



# Parent and Student Handbook

## 2023-2024

215 Airport Pulling Road N. Naples, FL, 34104

**Phone: (239) 784-1539**

**Fax (239) 263-4443**

**[www.gccas.org](http://www.gccas.org)**

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## **Welcome!**

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South of Naples represents a microcosm of the community-at-large that includes families from different cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. The Gulf Coast Charter Academy South School family learns, lives, and works harmoniously based on a foundation of mutual respect, without compromising their beliefs or their identities. Moreover, Gulf Coast Charter Academy South celebrates diversity in a multicultural environment and champions the cause of excellence and equity!

**FORZA Education Management LLC**



**FORZAedu.com**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Mark McCabe  
Helen Deitrich  
Gwen Dapore

### **GCCAS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

Jose Rubio – Regional Vice President  
Will Staros - Regional Vice President  
Brittany Fangmeier- Principal  
Michele Guettler- Assistant Principal  
Erin Farina – Assistant Principal

\* Board Meetings are held as scheduled by the Board of Directors. Meeting days, dates and times are posted in the lobby and on monthly calendars at: [WWW.GCCAS.ORG](http://WWW.GCCAS.ORG)

# **Section 1: School Information**

## **1. A. About Gulf Coast Charter Academy South**

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South (GCCAS) is a Florida non-profit corporation. GCCAS has entered into a charter contract with the School Board of Collier County, Florida to operate a charter school in Collier County focused on STEM education. The GCCAS Board of Directors has final authority to conduct oversight and set policies and procedures for GCCAS. The Principal of GCCAS is responsible for day-to-day operations and employment decisions.

## **1. B. School Hours**

Main Office	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Classroom Teachers	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Students	7:50 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
Tardy Bell	8:00 a.m.
Breakfast	7:30 a.m. - 7:50 a.m.
Dismissal Times	3:15 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.

## **1. C. Contact Information**

GCCAS Telephone number: (239) 784-1539  
GCCAS Fax 239.263.4443  
GCCAS Website - [www.GCCAS.org](http://www.GCCAS.org)  
FORZA Education Management – (727) 642-9319  
FORZA Education Management Website [www.FORZAedu.com](http://www.FORZAedu.com)

## **1. D. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Mission Statement**

The **Mission** of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South is to foster pride in academic achievement for all students, coupled with a concerted effort focused on the ELL (English Language Learner) population, through the STEM Model (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) learning opportunities, resulting in higher student learning outcomes, concurrently with teaching lifelong fitness and developing the students' creative ability. We strive to provide the students with an environment to learn and be successful in a safe and orderly school.

## **1. E. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Vision**

The **Vision** of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South is to establish an authentic learning community and environment, which will lead to greater academic achievement for all students. While authentic learning is a process that elevates all students to higher degrees of learning, our focus will be on English Language Learners, (which represents one out of five students in the State of Florida) using a STEM approach.

## 1. F. About the Handbook

This is the Parent and Student Handbook for Gulf Coast Charter Academy. It is the responsibility of each student and parent to read, understand, and abide by this handbook.

This handbook is to inform students and parents of the policies, procedures, and organizations of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South. Throughout the Parent/*Student Handbook* the term, “parent(s)” includes legal guardian(s) or other persons standing in loco parentis. All policies in this handbook are subject to change by the GCCAS school board or school administration. Parents and students will be notified when such changes occur, and an updated handbook will be posted on our website at [www.GGCAS.org](http://www.GGCAS.org).

This Handbook complies with the terms of the charter contract, as well as applicable state and federal laws.

## 1. G. Blue Zone School

Gulf Coast Charter Academy is a Blue Zone School, which promotes a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise. As such, soda, bubble gum, chewing gum, candy, and related items are not permitted.

## 1. H. Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Student Records

The revised Family Rights and Privacy Act became a Federal law in November 1974.

The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of student educational records. Without your prior consent, only you and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interests will have access to your child's educational records. In special instances, you may waive this right of access to allow other agencies working with your child to have access to those records.

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to a student who is 18 years old or attends a postsecondary institution. Prior consent is not required for schools to disclose information from an eligible student's education record to the parents if the eligible student is a dependent for tax purposes under the Internal Revenue Service rules. These rights are:

- *The right to inspect and review the student's education records* within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school Executive Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.



- *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 the school to amend a record should write to the school Executive Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be 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 advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
  
- *The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.* FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions: school officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. Upon request, our schools disclose education records without consent from officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
  
- \* *Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory" information* such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. The media permission form sent home at the beginning of each school year gives parents an opportunity to instruct the school not to share any directory information about their child or allows them to request that certain information not be shared. Please be sure to make your wishes regarding directory information known to your child's school. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. At GCCAS, we notify you of these issues in our student handbooks.

