



Elementary School 2023-24 Student/Parent Handbook



“Quality Expected, Excellence Achieved”

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Grand Traverse Academy Mission & Belief Statements

Mission Statement

Grand Traverse Academy's mission is for all students to be safe, loved and learning as they achieve excellence in character and academics.

Excellence is defined as:

- prepared for responsible citizenship
- prepared for success in higher education

Belief Statements

The staff of Grand Traverse Academy believes...

- in teaching exemplary character and excellence in academics
- that all students are capable of learning; our high expectations and individualizing help their learning
- in making decisions by first considering what is best for all students
- that success in learning builds self esteem and pride, challenge and mistakes are part of learning and help build character
- in providing outstanding customer service to GTA community members
- that Choice Theory helps us understand behavior, learning, and the importance of internal motivation
- that staff and students are responsible for continuous improvement
- that our school must have positive relationships built on trust, because everyone is important and contributes to learning
- that GTA parents want good things for their children now and want them to have a bright future
- that our core values will be passed on and maintained by the continued sharing of our history and mission

General Information

School Hours

Grades K-6

8:15 am-3:35 Monday-Thursday

8:15 am-12:00 Fridays and any scheduled half-days

Severe Weather

If students are in school when a tornado watch or thunderstorm warning is issued, we will keep them in school until regular dismissal time. If a tornado warning is issued, students and staff will take shelter in designated areas and remain in school until an all clear is given. Please do not call school during severe weather except in case of emergency. School phone lines must remain open to receive incoming messages.

Snow Days and Delays

We follow Traverse City Area Public School's decision on weather-related closings and delays. If TCAPS delays school on a Friday, then GTA will not have school. When it is necessary to close or delay school, announcements will air on the local television and radio stations.

Mandatory Drills

We are required by state and federal law to perform several fire, lockdown, and tornado drills each year. Teachers work with their students to teach and practice these procedures before and after they occur in order to ensure the safety of our students at all times.

School Uniforms

- School uniforms help build a sense of community, reduce distractions and increase safety
- Both students and staff wear uniforms daily
- Elementary, Junior High and High School students each have their own unique color scheme
- School uniforms allow students and adults to focus on learning
- Uniforms help eliminate student or staff judgment of each other because of brand names
- Behavior in school is improved
- School uniforms ensure that inappropriate clothing will not be worn to school

Required Uniform

Students are only allowed to wear approved uniform clothing in the classroom, even during cold weather. *Grand Traverse Academy spirit wear tops may be worn on Fridays with uniform bottoms.*

School Uniforms by Grade Level

Uniform Pieces	Kindergarten/Elementary (Grades K-6)	Junior High (Grades 7 & 8)	High School (Grades 9-12)
May Be Purchased from Any Vendor			
Dress Shirts or Blouses	White (Oxford button-down or Peter Pan collar)	White (Oxford button-down or Peter Pan Collar)	White (Oxford button-down or Peter Pan Collar)
Turtlenecks (under uniform shirts, sweaters, vests or pullovers only)	White (long-sleeved)	White (long-sleeved)	White (long-sleeved)
T-Shirts (underneath uniform shirts only)	White or Light Blue	White or Cobalt Blue	White or Navy Blue
Physical Education Uniform	n/a	Optional for Junior High Shorts: Navy Blue Shirt: Plain Gray or GTA Spirit Wear (available at EmbroidMe, or periodically at GTA)	Shorts: Navy Blue, Black Shirt: Plain Gray or GTA Spirit Wear (available at EmbroidMe, or periodically at GTA)
Pants, Shorts	Navy Blue	Navy Blue	Khaki
Must Be Purchased from EmbroidMe or French Toast Schoolbox			
Polo Shirts with Logo	Light Blue	Cobalt Blue	Navy Blue
Skirts	Blue Gold Plaid (French Toast Schoolbox) or Navy Blue	Blue Gold Plaid (French Toast Schoolbox) or Navy Blue	Blue Gold Plaid (French Toast Schoolbox) or Khaki
Jumpers, Skorts	Blue Gold Plaid (French Toast Schoolbox) or Navy Blue	n/a	n/a
Cardigan, V-Neck or Sweater Vest with Logo	Navy Blue	Navy Blue	Navy Blue
Fleece Zip Vest or Quarter/Full-Zip Pullover with Logo	Navy Blue	Navy Blue	Navy Blue
Blazer (worn with a white dress shirt)	n/a	n/a	Navy Blue (French Toast Schoolbox)

