbursement checks twice per year at the rate of \$12.00 per month (per family) for the school year. Disbursements will be made in January and June of the school year provided that receipts are submitted to receive a reimbursement. Families must participate in the Online School, as well as have compliant attendance as described in the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Handbook, in order to qualify for ISP reimbursement. Additionally, there must be current proof of residence for each student enrolled. Families are eligible for ISP reimbursement for the month in which they enroll.

Please be aware that if an ISP check is lost, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does not automatically reissue a check to that family. If a check is lost, parents/guardian(s) must contact the school office within sixty days, or a replacement may not be issued. Students must be in good standing, which means that they have participated in all online learning opportunities, testing, supplemental activities, have appropriate progress and up to date attendance to receive their internet reimbursement.

## School Supplies

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia provides most curriculum items needed to participate in school. There are times when household and consumable items are needed to complete a lesson. Be sure to use the Advanced Planning feature through the Online School to assist with upcoming lessons requiring certain materials. A suggested school supply list is provided by the teacher at the beginning of the school year.

## Printer Ink Usage Guidelines

Printer ink is expected to be used sparingly and only for school needs. We encourage families to use the student pages instead of printing. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does not provide printer ink cartridges or refills. Refills are the responsibility of the family. In order to conserve ink, it is recommended that your printer is set to always print in fast draft mode. To set for fast draft mode:

- Go to your Start menu
- Go to Printers and Faxes
- Right click on your printer's name
- Scroll down to Properties
- Click on the Advanced tab
- Click on Printing Defaults
- In the drop-down menu under Print Quality, choose Fast Draft
- Click Apply, then click OK

## Objectionable Content Policy

There may be times a parent/guardian considers certain lessons, books or materials objectionable for various reasons. The following process is used if a parent/guardian finds material objectionable; he or she should contact his or her Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teacher via email. Teachers will work with parents/guardians to find alternative lessons to meet the lesson objectives. An assessment for the lesson must be completed to show that the objectives have been met.

## Student Records

Student records are maintained at the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia office. The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia provides parents/guardians access to the academic records of their children. The access rights of parent/guardian consist of:

- The right to inspect and review the contents of educational records.
- The right to obtain one copy of the education records at no charge, and additional copies, if requested, at a charge. These will be stamped as “unofficial.”
- The right to receive from school personnel an explanation and interpretation of the educational records.
- The right to a hearing to challenge the contents of the educational records.
- The right to bring an attorney or parent/guardian advocate to review educational records.

A parent or guardian seeking access to the educational records may make a request by telephone or in person to the Head of School or designee. However, prior to reviewing and inspecting the educational records, a

parent or guardian must sign an official request form. Access to educational records is granted within forty-five days of the receipt of the written request.

After examining their child's educational record, parents/guardian(s) may request a hearing to challenge the contents of the record. The purpose of the hearing is to establish the accuracy of the record. At an informal meeting between the parent/guardian and the Site Administrator or designee, an attempt is made to answer any questions raised by the parent/guardian. If the questions are not resolved, a formal hearing is conducted in the office of the Head of School.

In general, the school may not permit access to, nor release of, educational records to third parties without the consent of the child's parents or guardians. However, educational records may be released without the consent of parent/guardian to another public school system to which a pupil transfer. Pupil directory information, which includes: the pupil's name; address; date and place of birth; photographic likeness; major field of study; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; and participation in officially recognized activities and sports may be released without the consent of the parent/guardian unless the school is notified annually by the parent/guardian not to release the information without their prior written consent. State law provides that the following additional conditions will apply regarding the educational records of special needs students:

- If you have asked to see your child's records, you must be allowed to do so prior to a conference regarding an individualized education program and prior to a hearing regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
- You may designate another person to examine your child's records if you wish to have further advice. You may ask for a list of the types and locations of the records kept about your child.

The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia has a schedule for the destruction of Special Education records of students who have been out of the program for at least five years. You will be sent a notice by mail at a time shortly before the student's records would be destroyed and advised of your right to obtain them for your own use or the student's use. It is your responsibility to provide the school with your current address so that you will receive the notification. You should do so by sending your address, the student's name, and birth date to Destinations Career Academy of Georgia.

Parents/legal guardians may contact the office to obtain a copy of student records. A copying fee may be assessed. If parents/guardians change their address, telephone, e-mail address, or place of employment, they are asked to notify their children's teachers immediately. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping contact-information current within the account setup section of the OLS.

### **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia maintains records concerning all children enrolled, including students with disabilities. Records containing personally identifiable information about or related to children with disabilities could include, but are not limited to: cumulative grade reports, discipline records, enrollment and attendance records, health records, individualized education programs, notices of recommended assignment, notices of intent to evaluate and to reevaluate, comprehensive evaluation reports, other evaluation reports by public school staff and by outside evaluators, work samples, test data, data entered into the data system, correspondence between school staff and home, instructional support team documents, referral data, memoranda and other education-related documents. Records can be maintained electronically, on paper, microfiche, audio and videotape.

Records can be located in the central administrative offices of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, electronic storage systems and in the secure possession of teachers, school administrators, specialists,

psychologists, counselors and other school staff with a legitimate educational interest in the information contained therein. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality.

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Destinations Career Academy of Georgia receives a request for access.  
Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.  
Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Destinations Career Academy of Georgia to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.  
One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.  
Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 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

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- o organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to:
  - (a) Develop, validate, or administer predictive tests;
  - (b) Administer student aid programs; or
  - (c) Improve instruction if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))

- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

## Personal Belief Protection Policy

In compliance with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will obtain written consent from parents or guardians before minor students are required to participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following:

1. Political affiliations;
2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
3. Sex behavior and attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.)

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide parents or guardians of minor students' annual notice of the following:

1. The right of parents or guardians to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to students.
2. Arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of the administration of a survey to students, including the right of parents or guardians to inspect, upon request, the survey, if the survey contains one or more of the same eight items of information noted above.
3. The right of parents or guardians to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students.
4. The administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students.
5. The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.
6. The right of parents or guardians to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of information, as described in number 5.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide parents or guardians of minor students an opportunity to opt out of (remove their child) from participation in the following activities:

- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information, or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose.
- The administration of any third party (non-Department of Education funded) survey containing one or more of the above described eight items of information.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is: 1) required as a condition of attendance; 2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

## Advanced Learners Program

The Advanced Learners Program (ALP) is a supplemental enrichment program for K-8 students who are one or more grade levels ahead of their age-appropriate grade level in a core subject, have been identified as gifted through a previous program, and/or are recommended to the program by their teacher or parents/guardian(s).

Students in the ALP are supported with accelerated course planning, topic enrichment, and other activities and instructional strategies that include invitations to National Learning Circles. Participants in the ALP are expected to maintain adequate progress and achievement. If you feel that your child would benefit from the program, contact your teacher for more information.