For more information on the federal **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, visit the U.S. Department of Education's website at [www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html).

## 1. I. Jessica Lunsford Act

This law went into effect on September 1, 2005, requiring a Level 2 screening (fingerprinting and FBI background check) of any non-instructional school district personnel or contractual personnel who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present, as well as those who have direct contact with students or who have access to or control school funds. "Contractual

personnel” has been defined as any vendor, individual, or entity under contract with the school board.

## **Section 2: Parent Code of Conduct**

Parent Responsibilities:

1. Keep in regular communication with the school concerning their child's conduct and academic progress.
2. Notify the school of any changes of address, phone numbers, and emergency contact numbers.
3. Ensure that their child is in daily attendance and/or report and explain absences to school personnel.
4. Notify the school if a family is relocating or if there is a family emergency.
5. Provide their child with resources needed to complete class work.
6. Ensure their child is well groomed, neat, and clean.
7. Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which negatively affects their child or other children of the school community.
8. Discuss course selections, report cards, and work assignments with their child.
9. Ensure the good health of their child.
10. Foster a positive attitude toward the school.
11. Practice and encourage the school's adopted character traits and Blue Zone practices.
12. Exercise oversight and supervision of their child at school events to ensure their child is conducting himself/herself responsibly at all events.
13. Behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect.

**Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on GCCAS property thereafter.**

### **2. A. Drug Free Zone**

#### **2. A. 1. Drug Use**

GCCAS is a drug free Zone. While on GCCAS's premises or related activities off GCCAS's premises, no adult may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs on the property is only permitted if it does not impair an individual's ability to act in a safe manner, which does not endanger other individuals.

#### **2. A. 2. Medical Marijuana Policy**

The school is a drug free zone. As such, the school does not allow its employees or visitors to consume marijuana before, during, or after school hours based upon a medical marijuana exception., at school

### 2. A. 3. Tobacco/ Vaping Use

In keeping with the intent of GCCAS to provide a safe and healthy environment, and in compliance with the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act, smoking/ vaping is prohibited anywhere on campus, on school-sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity. This policy applies equally to all employees and visitors.

### 2. B. Abusive Language

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express this frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At **NO** time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff or students.

### 2. C. Threats

Threats of any kind towards employees, children, other parents, or adults associated with GCCAS, will not be tolerated and GCCAS will not sit idly by while threats are made. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and the perpetrator will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, GCCAS will not assume the risk of a repeated offense. While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of GCCAS or the parents of other GCCAS students, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate and are prohibited.

### 2. D. Physical/ Verbal Punishment

GCCAS does not support or condone corporal punishment of children, therefore such acts are not permitted anywhere on campus. Moreover, while verbal reprimands may be appropriate at times and made in the correct manner, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher(s) and seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from reprimanding or disciplining any student that is not their own child, either physically or verbally. If a parent should witness another student behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher, principal, assistant principals, or the Regional VPs. Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss the other parent's child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher, principal, assistant principals, or the Regional Vice Presidents who will address the issue with the other parent accordingly. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and administration are prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled at GCCAS have privacy rights and

are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting GCCAS.

## 2. E. Safety Policies

Parents are required to always follow safety procedures. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interests of the employees, children, and associates of GCCAS. Please be particularly mindful of GCCAS entrance procedures. Please do not allow any individual to follow you inside the building. Immediately report any breaches to the principal, assistant principals, or the Regional Vice Presidents.

## 2. F. Parent Grievance Policy

If parents disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when parents believe that a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps. The parents may discontinue the procedure at any step.

- **Step 1.** Communicate with the classroom teacher via telephone, email, and or send a note discussing the concern. Email addresses are available at the front desk and on the school web page.
- **Step 2.** Schedule a Parent Teacher Conference with the classroom teacher to discuss the concern further if needed. At this meeting, establish next steps or goals and the process for follow up, as necessary. For unresolved concerns, please follow Step 3.
- **Step 3.** Schedule an appointment with the school administration.
- **Step 4.** Contact or schedule an appointment with FORZA Education Management.
- **Step 5.** Submit your concerns in writing to the Gulf Coast Charter Academy South School Board of Directors and the concern will be discussed at the next Board Meeting. Please seal your concern in an envelope and deliver it to the office manager. You can also attend the Board Meeting and address the Board during the Public Comment opportunity. Note: No individual Board Member can address your concerns per Florida State Law. The issue must be addressed by the full Board.