- Pants should fit properly at the waist, be hemmed to an appropriate length, and must not be overly baggy or tight.
- Men's dress shirts shall be tucked in.
- Cargo-style pants or shorts; jeans-style pants, shorts or skirts; denim; leggings worn as pants; athletic/sweatpants, warm-ups and yoga pants are not acceptable.
- Shorts and skirts shall be no shorter than the top of the knee when standing for Secondary students.
- Shorts for Secondary PE may have a white stripe down the side; the inseam may be no less than six inches in length.
- Shirts for Secondary PE may not be cut or altered in any way.
- Tights or leggings worn under skirts must be navy blue, gray or white.
- Shoes should be closed toed, comfortable and without wheels.

Accessories/Hair/Shoes

Please keep in mind that the intent of the uniform policy is for students and staff to have a simple, professional and unified appearance – both in clothing and personal appearance, including hairstyles/hair color/jewelry/nail care, make-up and general grooming. The focus at GTA is on learning; our ultimate guide for clothing/appearance is to be sure it does not distract from learning. We are preparing students for professional careers, and a professional appearance is important.

- Visible body piercings other than earrings are not allowed
- Only naturally occurring hair colors are permissible
- “Fairy hair” tinsel is not permissible
- Visible tattoos or ink, whether permanent or temporary, are not allowed
- Excessive/extreme jewelry, such as chains or spikes, is not allowed
- Bandanas are not allowed
- Neckties appropriate for a school setting may be worn with a white dress shirt
- Dress scarves appropriate for a school setting may be worn with a white dress shirt
- T-shirts, when worn under a uniform top, should be white or the same color as the uniform top and free of visible graphics and writing
- Extreme/excessive make-up is not allowed
- We do not have hair length requirements, but it is important that students are able to make eye contact, as would be expected in the business world, so hair must not cover the eyes

Extra-Curricular Functions

It is expected that students at school after hours, or at school activities or events, will be dressed appropriately for the occasion.

- Shorts or skirts must not be more than two inches above the knee
- For athletic events, students should not wear only tights or leggings. Tights or leggings with appropriate shorts over them are acceptable.
- No spaghetti strap tank tops or strapless tops
- Students should not bare their midriff
- Writing/slogans on clothing must be appropriate for a school setting
- Excessive/extreme jewelry, such as chains or spikes, is not allowed. No visible body piercing, other than earrings, is allowed
- Extreme/excessive make-up is not allowed
- Visible tattoos are not allowed

With ever-changing trends in fashion, the school reserves the right to make such changes to the dress code as may be necessary. Should changes occur, they will be clearly communicated to parents and students.

Attendance Policy

In order for students to progress, it is important that they attend all classes. Students must be excused by a parent if they are absent, tardy or leave early. Grand Traverse Academy maintains a closed campus, so students may not leave the school at any time during the school day without the permission of the school and their parent. Parents may excuse students by calling the GTA office at (231) 995-0665, sending a signed note, or visiting the GTA office.

The administration shall have discretionary authority to excuse an absence for a reason the administrator deems consistent with the policy.

If your child will be absent, please call the GTA office by 8:15 am. Students are considered unexcused if the parent does not contact the office. The office will call the student's home for all unexcused absences on the day that they occur.