## At-Risk Program

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia supports the academic achievement of all students, particularly those most at risk. The school has a strong commitment to the federally mandated goals of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It is a priority to build strong parent/guardian/teacher/student relationships and address the specific needs of individual students.

The At-Risk Program at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia uses an early intervention process to identify and to serve struggling students. This process includes parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. It uses a multi-tier model of service delivery, problem-solving methods to make decisions, and research-based, scientifically validated interventions/instruction. If a teacher identifies an area of weakness for any student and prescribes intervention strategies and activities supplementing daily curriculum, it is expected that the student would follow the prescribed plan which could include mandatory Live Class Connect sessions. Attendance is expected and student participation required. Additional assignments may be requested, but if a student does not participate, he or she will be subjected to the attendance policy.

## Title 1

The Title 1 program is consistent with Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The program will be planned and implemented with the consultation of eligible parents of participating students. Parents will be provided, to the extent practical, full opportunities to participate when limited English proficiency, disabilities and parents of migratory children in an understandable and uniform format upon request.

GADCA will be governed by the definition of parental involvement as participation of parents in regular, two-way (email, phone, classconnect sessions, face to face meetings), and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

**Section 1118 (c) (1) GADCA** shall convene an annual Title I meeting at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating (Title I) children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation in the Targeted Title I Program and to explain the requirements of Title I and the right of the parents to be involved in Title I programming.

- The annual meeting will be held in the first quarter of each school year during the Learning Coach Committee Meeting which is open to all parents and learning coaches at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. This meeting will be held at a convenient time for parents and learning coaches.
- Parents, GADCA Staff, and Administration are invited to a Class Connect session (Blackboard Class Connect).
- The Class Connect session will be available in recordings and parents can send responses to the Title I Coordinator, who will share with GADCA Administration.
- Parents involved in the GADCA Parent Targeted program will review Title I requirements and their right to be involved in Title I programs as a participant or as a facilitator.

Students will be identified for the Title 1 program based on multiple factors (Free and Reduced Lunch, English Language Learner, Below Grade Level on M-Step, Below Grade Level on District Benchmark Assessments, Teacher Recommendation).

Once identified, the Reading or Math Interventionist will reach out to the parent and student with the program requires and the Title 1 Student-Learning Coach- School Contract. Before Title 1 program supports can begin, the Title 1 Student-Learning Coach-School Contract must be signed and on file. Students may be recommended for removal from the Title 1 program services if they fail to meet participation guidelines.

- Miss six or more intervention class sessions in a row or eight sessions in a quarter
- Fail to complete the required number of assignments four weeks in a row
- Are sent to a breakout room for behavior more than 3 times per quarter

GADCA Reading Interventionists will be focusing on students in grades K-3 that are on Individualized Reading Improvement Plans or IRIPs. Small groups will be created, and students will receive instruction on concepts as well as working within iReady or other supplemental instructional programs.

GADCA Math Interventionists will be focusing on students in grades 4-10. Students who are struggling in the area of Algebra will especially be targeted. Small groups will be created, and students will receive instruction on concepts where they are struggling as well as working within iReady or other supplemental instructional programs.

## Homeless Children and Youth Policy

**References:** 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq. (McKinney - Vento Homeless Act)

### McKinney-Vento/ Homeless Student Liaison

Elena Mincy  
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**Definition:** The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia defines any homeless children and youth according to the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Definition, as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

The term includes children and youth who are:

- Sharing housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public space, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

### Homeless Children and Youth Services

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will ensure that homeless students are provided services including but not limited to the following:



- A. transportation services;
- B. public preschool programs and other educational programs and services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including:
  - programs for children with disabilities;
  - programs for English Learners (ELs) (i.e., students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP));
  - programs in career and technical education;
  - programs for gifted and talented students;
  - school nutrition programs; and
  - before - and after-school programs.

The Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Liaison for Homeless Children and Youth is, Mary Moorman. Ms. Moorman will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.

### **Maintaining a Stable School Environment**

To ensure stability for homeless students, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will make school placement determinations based on the “best interest” of the homeless student based on student-centered factors. The Academy will:

- 1.) continue the student’s education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year even if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- 2.) enroll the student in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

When determining a student’s best interest, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will assume that keeping the homeless student in the school of origin is in that student’s best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the student’s parent or guardian, or the student if he or she is an unaccompanied youth. The school of origin is the school the student attended or enrolled in when permanently housed, including a public preschool. The school of origin also includes the designated receiving school at the next level for feeder school patterns when the student completes the final grade level at the school of origin.

When determining the student’s best interest, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will also consider student-centered factors, including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students and give priority to the request of the student’s parent or guardian, or youth (if an unaccompanied youth). Destinations Career Academy of Georgia also considers the school placement of siblings when making this determination.

If Destinations Career Academy of Georgia finds that it is not in the student’s best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, or unaccompanied youth, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide the individual with a written explanation and reason for the determination in a manner and form understandable to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth. This written explanation will include appeal rights and be provided in a timely manner.

### **Immediate Enrollment for Homeless Students**

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia has an obligation to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students. A school chosen on the basis of a best interest determination shall enroll the homeless student,

even if the student does not have the documentation typically necessary for enrollment, such as immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, birth certificate or previous academic records. The homeless student shall be enrolled immediately regardless of whether the student missed application or enrollment deadlines during the period of homelessness or has outstanding fines or fees.

The enrolling school shall contact the school last attended by the homeless student to obtain relevant academic or other records. If the student needs immunization or other health records, the enrolling school shall refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the local liaison, who will help obtain the immunizations, screenings or other required health records. Records usually maintained by the school must be kept so that they are available in a timely fashion if the child enters a new school or Academy. These records include immunization or other required health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs. Procedures for inter-State records transfer between schools should be taken into account in order to facilitate immediate enrollment.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will also make sure that, once identified for services, the homeless student is attending classes and not facing barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs (if available). In addition, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may consider giving homeless children and youth's priority if there is a waitlist for these schools, programs, and activities.

### **Transportation Services for Homeless Students**

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide homeless students with transportation services that are comparable to those available to non-homeless students. Additionally, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide for, or arrange for transportation to and from the school of origin at the parent or guardian's request, or the liaison's request in the case of an unaccompanied youth. Transportation is arranged promptly to allow for immediate enrollment and will not create barriers to a homeless student's attendance, retention, and success. The following procedures also apply subject to a determination of the student's best interest:

- 1.) If the homeless student moves but continues to live within the area covered by the Academy's charter the Academy is considered the school of origin and the school of residence and, therefore, transportation will be provided or arranged for the student's transportation to or from the school of origin by the Academy.
- 2.) If the homeless student moves to an area outside of the Academy's charter, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the Academy and the public school district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the Academy and the public school district cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs will be shared equally.
- 3.) When the student obtains permanent housing, transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin until the end of the school year.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia shall determine the mode of transportation in consultation with the parent or guardian based on the best interest of the student.