Parents may also, at any time, request to have an item placed on the Board agenda. The parents must put the request in writing to the principal at least twenty-four hours before a Board Meeting. Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through discussion and understanding of mutual problems can parents and educators develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to keep the home-school partnership strong.

## 2. G. Visitors

It will be our pleasure to have visitors on campus to see our beautiful facility, our students and staff engaged in learning activities, to participate in school activities, and to volunteer. However, visitors, including parents, are **NOT** permitted to go to their child's classroom unannounced during

school hours, as this disrupts the classroom's educational process. For the safety and protection of all students, visitors (including parents) must present a valid Florida Driver's License and be checked in by the Front Office. Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly environment for all students.

## 2. H. Volunteer Program

Parents or guardians are required to volunteer at the school a minimum of 20 hours per year. Single-Parent households are required to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per year. The main office will be tracking parent volunteer hours. Please sign in at the main office to receive credit for your hours.

Please remember that for your child to be re-enrolled in Gulf Coast Charter Academy South for the following school year, you must have all your volunteer hours completed before the last day of school.

It is Gulf Coast Charter Academy South goal to provide a safe environment for students and staff while encouraging parents or guardians to work as school volunteers. To achieve this, volunteers shall be screened based on (1) the level of direct contact they may have with students and (2) the types of duties they may perform. Outside agencies that provide volunteers that work with students are required to screen their volunteers at a level consistent with this policy and provide evidence of insurance pursuant to board policy and/or practices.

All volunteer applicants must complete an online Volunteer Application, <https://www.gccas.org/volunteer>, submit their government ID to the front office at school, and receive approval before being assigned as a volunteer. In accordance with F.S. 943.043151, all school volunteers must be checked against the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Predator/Offender database. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South reserves the right to deny placement to an applicant volunteer based on any results not in accordance with Gulf Coast Charter Academy South standards or to revoke the volunteer's clearance based on subsequent information. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South shall maintain all volunteer application materials and records in a confidential manner consistent with Chapter 119 (Public Records). All files and other records maintained pursuant to this policy shall be stored in a central location.

The "Volunteer Level" provides the minimum guidelines for determining the documentation and background check required. Each volunteer will be assigned to one of the following levels:

1. **Volunteer Level I:** A volunteer who has direct contact with students, within the presence of a school employee or is assigned duties such as an office assistant that may not directly involve students.
2. **Volunteer Level II:** A volunteer who has direct one on one contact with students outside of the presence of a school employee except as noted above. This is the level required to chaperone field trips.

**Minimum Volunteer Level II screening requirements:** Same as Level I (complete an online Volunteer Application, submit government ID to the front office at school plus fingerprints).

**PLEASE NOTE**

Volunteers requiring fingerprints will receive an email from [volunteer@colierschools.com](mailto:volunteer@colierschools.com) once level I volunteer application is complete and the volunteer authorization packet has been submitted by the school.

Volunteers will need to use the field print code and pay the third-party vendor for fingerprinting at the time of registration.

**\*\*No children under the age of 18 are permitted to accompany a volunteer anytime in the school or during field trips.**

**2. I. Appointment of a Special Magistrate**

The “Parental Rights in Education” law, also known as House Bill 1557 (2022), sets forth specific procedures for complaints or disputes falling into those categories detailed in Section 1001.42(8)(c)1.-7., Florida Statutes, and on the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate” form published by the Florida Department of Education and available here: <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-9669/dps-2022-158b.pdf>. This includes any complaints or disputes related to the following:

- Concerns over procedures for notifying a student’s parent if there is a change in the student’s services or monitoring related to the student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school’s ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student.
- Concerns related to any school policies or procedures that are perceived to discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting their student’s mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.
- Concerns over classroom instruction related to sexual orientation or gender identity, which is prohibited in grades K-3 and must be age-appropriate for all other grades.
- Concerns over student support services training developed or provided to school personnel that is believed to be out of compliance with guidelines, standards, and frameworks established by the Department of Education.
- Concerns over parental notification at the beginning of the school year about healthcare services offered by the School, including the ability to opt-out or withhold consent for any such services.
- Concerns over whether the School provided a well-being questionnaire or health screening form to the parent and sought their permission before it was administered to the student. This only applies to students in grades K-3.

Parents and guardians have the right to notify the Principal of any concerns related to the above areas. The Principal or designee must provide a response to the parent within seven (7) days of receiving the complaint. If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Principal or designee within

seven (7) days, the parent may present the dispute to the School District. The School District must attempt to resolve the dispute within thirty (30) days. If the School District is unable to resolve the dispute, a parent may request the appointment of a special magistrate utilizing the “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate” form linked above. For purposes of this policy, the term “days” means business days and excludes state, federal and school holidays.