Important points:

- All excused and unexcused absences count toward absence totals, with the following exceptions:
 - School-imposed suspension
 - School-related absences – field trips, athletic events
 - Long-term Issues approved by the Attendance Committee
- The acceptable number of absences in a semester is seven (7) before incurring consequences.
- After the 7th absence in a semester, parents will meet with the Attendance Officer to set goals for student attendance and create an Attendance Agreement.
- On the 8th absence, a registered letter will be sent home and attendance counseling will be scheduled.
- Ten (10) absences will result in a referral to Truancy Court.
- An Attendance Committee has been formed to approve any extenuating circumstances. Please
- contact the elementary office for an Absence Exempt form if you believe you have extenuating circumstances.

Parent Notification:

- A letter will be sent to the student's recorded address upon the 4th absence, indicating the days missed and restating the attendance policy
- A telephone call home will be made at the time of the 7th absence to set an appointment with the Attendance Officer.
- A registered letter will be sent to the student's recorded address upon the 8th absence, indicating the days missed, restating the attendance policy and scheduling attendance counseling.
- A referral will be made to Truancy Court upon the 10th absence.

Absence Policy & Getting Work

Students miss valuable instruction when they are absent from school. In order to help students continue to progress academically, we expect that students make up the assignments they missed.

If your elementary child is absent for one day, he/she will get the missed work on the day he/she returns. If your child is absent for more than one day, you may request that his/her work be sent home. Please email teachers or call their classroom phones to request work prior to 8:00 am. The teacher will have the work available for you to pick up in the elementary office at dismissal time. If you call or email after 8:00 am, the work will be ready in the office by 8:15 am the next morning.

We recommend that family vacations are planned around our student calendar and take place during breaks. If your family decides to take a vacation during the school year, we will be able to provide some assignments in advance if you notify your child's teacher at least two weeks in advance. Some of the

assignments and assessments will need to be made up after the vacation, as lesson plans and schedules are flexible.

Arriving Late or Leaving Early

School begins promptly at 8:15. When students arrive after class has begun, not only do they lose valuable learning time, but it is a disruption to the entire class. Students are expected to be in class and ready to learn at 8:15.

If your child will arrive late to school, please check in at the office to receive the appropriate pass prior to your child going to his/her classroom. You will be issued a pass for your child to give to his/her teacher to excuse their tardy arrival. It is important for students to arrive on time and ready to learn each day. When a child comes to school late or leaves early it disrupts the entire class. For this reason, five (5) late arrivals will equal one (1) absence on Elementary students' attendance records.

For safety reasons, no student is to leave the school grounds at any time without permission from the office. Parents must check in at the school office when picking up their child for any excused dismissal. Please remember that learning is taking place right up to dismissal. You will be issued a pass to present to your child's teacher for early dismissal. The following guidelines will apply:

- No child will be released to a person other than a parent or a guardian during school hours without the written permission of the parent or guardian.
- The person to whom the child is to be released will be required to sign a log in the school office indicating time and purpose of the release. Identification will be required if the person is not known to the office staff.
- Teachers may release a child to an adult only after receiving notification from the principal or administrative support staff.
- No child will be permitted to leave school alone during school hours. A parent/guardian or an authorized adult must pick up the child inside the school.

It is important to be in school on time and to stay until dismissal in order to show respect for other students and create good work habits.

School Practices

Transportation

Students are transported to and from school by parents or carpool drivers.

Morning Carpool Procedures

Carpool begins at 7:45 am for Kindergarten and Elementary

If your child needs to be in school before 7:45, please park and walk your child in and sign them in to Quality Care. In order to ensure students are accounted for and safe, students are not allowed to go to their classrooms before 7:45 and instead, must go to Quality Care.