In accordance with Federal law, the above transportation requirements still apply during the resolution of any dispute. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will work with the State to resolve transportation disputes with other Academies. If the disputing Academy is in another State, the Academy will turn to the State for assistance as Federal guidance says that both States should try to arrange an agreement for the Academies.

### **Dispute Resolution Procedure**

Homeless families and youths have the right to challenge placement and enrollment decisions. If a dispute arises between a school and a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment of a homeless student, the Academy must follow its dispute resolution procedures, consistent with the State's procedures. If such a dispute occurs, the Academy will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute, including all appeals. The student will receive all services for which they are eligible until all disputes and appeals are resolved.

Pursuant to State, Academy and Board of Directors policies, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of all decisions regarding school selection and enrollment made by the Academy or State, along with a written explanation of appeal rights.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's notice and written explanation about the reason for its decision will include, at a minimum, an explanation of how the school reached its decision regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, including 1) a description of the proposed or refused action by the school, 2) an explanation of why the action is proposed or refused, 3) a description of other options the school considered and why those options were rejected, 4) a description of any other relevant factors to the school's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination such as the facts, witnesses, and evidence relied upon and their sources, and 5) an appropriate timeline to ensure deadlines are not missed. The Academy must also include contact information for the Liaison and the State Coordinator, and a brief description of their roles. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will also refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the Liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia ensures that all decisions and notices are drafted in a language and format appropriate for low-literacy, limited vision readers, and individuals with disabilities. For children and youth and/or parents or guardians who are English learners or whose dominant language is not English, the Academy will provide translation and interpretation services in connection with all phases of the dispute resolution process pursuant to federal laws. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will also provide electronic notices via email if the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth has access to email followed by a written notice provided in person or sent by mail.

### **Public Notice of Educational Rights**

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the homeless student or the unaccompanied youth of the applicable rights described above, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia post public notice of educational rights of children and

youth experiencing homelessness in each school on the school website.

### **Homeless Student Records**

The local liaison will assist the homeless students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) or unaccompanied homeless students in their efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school.

All records for homeless students shall be maintained, subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and in such a manner so that they are available in a timely fashion and can be transferred promptly to the appropriate parties, as required. Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, information regarding a homeless student's living situation is not considered directory information and must be provided the same protections as other non-directory personally identifiable information (PII) contained in student education records under FERPA.

No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

### **Medication Policy**

#### **USE OF MEDICATIONS**

Neither the Board of Directors nor the school leader shall be responsible for the diagnosis and treatment of student illness. The administration of prescribed medication and/or medically prescribed treatments to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to do so would jeopardize the health of the student, the student would not be able to attend school if the medication or treatment were not made available during school hours, or the child is disabled and requires medication to benefit from his/her educational program.

For purposes of this policy, medication shall include all medicines including those prescribed by a physician and any non-prescribed (over the counter) drugs, preparations, and/or remedies and performance-enhancing drugs as defined in AG 2431C. Treatment refers both to the manner in which a medication is administered and to health care procedures that require special training, such as catheterization.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription from the child's physician and the written authorization of the parent.

Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent who must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child. Medications will be administered by the Academy in accordance with the school leader's procedures.

Only medication in its original container that is labeled with the date (if a prescription), the student's name, and exact dosage may be administered. Parents, or students authorized in writing by their physician and parent(s) may administer medication or treatment. Staff members are to administer medication or treatment only in the presence of another adult, except in the case of an emergency that threatens the life or health of the student. Staff licensed as professional registered nurses are exempt from this requirement.

All staff authorized to administer medication or treatment will receive training on appropriate procedures for administering the medication or treatment. This training shall be provided by qualified individuals with knowledge of the Academy's policy and procedures and knowledge of the administration of medications or treatment.

Students may possess and self-administer a metered dose or dry powder inhaler for relief of asthma (or before

exercise to prevent onset of asthma symptoms), while at the school, on school-sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity in accordance with the Administrative Procedures, if all of the following conditions are met:

- There is written approval from the student's physician or other health care provider and the student's parent/guardian (if student is under eighteen (18) to possess and use the inhaler (Form 5330 F1c); and
- The School Leader has received a copy of the written approvals from the physician and the parent/guardian; and
- There is on file at the student's Academy a written emergency care plan prepared by a licensed physician in collaboration with the student and his/her parent/legal guardian. The plan shall contain specific instructions on the student's needs including what to do in the event of an emergency.

Students with a need for emergency medication may also be allowed to self-possess and self-administer such medication, provided that they meet the same conditions established above. Students who are prescribed epinephrine to treat anaphylaxis shall be allowed to self-possess and administer the medication if they meet the conditions stated above.

This policy and the administrative procedures developed to establish appropriate procedures shall be implemented in such a manner to comply with Academy's obligations and the student's needs under any Individualized Education Plan, Section 504 Plan, or other legally required accommodation for individuals with disabilities. The School Leader shall prepare Administrative Procedures to ensure the proper implementation of this policy.

## Special Education Services

### Special Education Academic

#### Administrator

Franeka Colley

[fcolley@gadca.org](mailto:fcolley@gadca.org)

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 's Special Education program meets the individual needs of students by using specially designed instruction with a standards-based curriculum in the virtual environment. Frequent assessment of student progress is necessary. We deliver programming and related services to Destinations Career Academy of Georgia students at no cost to the parent or guardian. Students with disabilities needing special education must receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). These services conform to the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

### Services by Disability

Special Education services are collaborative teamwork among the parent/guardian, teachers, and therapists to provide a systematic problem-solving approach for a quality education to each student. All members of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia school community believe that varied instructional practices and learning environments benefit all children.

Services by disability area are as follows:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Cognitive Impairment
- Severe Multiple Impairments
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Emotional Impairment

- Physical Impairment
- Early Childhood Development Delays
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Other health impairments

## Child Find

GADCA seeks to assure that all of its students with disabilities, including those who are homeless or are wards of Georgia, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated; and (ii) A practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Sec. 300.111 (s) (1).

Child find questions are completed by the parent within the online enrollment portal. These questions are asked again during the enrollment approval and placement process.

Once the school year begins, the assigned general education teacher will again query the parent in order to determine if the student has any academic need. Any student for whom a parent answers that they previously or are currently receiving special education services is immediately referred to the Special Education Manager or designee.

Any special education or evaluation records shared by the parent with the assigned homeroom teacher are forwarded to the special education department at GADCA so that they can be reviewed by the school psychologist and/or Special Education Manager or designee to determine next steps.