## **Section 3- Student Guidelines**

### **3. A. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

It is the intent of this section to inform students of their freedom allowable under law commensurate with the school's responsibility for student health, safety, and welfare. The rights and responsibilities presented reflect the opportunity for dialogue, debate, and discussion by our students for greater opportunities to serve themselves and society. Nowhere is it stated in this document, nor even implied, that the school should relinquish its authority and responsibility. Within every school, the Principal inevitably has the responsibility and authority for maintaining the orderly educational process.

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

1. Attend all classes and be prompt.
2. Be prepared for class with appropriate working materials.
3. Be respectful of individuals' property and rights.
4. Conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.
5. Be well groomed, clean, and neat.
6. Be responsible for their own behavior, conduct, and the consequences of their actions.
  - a. Report to school authorities any problem, circumstance, or condition, including, but not limited to, illegal, dangerous, or unsafe behaviors involving themselves or others, which affect, in any way, their health, safety and/or security or the health, safety and/or security of others whether on or off campus.
  - b. Not ignore what they have seen, experienced, or witnessed and should adhere to the message: "See it, Say it, Don't spread it, Report it!"
7. Abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the school, and/or individual classroom teacher.
8. Practice and encourage the school's adopted character traits and Blue Zone practices.
9. Students have the responsibility to exercise self-discipline in the classroom and on the campus so that the rights of all are respected and the efforts of all can be directed toward the stimulation of learning.
10. Students have the responsibility to obey school regulations.

#### **No student shall:**

1. Occupy any school building or property with intent to deprive others of its use or where

- the effect thereof is to deprive others of its use.
2. Block the doorway or corridor of any school building or property so as to deprive others of access thereto.
  3. Prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or continued functioning of any class, meeting, assembly, or activity on the school grounds.
  4. Prevent students from attending a class or school activity.
  5. Block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on the school grounds.
  6. Disrupt, make noise, or act in any other manner so as to interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct the class or any school activity.
  7. Disrupt a class or any other function of the school.

### 3. B. Personal Property

- Students are to leave their toys, games, family heirlooms, sports equipment (such as basketballs or footballs), rollerblades, scooters, etc. at home. The school provides everything needed for the classroom, physical education, and recess.
- Students should not bring large amounts of money to school.
- Under no circumstances should a child be allowed to bring knives, bullets, fireworks, spike bracelets, rubber bands, China stars, "peashooters," BB guns, firearms (real or replicas), toy guns, chains, matches, lighters, or any other hazardous objects to school. Law enforcement officers will be called to investigate violations.

### 3. C. Attendance

If a child is to succeed in school, they must attend regularly. Each of the 180 days of the school year is important to your child's success. Chapter 232.10, Florida Law, states "*Each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age shall be responsible for such child's school attendance as required under the provision of Florida School Law.*"

Poor attendance or excessive tardiness may result in failing grades.

- Students have the responsibility to take advantage of their educational opportunity by attending all classes daily and promptly.
- Students have the responsibility to provide the school with an adequate explanation with appropriate documentation indicating the reason for an absence.
- Students have the responsibility to request make-up assignments and inquire as to the deadline for completion upon their return to school.

Students should be in their homerooms and seated by 7:50am. Students who arrive after 8:00am will be considered tardy.

It is the parents' responsibility to **call the school office, (239) 784-1539, between 7:30 am and 9:00 a m** on the day the student will not be attending school. A note from a parent/guardian to explain an absence must be submitted to the office upon the student's return. A doctor's note is required if the student is absent three (3) or more consecutive days.



In accordance with F.S. 1003.21 and 1003.31, school administrators have an obligation under State law to enforce compulsory school attendance laws.

1. When a student accumulates **five** (5) days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, the principal or designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the parent or guardian by telephone to discuss the reasons for the absences and shall document such contact.
2. When a student accumulates **seven** (7) days of absences, other than out-of-school suspensions, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. The letter/records of absences will include information about Truancy Court.
3. When a student is absent **ten** (10) or more days, whether excused or unexcused, a record of absences will promptly be mailed to the parent/guardian of the student. If appropriate, a parent conference will be required and at the discretion of the principal or designees, the parent or guardian may be required to verify absences with appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's visits, etc.). A student found to be habitually truant will be referred to Truancy Court.

### 3. B. 1. Excused Absences

1. An accident/illness of the student or a medical or dental appointment; a **doctor's note** must be submitted at the office when student returns.
2. A death in the student's immediate family.
3. An observance of an established religious holiday; documentation of the religious affiliation of the student may be required by GCCAS.
4. A subpoena by a law enforcement agency or a required court appearance.