- Please do not park in the fire lane or carpool lanes at any time
- During carpool, we will be serving approximately 12 cars at a time, in one lane. Please watch for directions from your carpool kings/queens
- For children's safety, please
 - **Only** let your child(ren) out of the car **when a carpool king/queen opens the door for them**

- o Children may **only** get out on the passenger's side of the vehicle
- o If your student is bringing a project, display, pet or anything of significant size to school, please park in the lot and assist your child into school
- o Keep your car in single file to exit; please do not swing around other cars

Carpool ends at 8:10 am

- If you arrive any later than 8:10, please walk in with your child and sign them in at the main office

Celebrations and Activities

Celebrations will occur at various times and for various reasons. Family Council coordinates celebrations and family events throughout the year. Please check the newsletter for information. When celebrating specific holidays, Grand Traverse Academy will attempt to respect the beliefs of all of our families. Please contact your child's classroom teacher if you would like to share information regarding your family's beliefs.

If your child would like to bring a birthday treat, please send enough for the entire class. If you would like suggestions for treats or need to know how many to bring or if there are any food allergies you should be aware of, please check with the teacher.

Lunch

Students eat in their classrooms with their teachers. Teachers use this time to chat with students, teach good table manners, conduct conferences with students, as well as eat. Students are able to talk with friends in a restaurant-style atmosphere and seating arrangement.

As GTA does not have a hot lunch program, all students and staff bring lunch in an insulated lunchbox. Most classes have a microwave, however due to the number of students using them, there may be a schedule of who will use it on specific days although other students may be able to use it once everyone else is done.

Snacks

Students in grades K-6 will have a snack in the morning and/or in the afternoon. We ask parents to provide their children with healthy snacks each day.

Water Bottles

We encourage students to drink water throughout the day by keeping water bottles with them at all times while they are in school. Please only send water bottles that are translucent or clear so that the safety of all students can be maintained. Students should not have any other drinks throughout the day with the exception of lunch.

Emergency Contacts

If your child is injured or becomes ill at school, we will make every effort to contact you. Please be sure that your emergency contact information on your Student Registration Form is filled out completely and accurately and on file in the school office so that we will be able to reach you at home or at work. The registration form should also list the names and numbers of at least two other people we can call in case we are unable to contact you. Please be sure that the people you list as emergency contacts are aware of this and are willing and able to take responsibility for your child.

Illness

To protect the health of your child and other students, we expect children to be picked up from school if they have a fever, a rash, head lice or similar communicable symptoms. Please notify the school if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease and keep the student home until fully recovered. When notifying the office about a sick child, please relay the nature of the illness. Our policy is that children need to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Head Lice

If a teacher thinks a student may have head lice, the child will be sent to the office for a staff member to privately look over the child's head for any live lice. If the child has lice, his/her parent will be called to pick up the child and treat the child at home. Parents are given the 10-day guide for removal and treatment of lice. It is recommended that proper treatment is completed and there are no live lice on the child before they return to school.

Immunizations

State law requires that student immunizations be kept up to date unless a waiver is filed with the school. Nonmedical Waiver forms are required to be completed, signed and certified at the local health department or a medical doctor's (MD/DO) signed State of Michigan 2019 Medical Contraindication Form, which states the medical contraindication(s), the vaccines involved and the time period during which the child is not able to get the vaccines.

Medication

Michigan law requires that before any medication, including over-the-counter medication and herbal treatments, can be administered to students, the school office must have the following:

- a signed form, including directions, completed by the parent or guardian for over-the-counter medications
- a signed statement from a physician and parent explaining doses and any precautions for prescription medication
- the current prescription container from the pharmacy or original packaging for over-the-counter medications

Please note: Children are not allowed to transport medication to and from school. Parents must bring the medication to the office.

Communications

Each Friday the school newsletter is emailed home. The newsletter includes dates of interest, detailed information about upcoming events, notes from the principals and other miscellaneous topics relating to our school. It is a quick and easy way to keep in touch with what is happening at school.

Teachers will also stay in frequent contact with families through a newsletter, weekly matrix, web page or other resource. Please ask for hard copies to be sent home if you do not have email.