For more information regarding Special Education Child Find: [Special Education Rules Implementation Manual](#)

## IDEA

The 2007 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandate that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children (from birth through age 21), with disabilities, who live in that specific district. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will make a concerted effort to identify, to locate and to evaluate children through 21 years of age who enroll in Destinations Career Academy of Georgia and have a confirmed or suspected disability, in accordance with all federal regulations and state standards. In addition, it shall be the policy of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia that children with disabilities, as well as their parents/guardians, shall be provided with safeguards as required by law, throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process and to provide these children with a free, appropriate, public education. For more information regarding IDEA: [GADOE IDEIA Special Education](#)

## Special Education Screening

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia screens and evaluates children to determine eligibility for special education and related services. We undertake screening activities before referring most children for a multidisciplinary team evaluation. Screening activities consist of the following:

- On-going analysis of the child's response to instruction and performance on statewide and district-wide assessments
- Periodic vision and hearing assessments by the school nurse and review of the results of physical

- examinations by school or private physicians as mandated by the Georgia Public School Code
- Baseline assessment and analysis of the child’s response to individualized academic or behavioral intervention over an extended period. Such intervention-based screening occurs when requested by the child’s teacher, parents/guardian(s), or other concerned school personnel.

For information about the dates of various screening activities by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, please contact the school directly. Parents or guardians of preschool-age children (three through five) may obtain information about screening activities or may request a screening of their children by calling or writing their local school district’s Early Intervention Services.

## **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

The MTSS framework consists of three levels or tiers that are fluid and overlapping. The tiers provide various levels of support to students in terms of duration and intensiveness. The more instructional support needed the higher up on the model the student moves. Teachers using MTSS utilize research-based instructional practices, targeted interventions, and curricular enhancements to support students in accomplishing their individual learning goals and include innovative scheduling and resource allocations. Fluidity between the instructional tiers is critical to students’ receiving the supports they need. Every student is given an opportunity to meet or exceed proficiency standards by teachers utilizing data in an effective and collaborative decision-making process, which results in differentiating instructional practices for all learners.

## **Commitment to Serve Students**

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is committed to the full implementation of NCLB and IDEA. When students with special education needs are given the support necessary for success as outlined by their IEP, we believe they can achieve at the same high standards that are required for all students enrolled in our school. Therefore, we will ensure that our enrolled students with special education needs will have full access to those curricular offerings aligned to Georgia Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE).

## **504 Service Plan and Child Find**

**Franeka Colley**

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Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria may nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a documented mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in, or access to, an aspect of the school program.

## **CHILD FIND: United States Department of Education Guidance**

**The process Destinations Career Academy of Georgia uses to identify students eligible for services under Section 504.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia uses the same process to evaluate the needs of students under Section 504 as they use to evaluate the needs of students under the IDEA. GADCA Virtual Academy of Georgia may use the same process or if the student has a medical condition that is outlined below, a medical process may be used. GADCA follows the requirements for evaluation specified in the Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35.



**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does not consider "mitigating measures" used by a student in determining whether the student has a disability under Section 504?**

- Beginning January 1, 2009, school districts, in determining whether a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that student in a major life activity, must **not** consider the ameliorating or improving effects of any mitigating or reducing measures that a student is using. This is a change from prior law.
- Congress did not define the term "mitigating measures" but rather provided a non-exhaustive list of "mitigating measures." The mitigating measures are as follows: medication; medical supplies, equipment or appliances; low-vision devices (which do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses); prosthetics (including limbs and devices); hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices; mobility devices; oxygen therapy equipment and supplies; use of assistive technology; reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services; and learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.
- Congress created one exception to the mitigating measures analysis. The ameliorative effects of the mitigating measures of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses shall be considered in determining if an impairment substantially limits a major life activity. "Ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses" are lenses that are intended to fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error, whereas "low-vision devices" (listed above) are devices that magnify, enhance, or otherwise augment a visual image.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands it must use multiple formulas or scales that measures substantial limitation.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 's determination of substantial limitation must be made on a case-by- case basis with respect to each individual student. The Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35 (c) requires that a group of knowledgeable persons draw upon information from a variety of sources in making this determination.
- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may and most often will utilize data obtained by a *multi-tier system of supports team, the classroom teacher data reports, a physician's statement, a prior evaluation data, or a previous school's determination.*

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands there are no impairments which automatically means a student has a disability under Section 504.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands an impairment in and of itself is not a disability. The impairment must **substantially limit** one or more major life activities in order to be considered a disability under Section 504.

**A medical diagnosis cannot suffice as an evaluation for the purpose of providing FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education)**



- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does accept a physician's medical diagnosis as one of several data sources, among other sources that are considered in evaluating a student with an impairment or believed to have an impairment which substantially limits a major life activity. Other sources to be considered, along with the medical diagnosis, include aptitude and achievement tests, multi-tier systems of support team recommendation, teacher recommendation, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require school districts to draw upon a variety of sources in interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands a medical diagnosis of an illness automatically mean a student can receive services under Section 504.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands a medical diagnosis of an illness does not automatically mean a student can receive services under Section 504. Further, the illness must cause a substantial limitation on the student's ability to learn or another major life activity. For example, a student who has a physical or mental impairment would not be considered a student in need of services under Section 504 if the impairment does not in any way limit the student's ability to learn or other major life activity, or only results in some minor limitation in that regard.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may utilize an outside independent evaluation. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia considers all data brought to a multi-disciplinary committee where the weight of each is determined by a committee.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may utilize a multi-disciplinary committee such as the *multi-tier system of supports team, the classroom teacher data reports, a physician's statement, a prior evaluation data, or a previous school's determination, and* understands the results of an outside independent evaluation may be one of many sources to consider. The Multi-disciplinary committees, such as must draw from a variety of sources in the evaluation process so that the possibility of error is minimized. All significant factors related to the subject student's learning process must be considered. These sources and factors include aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior, among others. Information from all sources must be documented and considered by knowledgeable committee members. The weight of the information is determined by the committee given the student's individual circumstances.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may use regular education intervention strategies for referring a student for evaluation for services under Section 504.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may use regular education intervention strategies to assist students with difficulties in school. GADCA understands Section 504 requires students referred for an evaluation for possible Section 504 or special education or related aids and services or modification to regular education if the student, because of disability, needs or is believed to need such services.

**Please note the following:**

**If a parent of a student does not wish services to continue, may they withdraw the services?**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia may initiate a Section 504 due process hearing to resolve the dispute if the district believes the student needs the services in order to receive an appropriate education.

**A student who has a disability referenced in the IDEA, but does not require special education services, the student may be eligible for services under Section 504.**

- The student may be eligible for services under Section 504. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia must determine whether the student has an impairment which substantially limits his or her ability to learn or another major life activity and, if so, make an individualized determination of the child's educational needs for regular or special education or related aids or services. For example, such a student may receive adjustments in the regular classroom.