### 3. B. 2. Unexcused Absences

1. Contribute to truancy of the student.
2. Are caused by an out-of-school suspension. A student suspended out of school is responsible for all work missed. The teacher will decide if the work missed will count as a "0," or will be made up for credit or partial credit.
3. The administration will notify the district of excessive unexcused absences.

The school will contact student services to refer the student who is exhibiting a pattern of non-attendance. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, a Child Study Team shall implement the following:

- A. Frequent attempts at communication between Gulf Coast Charter Academy South and the family.
- B. Attendance contacts.
- C. Evaluation for alternative education programs.

### 3. C. Tardiness

A student is tardy when the student arrives after the beginning of the school day or when the student is not in their assigned seat or station when the school day begins. Students should be in their homerooms and seated by **7:50 am**. Students who arrive after 8:00 am MUST sign in at the Main Office.

A student's excessive unexcused tardiness will be reported to the district.

#### 3. C. 1 Excused Tardiness:

A student will be considered excused ONLY if a parent/guardian personally escorts the child to the front desk and has a note to excuse tardiness. The reasons for excused tardiness are as follows:

1. Doctor's appointments with notes from the doctor/dentist, etc.
2. Court notices mandating student's appearance.

Excused tardiness will not count toward the student's tardy record.

#### 3. C. 2. Unexcused Tardiness:

Alarm clock failures, car trouble, inclement weather conditions, etc. will be considered unexcused. Unexcused tardiness will count toward the student's attendance records. Your children must be in school and **ON TIME** by state law.

Students have the right to make up class work in case of any absence. Students shall not be suspended for "lateness," "tardiness," or truancy. Other forms of discipline alternatives should be applied to these violations. F.S. 1006.09(9).

### 3. D. Drop off and Dismissal

\*\*Parents must maintain communication with their child's classroom teacher notifying them how their child will go home on a regular basis. If your child follows a regular or irregular pattern, please make it clear in writing. Please try to keep a regular routine of dismissal procedure(s) for your child. If a change needs to be made in case of an emergency, please notify the office as soon as possible. If it is a last-minute emergency change, please call the office (239) 784-1539 no later than 2:30 p.m.

### 3. D. 1. Drop- Off

Students transported to school by parents may not arrive earlier than 7:30 AM. There will be no supervision until this time. In the “Car Rider Line,” please remember to be courteous to faculty and staff. Moreover, it is YOUR responsibility to be patient and vigilant of students as they are walking to their cars. Cell phone use is STRICTLY PROHIBITED in the car line.

Students are dropped off at the building entrance of the school, where parents will wish them well and send them to the cafeteria until class begins. Parents may not wait in the entrance with their children, as there is not space for everyone, and the time before school lends itself to social time for the children with their peers.

Cars may not be in the bus zone (front of the school) as that is only for loading and unloading the bus. Car riders are to arrive by 7:50 a.m. For the safety of children, traffic flow will be restricted to one lane at morning drop-off.

### 3. D. 2. Dismissal Procedure

Please be patient during the first few weeks of school during dismissal. It typically takes a few weeks for teachers and parents to get accustomed to the new dismissal procedures. We believe in safety first and want to ensure that students are being dismissed properly and safely.

Parents who need to pick up their students during the school day must report to the office and sign them out. The office will send for the student. **Students will not be released after 2:30 p.m.** Please inform the office if you are planning to pick up your child early. **Students will ONLY be released to those listed by the parent on the child’s emergency card. Picture identification will be required by anyone picking up a child.**

All transportation changes require notification by a parent/guardian of the school and be directed to the Office Staff, who will notify the teacher.

### 3. E. Car Riders:

1. Parents are to use the car line entering from Radio Road and proceed to the back of the school to drop them off and pick up students by car.
2. Staff will assist students arriving and/or departing by car. Students designated as car riders will be loaded into their vehicles and dismissed through the car line.
3. Drivers are asked to display *the Placard i.e., car tag*, listing the student’s name(s) on the front windshield. Drivers who do not have this placard properly displayed will be required to go to the office for an identification check (be sure to have your picture ID with you). Your child will be released once identification has been established.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Please note that those picking up their students in the car line may NOT arrive on campus prior to 2:45 P.M.

In addition, parents are NOT permitted to BLOCK any local businesses during dismissal (entrance to Storage facility and the intersection to Dunkin Donuts). Failure to abide may result in ticketing by law enforcement and/or their vehicle towed by such business at the vehicle owners' expense.