Message Sender is a communication device utilized to deliver messages and information via voicemail and/or email. Message Sender will call both the parent's home and cell phone numbers we have on file and leave a message if there is information regarding snow days, athletic events, school emergencies, attendance and other important information.

Lost and Found

Please mark your child's name on all personal items, such as uniform pieces, hats, gloves, coats, boots, water bottles, lunch bags and backpacks. Check for lost items in our Lost and Found, located in the vestibule at the junction of the Elementary and Secondary corridors. Items not claimed, with the exception of uniforms, are periodically donated to charity.

Quality Care (Before/After School Child Care)

Grand Traverse Academy commits to serving families by offering high-quality before and after school care that provides a nurturing and enriching environment for children. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a range of age-appropriate activities. Care is provided by trained paraprofessionals in a licensed program and our families pay for this service. Quality Care is not available on snow days. Care is available beginning at 7:00 am until the start of the school day and also after school until 6:00 pm.

Elementary Athletics

Our intramural (IM) and league-style elementary athletics program at GTA is intended to provide a developmental, competitive and instructional framework as an extension of the academic and character education of our school. All participants will learn the fundamentals of each sport and be given the opportunity to develop strong and disciplined athletic minds and bodies. Participants will be taught good sportsmanship, fair play and team spirit. Coaches and upperclassmen will work to develop relationships with young athletes and develop the skills of all players. A healthy understanding of competition will be developed but winning is not the number one priority. Sports offered at the elementary level include: co-ed cross country (3rd-6th grade), boys' & girls' basketball (3rd-6th grade), co-ed volleyball (3rd-6th grade) and track & field (4th-6th grade).

<https://www.mygta.us/elementaryathletics>

Recess

Each classroom schedules its own break time. Outside breaks are given, weather permitting. Students will go outside for recess as long as the air temperature and wind chill are above zero and it is not raining. Children should bring clothing (boots, snow pants, hats and mittens) appropriate for the season.

Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, personal music players and personal game systems or tablets are not allowed at school. For a variety of reasons, these devices are not conducive to a social school community atmosphere. Headphones of any kind are not to be worn unless they are plugged into a school computer for educational purposes.

Cell phone or other electronic communication device use, such as watches capable of texting or making phone calls, are prohibited during the day, including lunch, passing periods, before school, after school and during field trips.

Grand Traverse Academy is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage to cell phones or other electronic devices.

Suggestions and Complaints

We view parents and students as partners in education. GTA staff members are open to ideas that will help us improve our school.

All suggestions and complaints should be of a constructive nature and be in line with the safe, loved, and learning mission of the school. Parents are always welcome to call the school to speak with a leader or to call them directly, but we do ask that you bring the issue to the attention of your child's teacher first, as they are often the people who will have the most direct information available or be most able to assist you with your concern.

Staff members are open to the opinions of students who would like to contribute in a positive way. Students may approach appropriate staff members directly and offer suggestions. If the suggestion cannot be dealt with at that level, the staff member will relay the suggestion to school administration. Students and parents are welcome to submit a suggestion in writing to school administration, and their suggestions will be given proper consideration. They may do this by emailing any of the school leaders.

Student Records

Parents or legal guardians have the right to review records maintained by Grand Traverse Academy for their children. Please call the office for an appointment with a principal. Student record information will not be released except, 1) by written consent of parent or guardian; 2) when information is used, with parent consent, in a school directory; or 3) under circumstances as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Visiting School

Parents are encouraged to visit GTA and their child's classroom throughout the year. Appointments are not necessary but we ask that you check in at the front office prior to going to your child's classroom and put on a visitor name tag. Additionally, there may be times where a visit would interfere with the ongoing learning of all students and you may be asked to schedule a different time. We also ask that no pets, such as dogs, are brought into the school due to allergic reactions that some staff or students may experience from such visits.