**Destinations Career Academy of Georgia view of a temporary impairment, such as a broken leg, arm or other temporary circumstances.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands a temporary impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of Section 504 unless its severity is such that it results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities for an extended period of time. The issue of whether a temporary impairment is substantial enough to be a disability must be resolved on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration both the duration (or expected duration) of the impairment and the extent to which it actually limits a major life activity of the affected individual.
- Congress clarified that an individual is not “regarded as” an individual with a disability if the impairment is transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

**An impairment that is episodic or in remission may be a disability under Section 504.**

- Destinations Career Academy of Georgia understands under certain circumstances this may be true. Congress clarified that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. A student with such an impairment is entitled to a free appropriate public education under Section 504.

## **English Language Learner Program**

### **ELL Coordinator**

Franeka Colley

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Students who are identified as English Language Learners through a review of the Home Language Survey or other procedure, will be given the WIDA screener within 10 days of enrollment. If the student has received previous ELL services, the prior year’s WIDA scores will be reviewed within 10 days of enrollment. WIDA scores will be reviewed and those students needing support will be provided targeted English as a Second Language support.

All students who are identified as an English Language Learner by the state of Georgia are required to take the state WIDA assessment in February-March each year until the student has achieved proficiency in English and can be exited from the program. Information is available for translation by request. If needed a translator can be used

to ensure parent/school communication.

### **Translation and Interpreting Services**

Schools must provide translation services for communicating required information to parents with limited English proficiency at no cost to the parent. School districts must ensure that LEP parents have adequate notice of and meaningful access to information about all school district or SEA programs, services, and activities. GADCA uses Certified Languages International (CLI) to provide translation and interpreting support.

A school team will collaborate annually with the teachers and other administrative staff, as necessary, to identify vital written documents that need to be translated into the language of each frequently-encountered LEP parent group eligible to be served and/or likely to be affected by the school's program or activities, as well as other languages as necessary.

### **Notification of Language Assistance Services**

Schools must notify LEP parents and all school staff of the availability of free language assistance services with respect to information about school programs and activities (e.g., on-line/digital and "in person" or telephone-based orientation sessions, parent-teacher conferences, meetings with school staff, special education or other meetings about disability, learning coach activities, etc.). The notification(s) should include information about how to access the services and will identify a school contact person (e.g., EL Leader) who can assist LEP parents in accessing interpreter services or translated documents.

## **Communication (My Info and Email)**

Students and parents are able to contact their teachers through email. Staff emails will be made available by teachers and within the OLS system. Correspondence will be sent to Learning Coaches and families through their personal email addresses as provided during enrollment. Students will be contacted via their school-based email. It is expected that students and parent/guardian read their email at least once a day. Critical information is sent via email.

### **Notice for Directory Information:**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*, a federal law, requires that GADCA with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, GADCA may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised Destinations Career Academy of Georgia to the contrary in accordance with GADCA procedures.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the GADCA to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production.
- The annual yearbook.
- Honor roll or other recognition lists.
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want GADCA to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify GADCA in writing. GADCA has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

In order to remove your student from directory information that may be released by GADCA, please send your request to the following contact:

Tifferney Dodd  
GADCA Operations Manager  
470-890-6001  
schooloffice@gadca.org

## Flag Salute

A student may refuse to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or salute the flag based on the student's religious conviction or personal belief. A student who declines to participate in this exercise shall stand quietly and respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Special Interest Student Clubs

Student clubs will be offered to all students, in order to enhance their complete educational experience at Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Clubs facilitate student socialization, community and in some cases, service. Clubs are sponsored by Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teachers who welcome parent/guardian participation, as well. Teachers will provide a more detailed list along with contact information, as the school year progresses. More clubs may be added as interests arise. Suggestions are always welcomed. Any materials or supplies (outside of the supplied curriculum) needed for the clubs are the responsibility of the family- neither Stride K12 or Destinations Career Academy of Georgia will provide these materials or supplies.

**Please Note:** School-based clubs hosted during the school day or within school platforms must have a teacher sponsor; however, non-sponsored student-led events, meetings, or forums will not be restricted based on religious, racial, gender or other basis unless said meetings are determined to cause potential significant disruption to the school day.

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Gatherings

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia teachers arrange a variety of special gatherings for students and families throughout the year. Attendance is not required; however, these special gatherings provide wonderful opportunities to meet teachers, make new friends, and to talk with fellow parents/guardians about school. Parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of transportation and any other fees. The fees are often negotiated and reduced for our school. Students qualifying under the McKinney Vento Policy may be eligible for transportation support to face to face events including testing and outings.

Time spent on a field trip counts as attendance in the related subject. For example, a trip to a science museum can count as attendance time in science. All gatherings/notices are posted on the School Community Board and/or the online calendar of events.

Any student may attend any outing he or she wishes by submitting an RSVP, if required, to the teacher listed in the outing information. Parents, guardians, or adults who they specify are responsible for supervising children at all times during an outing. Siblings and friends are welcome to attend as well.

All students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for school. Clothing that distracts students, disrupts the educational process or poses a health or safety threat to anyone is not acceptable in our school. Parents/guardians may contact the school if further information is needed. All attending children must bring a signed (by parent/guardian) and completed Liability Release Agreement.

The Board recognizes that students attending Destinations Career Academy of Georgia gatherings may require medication for various reasons. Parents and guardians shall be encouraged to administer medications outside the hours of school gatherings. Parents and guardians shall assume full responsibility for the care of this part of their child's health.

During periods of public health crises, attendees at any face-to-face event may be asked to wear a mask and/or social distance. Please refer to the GADCA Preparedness Plan for specific details to be updated according to current and appropriate Federal and State guidance.

## Work Permits for Minors Under Age 16

The minor must secure potential employment prior to completing their portion of the Youth Work Permit application. Once

the minor completes their portion of the work permit application online, the Employer must complete their portion of the work permit application online. Once both the minor and employer complete their sections of the work permit application, the work permit can be issued by the authorized issuing officer.

Completing the Youth Work Permit Application:

- Minor will access the minor application for a Youth Work Permit at this link: <https://www.dol.state.ga.us/WS4-MW5/cics.jsp?TRANSID=WP17&FRMNAME=WP17>
- The minor will enter their Social Security Number or their Parent's Alien Certification number (if not a US Citizen), and correct date of birth
- Select the "Start a New Permit" button
- Complete all required information and select the "Submit" button
- Verify all fields are correct and complete before clicking on the "Submit" button
- You will be presented the Work Permit Minor Confirmation Page which includes the 10 digit Minor Security Key "MSK" (which is a combination of letters and numbers)
- Print the Work Permit Minor Confirmation Page and provide the Minor Security Key (MSK) to the employer
- Instruct the employer to go to the GDOL website <https://www.dol.state.ga.us/WS4-MW5/cics.jsp?TRANSID=WP19&FRMNAME=WP19> to access your application by using your printed out Minor Security Key to complete their portion of the Youth Work Permit. Once the employer completes their portion of the Youth Work Permit.