### 3. G. Buses

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South offers bus service on a limited basis. Parents must complete and submit a bus application to the Administration by the stated due date.

Buses will be dismissed at 3:09 pm.

A student who misses their assigned bus at dismissal shall promptly go to the office and report to the secretary. The student's parents will be contacted immediately to arrange transportation. If students are not picked up in a timely manner, they will be placed in After Care and the parents will be charged for said service.

It is important that students realize that the same higher standards of conduct are expected on the bus as in all other aspects of school life. Students are asked to sit facing the front of the bus and talk quietly. Students receiving bus referrals will be disciplined. Repeated referrals will result in suspension from the bus.

Students may only ride on their assigned bus; they may not change buses.

Phones are to be turned off and in bags, they are not to be used on school buses.

### SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE

<b>1<sup>st</sup> offense</b>	<b>Verbal warning and parents will be contacted.</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> offense</b>	<b>Not permitted to ride the bus for 1-3 days.</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> offense</b>	<b>Not permitted to ride the bus for 3-5 days.</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> offense</b>	<b>Suspended from riding the school bus for the remainder of the year</b>

### 3.H. Rainy Day Dismissal

Rainy Day Dismissal -Based on School Board Procedures, we use the 30-30 rule. This dictates that if lightning is within 3 miles of the school building, all students will need to remain indoors or be moved indoors even if dismissal has already begun. Lightening within 3 miles requires us to suspend releasing students for dismissal (car or bus) until the danger passes.

### 3. I. Early Checkout Procedure

Pre-approved and Emergency checkout procedure: We strongly discourage parents from picking their child up early during the school day. In the event a student must leave early, the parent must make the request in person in the front office.

During school hours the front office will permit a child to leave school ONLY in custody of a parent/ guardian or person listed on emergency contact card with a valid photo ID.

#### 3. I.1. Excused Early Checkout

Excused early dismissal may include the following:

1. Doctor/Dentist Appointment, with note provided.
2. Court appearance (subpoena required).

#### 3. I.2. Unexcused Early Checkout

May include the following:

- Forgotten items (for instance, books, lunch, money, homework, projects).
- Violation of dress code (to obtain appropriate dress).

### 3. J. Early Dismissal Days

- The Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Board has provided early dismissal days so that staff may engage in professional development activities. Teacher planning days and early dismissal days may not be the same as the Collier County School District. Please refer to the month-to-month calendar for scheduled early dismissal and teacher planning days.
- Students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. and After-School care will be available for those enrolled.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the “going home” procedures with their children on these Early Dismissal days.

### 3. K. Aftercare

After Care is offered from 3:50 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The cost for After Care is \$11.00 per day per student. Registration with a credit card/checking account withdrawal payment method is mandatory when signing up for the After Care Program. An upcharge of \$5.00 per student will be applied on early dismissal days.

All fees **MUST** be paid by **FRIDAY** of each week the services are rendered. Tuition is expected based on the student’s enrollment and will be billed weekly to the student’s account for the days of attendance. **A late payment fee of \$25 will be applied to student accounts on Monday for payments that are not made by 6:00 p.m. Friday of the previous week.** Fees can be paid with

Master Card, Visa, Debit Card, Checking Account Withdraw, Money Order, or Personal Check.  
**NO CASH PLEASE!**

### 3. K. 1. Overdue Balances:

Families that become overdue on balances will be subjected to consequences as listed below:

Aftercare – **BALANCES OVER \$100** per student. Students will be suspended from After Care until the balance is paid in full.

### 3. L. Dress Code

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for one another and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days. The Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Administration reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes to them during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines and every student **MUST** wear a school uniform. GCCAS will start to phase out maroon and yellow uniform shirts over the next 2 years. Students may wear the current colors, until the uniform officially changes in 2024.