Volunteers

Research has shown that parent involvement is crucial to a child's success in school. We welcome, encourage and appreciate the time and support of all the parents who have given to our children. In addition to Family Council, volunteer opportunities at GTA include, but are not limited to:

- Classrooms: Listening to students read, helping students with projects or helping teachers prepare for projects.
- Office Work: Helping in the office by making copies and doing other paperwork.
- Homework: Doing work at home and bringing it back to school or sending it with their student.

Special Education

In 2010, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) required that each local district make public its process to identify a Specific Learning Disability (MDE Update 3/16/17). The MDE SLD Criteria, outlined the various options districts may select in order to determine the presence of a SLD.

Northwest Education Services (formerly TBAISD) has established Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses (PSW) guidelines as an interim Specific Learning Disability (SLD) identification process in response to changes in federal and state law, while providing continual support for the transition to a Multi-Tiered System of Support and use of Response to Intervention framework for SLD identification within the local districts. GTA will use PSW, Rti or a combination of these processes to identify SLD.

Universal Accommodations

At GTA, we believe that all students are capable of learning; our high expectations and individualizing help their learning. Due to this and our other core beliefs, teachers often provide a wide range of accommodations for all students without the need for any individualized plans or formalized support. To give an idea of what these supports may include, a short list of some examples has been provided below.

- Frequent reminders
- Preferential seating
- Home communication (planner & email)
- Small group instruction
- Predictable schedule
- Frequent check-ins
- Rephrasing
- Ability to make corrections
- Alternative location for work completion
- Visual schedule that is predictable

Student Allergies

If documented allergies, such as environmental or food allergies, exist, such that they are life-threatening, support may be obtained through a documented plan. An evaluation may be requested by either a parent or a teacher.

In order to ensure that we are meeting our mission of all students being safe, loved and learning, it is beneficial for us to know the exact extent of any allergy a student may have and the exact level of precautions that need to be taken as well as specific procedures to follow should accidental exposure occur. For us to ensure this is happening, we will implement the necessary procedures needed to maintain safety for any child. Direct contact and communication with your child's doctor will help us to best determine these procedures and proper response. To make this easiest for all families, a note from your doctor with the information listed below would be helpful. Or, to make it easier on you and your family, you can sign a release form giving us permission to call and talk with the doctor's office directly. Information that would help us maintain the safety of your child is as follows:

- Student name
- Doctor and practice name
- Allergen
- Specific needs as outlined by the doctor to ensure the safety of the student
- Signs to watch for should exposure occur
- Any applicable responses should the student show these signs of exposure

Curriculum and Assessment

Grading, Assessment & Reporting Student Progress

Assessment of student progress will take several forms at GTA:

- Academics, character education and conferences

- M-STEP, a state-mandated test for students in grades 3-7
- Northwest Evaluation Association’s (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) achievement tests for students in grades K-11 in the fall, winter and spring
- Reading and math tests several times a year for students in grades 1-6
- Social Emotional Learning assessments may be given to inform teachers and parents of the whole child’s needs
- We report to students and parents regularly by alternating academic report cards, character education report cards and conferences. On our report cards we use a grading scale of:

Academic Grades	Character Report Card Grades
A - 90-100%	3 - Consistently Meets Standards
B - 80-89%	2 - Sometimes Meets Standards
C - 73-79%	1 - Rarely Meets Standards
N - Not There Yet	

Our goal is that all of our students have competent learning in our curriculum. We do not count something as learned until it is at a level of competence. We also want each student to reach the “A” level of quality on a project at least once per year.

Parents are Informed

Parents are informed of their child’s progress in school through four academic report cards, four character education report cards and two conferences per year. Character building is an important part of our curriculum, to help here at school and in their home environment. Students are taught Respect, Optimism, Getting Along, Work Ethic, Responsibility and Kindness.