Once the minor must contact the issuing officer to have the work permit completed and issued:

- Minors attending a GA School must present a certified copy of their birth certificate and Minor Security Key (received when this application is completed) to the issuing officer at their school after the employer completes their portion of the application and are issued an employer's security key.
- Homeschooled Minors must email a certified copy of their birth certificate, Intent to Home School Form and Minor Security key to [childlabor@gdol.ga.gov](mailto:childlabor@gdol.ga.gov) after the employer completes their portion of the application and are issued an employer's security key.
- Minors residing outside the State of Georgia – or attending school outside the State of Georgia must email a certified copy of their birth certificate, minor security key and a statement that they attend school outside the State of Georgia (please provide the State of Residence and School Name) to [childlabor@gdol.ga.gov](mailto:childlabor@gdol.ga.gov) after the employer completes their portion of the application and are issued an employer's security key

For more information: [Georgia Department of Labor Youth Permit Online Resources](#).

## Learning Coach School Involvement Opportunities

GADCA offers multiple opportunities for Learning Coaches and Parents to be involved!

- 1) Surveys sent throughout the year to see how things are going. All responses are read and taken into consideration when making school policy and planning decisions.
- 2) Learning Coach Committee Meetings: Monthly Meetings covering timely topics in order to prepare LC's for relative items such as Testing. These meetings are also used to garner feedback on various topics as well as provide an opportunity for families to share celebrations and any concerns.
- 3) Learning Coach Teacher Organization Meetings: GADCA's equivalence to PTO-type organizations. Come share ideas, help fundraise and brainstorm fun ideas for the school!
- 4) "GADCA Virtual Academy Families" Facebook Page: This is a great place to get school-wide updates and reminders as well as look for Learning Coach advice, connect with families in your area, or help other families getting started.

## Acceptable Use Guidelines

Technology has fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. As a result, educators are continually adapting their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to incorporate the vast, diverse, and unique resources available through the Internet. The Board of Directors provides Technology Resources to support the educational and professional needs of its students and staff. With respect to students, Academy Technology Resources afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board of Directors provides students with access to the Internet for limited educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students. The Academy's computer network and Internet system does not serve as a public access service or a public forum, and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its limited educational purpose.

The Board regulates the use of GADCA Technology Resources by principles consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, GADCA's educational mission, and articulated expectations of student conduct as delineated in the Student Code of Conduct. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct govern students' use of GADCA Technology Resources and students' personal communication devices when they are connected to the GADCA computer network, Internet connection, and/or online educational services/apps, or when used while the student is on Board-owned property or a Board-sponsored activity.

Users are required to refrain from actions that are illegal (such as libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, and the like) or unkind (such as personal attacks, invasion of privacy, injurious comment, and the like). Because its Technology Resources are not unlimited, the Board has also instituted restrictions aimed at preserving these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers.

Users have no right or expectation to privacy when using GADCA Technology Resources (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, e-mails, and records of their online activity when using the Academy's computer network and/or Internet connection).

First, the Board may not be able to technologically limit access through its Technology Resources, to only those services and resources that have been authorized for the purpose of instruction, study and research related to the curriculum. Unlike in the past when educators and community members had the opportunity to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the curriculum according to adopted procedures and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them), access to the Internet, because it serves as a gateway to any publicly available file server in the world, opens classrooms and students to electronic information resources that may not have been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Pursuant to Federal law, the Board has implemented technology protection measures that protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, and/or are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. At the discretion of the Board or the School Leader, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. GADCA also utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. However, the Board is cognizant of the fact that such software and/or hardware is not perfect and relies on students to self-police (and immediately cease viewing) online activity that would otherwise be in conflict with these policies and to immediately report such to the Head of School. The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using GADCA Technology Resources, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under the Children's Internet Protection Act. Any



student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be subject to discipline.

The Head of School may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online educational services/apps containing appropriate material, if access to such sites has been inappropriately blocked by the technology protection measures. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protection actions of the technology protection measures.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to services and/or resources on the Internet that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that they and/or their parents may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet.

The Head of School is directed to prepare procedures which address students' safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, and prohibit disclosure of personal identification information of minors and unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking"), cyber bullying and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by minors online.

Pursuant to Federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- C. safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- D. the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information;
- E. the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking", "harvesting", "digital piracy", "data mining", etc.), cyber bullying and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online, and
- F. unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding minors.

The Board directs staff members to provide instruction for their students and/or the Educational Service Provider to implement procedures regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified above. Furthermore, the Educational Service Provider will implement monitoring procedures for the online activities while students are at school.

Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions; or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server, and computer logs.

The Educational Service Provider is responsible for providing training so that Internet users under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying procedures. The Board expects that staff members will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of GADCA Technology Resources. Such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social media, including in chat rooms, and cyber bullying awareness and response. All users of Academy Technology Resources (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying procedures.

Students are responsible for good behavior when using Academy Technology Resources – i.e., behavior comparable to that expected of students when they are in classrooms, school hallways, and other school premises and school sponsored events. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. The Board does not approve any use of its Technology Resources that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying procedures.

Students may only use GADCA Technology Resources to access or use social media if it is done for educational purposes in accordance with their teacher's approved plan for such use.



Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying procedures may have their use privileges suspended or revoked, and disciplinary action taken against them. Users are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for uses of GADCA Technology Resources that are not authorized by this policy and its accompanying procedures.

The Board designates the Educational Service Provider and Head of School, as the persons responsible for initiating, implementing, and enforcing this policy and its accompanying procedures as they apply to students' use of Academy Technology Resources.

For more information: [Georgia Department of Education Office of Technology Services](#)

## **Accountability**

Posting anonymous messages is not permitted unless authorized by the teacher of the online course. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited. Use only your own username and password, but do not share these with anyone.

Do not interfere with other users' ability to access Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's Online School or Virtual High School or disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. You are responsible for all activity that is associated with your username and password. Change your password(s) frequently, at least once per semester or course. Do not publicly post your personal contact information (address and phone number) or anyone else's. Do not publicly post any messages that were sent to you privately. Do not download, transmit or post material that is intended for personal gain or profit, non-Destinations Career Academy of Georgia commercial activities, non-Destinations Career Academy of Georgia product advertising, or political lobbying on a Destinations Career Academy of Georgia-owned instructional computing resource. Do not use Destinations Career Academy of Georgia instructional computing resources to sell or to purchase any illegal items or substances. Do not upload or post any software that is not specifically required and approved for your assignments, on Destinations Career Academy of Georgia's instructional computing resources. Do not post any MP3 files, compressed video, or other non-instructional files to any Destinations Career Academy of Georgia server.