#### **GCCAS UNIFORMS CAN BE ORDERED AT**

<https://www.gccas.org/dress-code>

<b><u>SHIRTS</u></b>	<p>K – 5<sup>th</sup> students <b>MUST</b> wear the short or long sleeve school polo shirt with the GCCAS logo Monday – Thursday. Spirit shirts may be worn on Fridays.</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> students <b>MUST</b> wear the short or long sleeve school polo shirt with the GCCAS logo Monday – Thursday. Spirit shirts may be worn on Fridays.</p> <p>These are the only shirts permitted to be worn in school. Shirts are to be <b><u>tucked</u></b> in at all times. All undershirts <b>MUST</b> be solid in black, navy blue, or white.</p>
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<b><u>SWEATSHIRTS</u></b>	<p><b><u>ONLY</u></b> GCCAS spirit sweatshirts will be worn inside the building in cooler temperatures (Available for purchase).</p> <p>K – 5<sup>th</sup> will wear blue 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> will wear maroon or blue</p> <p>Hoods are not to be worn on any student’s head on <b><u>campus at any time before, during, or after school.</u></b></p> <p>Other sweaters and outer jackets, coats, hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens <u>must be removed upon entering the building.</u> In severe weather these may be used during outdoor activities as deemed appropriate.</p>
<b><u>BOTTOMS</u></b>	<p><b><u>BOYS - ONLY</u></b> uniform pants or shorts in Khaki, black or blue are acceptable.</p> <p><b><u>GIRLS – ONLY</u></b> uniform pants, shorts, Capri-pants, skirts, skorts, or jumpers in Khaki, black or blue are acceptable.</p> <p>Garments must fit, so as not to be so tight that movement is hindered, or so loose as to sag down from the waistline.</p> <p><b>The following are <u>NOT</u> permitted:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Jeans, denim, stretch, spandex, cargo or decorated pants or shorts</li> <li>*Athletic/sport-style shorts, sweat/warm-up style pants</li> <li>*Tights or leggings in any color</li> <li>*<b>NO</b> frayed edges or holes of any kind.</li> </ul>
<b><u>BELTS</u></b>	<p><b><u>All bottoms with belt loops require a solid color belt in blue, brown, or black.</u></b></p>
<b><u>SHOES/ SOCKS</u></b>	<p><b><u>ONLY</u></b> traditional tennis shoes with laces or Velcro closures are permitted. No boots, dress shoes, flats, heels, sandals, or flip flops.</p> <p>Socks must be solid white, khaki, brown, navy blue, or black.</p>

**Any non-Gulf Coast Charter Academy School attire being worn without permission will receive a verbal warning and said attire will be maintained in the main office and returned to the student at the end of the day. Administration will make the final judgment concerning the appropriateness of a student’s clothing and appearance.**

### 3. M. Lost and Found

Please be sure your child's name is in his/her wallet, purse, coat, sweater, lunchbox, raincoat, etc. Many such articles are lost and unclaimed. At the end of each grading period, all unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization.

### 3. N. Makeup/ Cologne

Students in grades K-5<sup>th</sup> **may not wear** any makeup, however students are permitted to have lip balm (chap stick). K – 5 students wearing makeup will be sent to the restroom to remove it. If makeup is still not removed, students will be sent to administration. If students in grades 6-8 wear makeup, it may not cause distractions in any way. **No heavy/dark makeup is to be worn, and fake nails and eyelashes are strictly prohibited.**

Children **are not permitted** to wear perfume or cologne, due to students and staff with allergies and asthma.

### 3. O. Hair

Hair must be neat and clean with no "unnatural" colors, including but not limited to, greens, blues, pinks, and fluorescent colors. No headwear is allowed including, but not limited to hats, and bandana. Hair bows, hairbands, etc., are allowed for girls. If there is a question, please ask. Decisions are at the discretion of the administration of GCCAS.

### 3. P. General

- Students may not wear body piercings other than small earrings or studs in their ear lobes, for safety purposes (no large hoops). Nose rings and other facial piercings are not permitted.
- Students are not permitted to wear anything offensive, immodest, or deemed inappropriate by the faculty.
- Clothing exposing the torso, midriff, or mid-chest area shall not be worn.
- Underwear shall not be visible.
- Head coverings and sweatbands are not to be worn in the building unless required for religious observance or health-related reasons.
- Hemlines shall be no shorter than fingertip length.
- All pants and shorts shall be secured at the waist.
- Garments and/or jewelry which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, gang, weapons, or alcohol-related wording or graphics, or which provoke violence or disruption in the school, shall not be worn.
- Wallet chains shall not be worn.

If the appropriateness of attire is questioned, students will be referred to the office and required to change, and the parent/guardian may be contacted. Disciplinary actions will be taken when violations are repeated.



The general appearance of a student should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene. Any student that violates the grooming and hygiene policy will be sent home. Students may return to school when their appearance is appropriate.

### 3. Q. Dress Code Consequences

Teachers will be checking for dress code compliance as each student enters the classroom at 8:00 a.m. Students must be in the appropriate attire. Any student out of compliance will be required to change into the appropriate attire. A parent or guardian will be contacted to bring the appropriate clothing to school. Students are not permitted to attend class until they are wearing clothing as stipulated by the dress code. Continuous dress code violations will lead to a parent conference, suspension, or other administrative action.

### 3. R. Lunch and Cafeteria Procedures

Employees may not use lunchtime as time worked beyond their regular paid work hours or as compensatory time without prior approval from the Administration.