Achievement Testing

It is important that all schools regularly measure students’ progress in learning. This has been shown by the Effective Schools Research to be one of the most important things we can do to make sure we have high student achievement. Here are the ways that we measure student learning at Grand Traverse Academy:

1. **Teacher-developed or textbook chapter and unit tests.** All teachers routinely give assessments to their students on various lessons and units that they are teaching. These assessments are graded and make up the report card grade that parents receive.
2. **Reading tests.** All students in grades 1-6 are tested several times per year with the F&P reading assessment. These are tests of reading fluency and comprehension that tell at which grade level an individual student can currently read and comprehend successfully. These results are reported to parents on our report cards.
3. **Northwest Evaluation Association.** Students in grades K-11 take the computerized MAP test three times each year and we are able to measure academic growth in reading and math. We are also able to show progress school wide using this test. It is a very effective test for schools to use, not only because of the national standards, but because the results are available right away.
4. **M-STEP test.** This is the state required test for students in grades 3 - 7 in various subject areas.

5. **Cooperative and individual projects** in various subjects are frequently assigned and assessed by teachers. These are designed for students to demonstrate learning within our curriculum.

Our parents appreciate that we do not spend all year preparing for one test. They're also pleased that their children are not experiencing a lot of pressure to perform satisfactorily on only one test. GTA teachers and parents consider the reading tests and growth shown on the NWEA to be the most important measures of achievement. We are happy to discuss with you the measurements of achievement that we have chosen and to show you samples at any time.

Discipline Philosophy and Practice

At all times we will treat students kindly and respectfully and work to have a warm relationship. At Grand Traverse Academy we have one school rule for all students and adults within the school. That rule is, "Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do." That is exactly what we want to teach our students.

We do the right thing as we go through our daily lives, not because someone is going to give us a reward, or because we will be punished if we do not, but because it is the right thing to do. It will make us happier and those around us happier. Doing the right thing helps promote better learning.

At our school we believe that talking it through will solve all problems. We teach students a process for talking through problems that promotes self-evaluation for improved behavior. We have as a primary goal the prevention of all discipline problems by developing good relationships with our students and creating classrooms that are need-fulfilling for students.

If a student does disrupt learning, we will:

1. Ask the student to please do his/her work in another area of the room until he/she is ready to rejoin the group. Whenever the student decides to rejoin the group is fine, as long as there is no further disruption to learning.
2. If that is not effective, the student will be asked to please go to another classroom (which has been arranged ahead of time) until he/she is ready to join his/her regular classroom. Again, whenever the student decides to rejoin the group is fine, as long as there is no further disruption to learning.
3. If the student is disruptive in the hosting classroom, or the student's teacher believes the disruption is severe, then the student is asked to take a break from the classroom with GTA's behavior interventionist. They will talk with the child in order to help the student calm down and feel happier. Once the student has reflected on their choices and they and the staff member have discussed a plan on how to make better choices, the student will return to their classroom.
4. If at any time there is violence or the threat of violence, there will be a referral to the principal.
5. Parents will be contacted if their child has been referred to the principal.
6. If the incident is severe enough to warrant a suspension (violence, threats or repeated disruption of learning), we use a system of progressive suspension.

Specific Behavioral Policies

1. **Swearing.** Appropriate language is essential in forming positive relationships and is in line with the character we strive to instill in our students. Students who choose to use inappropriate language will be asked to work in the office for up to a full school day, depending on the age of the student and the severity or frequency of the violation.
2. **Physical Altercations.** Physical altercations between students are not in line with maintaining the safety of everyone in our building. Students who choose physical actions against anyone else will receive either an in school, or out of school suspension based on the severity of the incident.
3. **Theft.** Theft of another student's or teacher's personal belongings do not exhibit the core character that we work to instill in our students. Each situation will be considered independently, and the consequences may vary depending on the age of the student and the severity of the theft. Consequences may, but are not limited to simple discussions and restorative practices, replacing the stolen item, or out of school suspension.