## **Student Internet Safety**

Do not reveal on the internet personal information about yourself or other persons. For example, you should not reveal your name, home address, telephone number, or display photographs of yourself or others to persons outside of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia. Do not agree to meet in person, anyone you have met only on the internet and who is not affiliated with Destinations Career Academy of Georgia.

## **Network Etiquette**

At Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, parents, guardians and students are expected to follow the rules of network etiquette, or "netiquette." The word netiquette refers to common-sense guidelines for conversing with others online. Please abide by these standards. Avoid sarcasm, jargon, and slang. Swear words are unacceptable. Never use derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues. Focus your responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on the individuals involved. Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful. Review your messages before sending them. Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos.

Respect other people's privacy. Do not broadcast online discussions, and never reveal another person's email address.

## Use of Copyrighted Materials

All materials in the courses are copyrighted and provided for use exclusively by enrolled students. Enrolled students may print or photocopy material from the website for their own use. Use by or distribution to others is prohibited unless expressly noted. Unauthorized copying or distribution may result in revoked access to course(s).

Users shall not upload, download, transmit, or post copyrighted software or copyrighted materials, materials protected by trade secrets or other protections using Destinations Career Academy of Georgia computer resources. This includes copyrighted graphics of cartoon characters or other materials that may appear to be non-copyright protected.

## Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Indemnification Provision

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia assumes no responsibility for information obtained via the internet which may be illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or offensive. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia assumes no responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs or other obligations arising from the use of instructional computing resources. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible on the computer network or the internet is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia, its affiliates or its employees. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia assumes no responsibility for damages to the user's computer system.

Nothing in this policy negates any obligation the student and parent or guardian have to use the instructional computing resources as required in the Use of Instructional Property Agreement ("Agreement") the parent or guardian signed as part of the student's enrollment packet. In the event that this code conflicts with the Agreement, the terms of the Agreement shall prevail.

## Confidential Communications of Students

Some oral or written communications between students and school personnel are confidential. Information that is expressed as confidential or received in confidence by a staff member from a student may be revealed to, or by the Head of School or other appropriate authority, including law enforcement personnel, when the health, welfare or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

## Class Connect

Students should:

- Arrive promptly at the scheduled time for the Class Connect session.
- Wait for whiteboard and microphone privileges which will be assigned at the discretion of the teacher.
- Only communicate regarding direct content of the lesson.
- Be respectful and courteous towards others at all times.
- Always participate and engage in the session (stepping away without the teacher's approval will count as an absence).
- Log in to each session individually.

Please bear in mind that individual teachers may have expectations that are specific to their classrooms. Parents/guardians should remove their child from a Class Connect session if the student displays offensive behavior or is ill. If you must remove your child from a Class Connect session, please contact the teacher to discuss the situation.

Parents and guardians should keep comments and questions specific to the lesson. Contact your child's teacher

about other concerns by phone, email or in person during office hours. Because the lessons are student-centered, only students should be using the microphones during the sessions. Please refrain from coaching your child during Class Connect sessions. The goal of this instructional time is for your child to become an independent learner and critical thinker.

## Mandated Reporting

### 1. Purpose of Policy.

- a. The purpose of this Code section is to provide for the protection of children. It is intended that mandatory reporting will cause the protective services of the state to be brought to bear on the situation in an effort to prevent abuses, to protect and enhance the welfare of children, and to preserve family life wherever possible. This Code section shall be liberally construed so as to carry out the purposes thereof.

### 2. Georgia's Mandated Reporter Law

- a. Georgia law § 19-7-5(a) mandates reports of suspected child abuse by school employees. Mandatory reporting of abuse is intended "to cause the protective services of the state to be brought to bear on the situation." and the law "shall be liberally construed so as to carry out the[se] purposes."
- b. All District employees and volunteers are mandatory reporters under the law.

### 3. When does the report have to be made?

- a. A report of suspected abuse should be made immediately, "but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused to a child welfare agency providing protective services . . . or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney." O.C.G.A. 19-7-5(e).
- b. In addition to professional repercussions, such as termination of employment, a person required to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a criminal misdemeanor. (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5(h)).

### 4. Mandated Reporting Procedure

- a. Any suspected cases of child abuse shall be reported immediately, and at least within 24 hours. The reporter may choose to consult with the district personnel, so long as the report is still made within the required time. After making the report, the employee should notify the district personnel that a child abuse report has been made and provide documentation of the report.
- b. Sexual abuse is a common type of child abuse. However, it is important to remember that not all sexual activities of minors are reportable as child abuse. In particular, sexual abuse does not include (a) consensual sex acts involving persons of the opposite sex when the sex acts are between minors at least 14 years old, or (b) consensual sex act between a minor and an adult who is not more than four years older than the minor.
- c. The statewide phone number for the DFCS Child Protective Center to make an oral report is 1-855-422-4453. Contact information for local county DFCS office can be found at <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/locations>. To access the online DFCS Mandated Reporter Form visit <https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/Main/Default.aspx>. Mandated reporters also have the following options to submit this form electronically (use only one option per report):
  - i. Option One: E-mail to [CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov). The system may restrict you to receiving only one auto-reply per day per email stating that the CPS report has been received.
  - ii. Option Two: Fax to 229-317-9663. Faxed reports convert to a PDF (Adobe) format and are automatically forwarded to the [CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov) e-mail box. If you provide an e-mail address, you can receive a confirmation e-mail.
- d. If the child is in a life-threatening situation or immediate danger, a report should be made immediately to law enforcement or the district attorney in the county where the child lives. The identifying employee should follow up with DFCS as soon as possible to make an official report in accordance with DFCS reporting forms and procedures. The reporter must follow up to assure that the report was received.

- e. The obligation to report arises when there is “reasonable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred.” “Reasonable cause” means you have an objective, factual basis to believe that the child may have been abused. This does not mean you that are sure beyond a reasonable doubt that the child has been abused. It means that your belief is based on more than a hunch.
- f. The responsibility of a mandated reporter is to ensure that a report is made whenever there is reason to believe that a child has been the victim of abuse. It is the responsibility of DFCS to review the report and decide whether further investigation is warranted. If the report is on a family that already has an open case with DFCS, the current suspicions must still be made to the DFCS intake worker.
- g. Mandated reporters may contact DFCS to find out whether their report was substantiated. Even if the report was not substantiated, it is the responsibility of the mandated reporter to report future concerns regarding the child.

## 5. Mandated Reporter Policy

- a. Any school employee or volunteer who suspects child abuse or maltreatment is mandated to report and is authorized to report to DFCS and/or Law Enforcement as required by law pursuant to Code Section 19-7-5 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A). As mandated by Georgia law O.C.G.A 19-7-5, any employee of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia (GADCA) having cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18):
    - b. has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon the child other than by accidental means by a parent, caregiver or any person who attends to any child as an employee or volunteer of the school;
    - c. has been neglected or exploited by a parent, caregiver or any person who attends to any child as an employee or volunteer of the school; or
    - d. has been sexually assaulted, shall report their belief to District leadership and shall make a report of child abuse and neglect to the appropriate Department of Family and Children Services (“DFCS”) as soon as reasonably possible, but within the twenty-four (24) hour from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred.
6. GADCA will provide training annually for professional staff in the identification of children suspected of being neglected or abused. The training will include procedures for reporting such cases. Training may be provided through Pro Solutions Training online service.
- a. REQUIREMENTS**
- 1. If any employee has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, sexual abuse, molestation, neglect or exploitation has occurred, the employee must report it or face criminal penalties and employment penalties, including but not limited to termination. When in doubt, the employee shall report the suspicion to protect the interest of the child and to fulfill their legal duty to report.
  - 2. If any employee is aware of an allegation of child abuse of a student by a parent or caregiver (including an employee), the allegation shall be reported in accordance with this policy and as soon as possible within the twenty-four-hour required reporting time.
  - 3. If any employee has reasonable cause to suspect the student is subject to child abuse, sexual abuse, molestation, neglect or exploitation, or that the employee has received an allegation of child abuse by a parent or caregiver (including employees), the employee shall submit a complete and written report as soon as possible, but no later than the 24-hour requirement. Documentation must be provided to District leadership that the report has been made.
    - a. Reporting Options
      - i. Phone: 1-855-422-4453
      - ii. Email: [CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov)
      - iii. Online: <https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/Main/Default.aspx>
      - iv. Fax: 229-317-9663

4. If any employee is alleged to have committed child abuse or neglect, in addition to submitting a report to DFCS as required under Paragraph (3) above, District leadership shall conduct a prompt investigation to determine whether any inappropriate or unprofessional conduct was taken by the employee. District leadership should:
  - a. solicit the assistance of involved school employees to assist in their investigation.
  - b. contact DFCS and request all documents pertaining to the employees' case, as allowed by law,
  - c. and interview the employee, if possible. If an employee refuses to cooperate in the school system's investigation, the employee may be charged with insubordination.
5. At a minimum, the findings of the investigation shall be submitted to the Board of Directors and should include:
  - a. the steps taken to investigate the allegation; unprofessional or inappropriate conduct;
  - b. the findings as to whether the employee engaged in the recommendation of what action should be taken, if any, as a result of the investigation; and,
  - c. the rationale for recommended action, if any, or rationale for lack of action
6. The legal requirement to report suspected child abuse or neglect is applicable to any adult school volunteer. Therefore, mandated reporter training will be required of all school volunteers. School volunteers will be notified of such reporting requirements and required training through the student handbook and on the school website.

**References:**

Mandated Reporter Law

O.C.G.A. §19-7-5 (2016)

## **PANDEMIC (COVID-19) SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia operates primarily virtually, however on occasion there are circumstances where employees, contractors, vendors, service providers, parents, students, and community members may need to engage in face to face (in- person) meetings, cultural and/or operational functions. ALL in person interactions and practices will align with the Governor of the State of Georgia's Executive Orders.

Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is a fully online virtual school and as such our instructional and academic programs are minimally affected by pandemic situations. However, *in person* evaluations, services, state testing, events, activities, and field trips may be altered, postponed, suspended, or changed as needed in pandemic situations. We appreciate your understanding and patience should these situations arise.

IF State Milestones Testing is suspended or waived by the state:

- GADCA will replace the end of year state EOG assessments with an alternate VIRTUAL summative assessment in grades 6-8. This data point will serve as a replacement for the Milestones Assessment data point in GADCA's retention, promotion, and placement protocol.

### **Learning Coach and Student Compact**

(Please print the I Understand Statements for easy reference.)

By signing the Signature Page found at the end of this handbook, parents/guardians confirm that they understand and agree to the contents of this page. Please initial each statement. The purpose of this section is to set

expectations for Destinations Career Academy of Georgia parents/guardians. Students' success is a primary goal of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia and that can only be achieved if you, the parent or guardian, are successful. Therefore, it is important that parents of Destinations Career Academy of Georgia children understand and agree with the following curricular and attendance requirements:

- I understand that my student is enrolled in a public school with attendance requirements that I am expected to meet. The state requirement is 5.5 hours per day. Students in grades 6-8 must complete 330 minutes of instructional time based on the 180-day school year.
- I accept the responsibility to supervise my student in using the Stride K12 curriculum, and I understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about it. Any other work accomplished by the student is supplemental to, and does not take the place of, the Stride K12 curriculum lessons. Destinations Career Academy of Georgia does not consider it acceptable to leave a student home alone or unsupervised all day to complete coursework.
- I understand and agree that student progress is an expected part of the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia program, in addition to the attendance hours logged. Teachers review progress and consider other factors including parental input, when making student advancement decisions. Promotion is based on progress, content mastery, and/or credits earned, not simply attendance.
- I understand and agree that I am expected to follow the guidance and support of a certified teacher in implementing the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia program with my student.
- I understand and agree that I am expected to participate in scheduled interactions with my student's teacher, and that I must submit work samples when requested by my student's teacher.
- I understand and agree that, as a public school, Destinations Career Academy of Georgia students are required to participate in state standardized and other testing. My child is expected to participate fully in the testing at his or her grade level. Your participation is critical to GADCA remaining a school option for your child.
- I understand and agree that my child is expected to participate in NWEA, Stride, iReady, or other performance/achievement testing.
- I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to secure an internet service provider (ISP) in order to access the Online School.
- I understand that if I am without internet for more than 24 hours, I will notify my teacher and travel to a location, such as a library, that has internet access. Regular, daily attendance is still expected in order to meet state attendance guidelines.
- I understand and agree that I must have a working email address and notify the school if it changes.
- I understand and agree that Destinations Career Academy of Georgia is a full-time public-school program, and that my child may not be enrolled in any other full-time or part-time public or private school.
- I read and understand Destinations Career Academy of Georgia policy for all addressed topics found in the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia Handbook/Student Code of Conduct.

## Signature Page

We have read and reviewed the Destinations Career Academy of Georgia 's Handbook including the "I understand" statements and FERPA guidelines. In signing, we indicate an awareness and understanding of the school practices and procedures set forth herein.

Please fill out the information below and email to Operations Manager, Tifferney Dodd (tdodd@k12.com).

<u>Student Signature(s)</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Parent Signature(s)</u>	<u>Date</u>
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
4.		4.	

***Please sign and return this signature page to your homeroom teacher or let them know when you've signed electronically.***