Progressive Suspension

First suspension – the student goes home for the remainder of that day and also the next day

Second suspension – the student goes home; two-day suspension

Third suspension – the student goes home; three-day suspension and meeting with parents and school staff

State of Michigan Law Regarding School Safety for Students in Grades 6 (or age 12) and Above

Physical Assault against Another Student

If a student enrolled in grade 6 or above commits a physical assault at school against another student, the student shall be suspended or expelled for up to 180 days. "At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored event whether or not it is held on school premises. "Physical assault" means intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

Physical Assault by Student against a School Employee, Volunteer or Contractor

If a student enrolled in grade 6 or above commits a physical assault at school against a person employed by or engaged as a volunteer or contractor by the school board, the student shall be expelled from the school permanently.

Verbal Assault or Threat by Student against a School Employee, Volunteer or Contractor

If a student enrolled in grade 6 or above commits a verbal assault at school against a person employed by or engaged as a volunteer or contractor by the school board, the student shall be suspended or expelled for a period of time determined by the school board or its designee.

Weapon Possession

If a dangerous weapon is found in the possession of a student while the student is in attendance at a school or a school activity or while the student is in route to or from school on a bus, the superintendent of the school district, or his or her designee, immediately shall report that finding to the student's parent or legal guardian and a local law enforcement agency. The student shall be expelled. ("Dangerous Weapon" includes firearms, knives, iron bars and brass knuckles.)

Persistent Disobedience

A school principal or another designated school district official may authorize or order the suspension or expulsion from school of a student guilty of persistent disobedience.

Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy

Drug-Free School Policy

GTA will take a firm disciplinary stance for drug related incidents at school. At the same time, we recognize that some students may require drug treatment information and access to drug treatment programs in order to truly become drug free. Disciplinary consequences may be individualized according to previous incidents and the student's age. Please note that an officer will likely be called to the school and the incident may be referred to the prosecutor's office.

Consequences for Possession/Use of Marijuana, Alcohol or Other Illicit Drugs

First Offense - Five-day suspension; substance abuse program

Second Offense - Ten-day suspension; substance abuse program

Third Offense - Expulsion

Distribution/Sale of Marijuana, Alcohol or Other Illicit Drugs

Expulsion

Consequences of Possession/Use of Tobacco/Vape

First Offense-possession: Three-day out of school suspension

First Offense-sale or distribution: Five-day out of school suspension

Second Offense-either possession or sale/distribution: Ten-day out of school suspension

Third Offense: Expulsion

Smoking

State of Michigan law prevents anyone from smoking or vaping on school property. No smoking or vaping is allowed in parked cars or during carpool. Please extinguish cigarettes before entering our parking lot/driveways.

Harassment

Harassment is a violation of state and federal law as well as Federal Charter School policy. It can take the form of verbal or physical threatening and conduct of a racial or sexual nature. Such behavior will not be tolerated at GTA. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, vulgar or obscene comments and/or jokes, unwelcome hugging or touching, referring to someone in demeaning terms, starting or spreading demeaning rumors about the life of another individual.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

All parents and guardians of students under 18 have the right, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, to examine the official records, files and data of the school district which pertain to their student. Procedures for examination and hearings to challenge anything in the record may be made available upon request.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The Grand Traverse Academy (“Academy”) does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, height, weight, marital status, or any other legally protected characteristic, in its education programs or activities in accordance with federal and state civil rights laws, including, but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. This policy applies to employees, students and the general public.

Inquiries regarding the application of, or the Academy’s compliance with, this nondiscrimination policy may be directed to the Academy’s civil rights coordinator:

Michelle Floering, Superintendent
Grand Traverse Academy, 1245 Hammond Road East, Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 995-0665

Notice of the Academy’s policy on nondiscrimination shall be available in the school, published in any Academy statement regarding the availability of educational services, and in student and staff handbooks.

Contact Information

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