Teachers must check the lunch schedule for the exact times that their students should arrive at the cafeteria and when they should be picked up. Lunchtimes may be adjusted for special events. However, on regular days, the scheduled lunchtime must be strictly adhered to. For the first month of school, the teacher is required to wait with the students who are receiving hot lunch and monitor them while they are being served. The lunch duty calendar will specify when each teacher is expected to be in the cafeteria for his or her turn for lunch duty.

The cafeteria rules are posted in varying locations in the cafeteria and all students are expected to follow them.

The students must:

1. Enter and exit the cafeteria in a line that is quiet and orderly.
2. Stand in a single file line while waiting for food.
3. Sit in assigned area.
4. Not exchange food items.
5. Use a quiet, indoor voice.
6. Show good manners, courtesy, and consideration of other students and adults in the cafeteria.
7. **Always follow the instructions of the cafeteria monitors or other adults.**
8. Not leave the cafeteria during the lunch period without a written pass.
9. Not remove food and beverages from the designated eating areas.
10. LEAVE THE TABLE AND FLOOR CLEAN! Each student is required to dispose of trash from his/her table in the containers provided for trash when instructed to do so by monitors.
11. OCCS participates in the Federal Lunch Program and the school must follow its guidelines. **Students are not permitted to exchange food!** No child should ever be

forced to eat, but each student is required to take everything being offered. Encourage children to sample new foods.

Food should never be withheld as a punishment. Carbonated and sugary drinks, candy, and glass containers should not be part of a student's lunch. Teachers are not to spend their lunch period with students or parents in their classroom without preapproval by the administration.

## **Section 4: Academics**

### **4. A. Grading Policies**

Students shall be informed by the school of their academic progress and shall have periodic reviews of their instructional achievement by the school staff. Students' academic marks in each class will be presented fairly and impartially regarding their academic progress in that class. They should have the opportunity to periodically review their grades with their teacher. Students shall be graded on their progress and classwork. Conduct, while not a part of a student's grade, may bear a direct relationship to said academic grade, especially if a student is absent from a class and unable to make up work due to misbehavior.

A student must accept the responsibility for regular class attendance, the performance of all tasks required for the successful completion of the course, and for making up all work missed during excused absences. Additionally, a student shall complete all classroom assignments to the best of his or her ability to earn the best possible grade and cooperate with the teacher to provide a good learning environment in class. A student has the responsibility to refrain from cheating or plagiarizing on all tests and work assignments.

### **4. B. Accountability and Tracking**

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Accountability Plan must provide information needed to measure and track the school's progress toward its goals, make program adjustments when needed, and report to parents, the community, and the Charter Authorizer on performance and progress.

It is the intent of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South that all Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students become proficient in reading, writing, math, science, social science, and Physical Education classes each year at, or above their grade level. Moreover, that the students will make progress towards Gulf Coast Charter Academy South achievement standards in preparation to meet or exceed the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards as monitored on the Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (F.A.S.T.) progress monitoring. The state of Florida is rolling out this new progress monitoring during the 2022-2023 school year. As more information is released by the state, the information will be shared with the school community.

In addition, all grade levels will achieve mastery of the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards as monitored by the SAT 10 and i-Ready Diagnostic assessments for reading and math. Pre, Interim, and Post Tests will be used as a quarterly benchmark in monitoring each student’s learning gains throughout the school year. The results obtained, utilizing the above evaluative and monitoring tools, will provide the annual Gulf Coast Charter Academy South’s **school data** that will be presented to the school community, Collier County, and the Florida Department of Education.

#### 4. C. Report Cards

GCCAS will use the Focus System for Attendance and Grade Reporting. Parent/Student Portal access will be made available for online tracking of student assignments.

This information will provide parents with a clear, concise, and well-defined report regarding their student’s current level of performance and continuous improvement over the school year. This will be viewed as one part of a larger accountability system for students and parents, based on performance and proficiency in the standards in each academic area.

#### Collier County/ Gulf Coast Charter Academy South Grading Scale 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> Grades:

<b>A+</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>Excellent Progress</b>
<b>A</b>	94%	
<b>A-</b>	90%	<b>Above Average Progress</b>
<b>B+</b>	87%	
<b>B</b>	83%	
<b>B-</b>	80%	<b>Satisfactory Progress</b>
<b>C+</b>	88%	
<b>C</b>	73%	
<b>C-</b>	70%	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>D+</b>	67%	
<b>D</b>	63%	
<b>D-</b>	60%	<b>Unsatisfactory Progress</b>
<b>F</b>	0-59%	

#### Kindergarten Grading Scale

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

U – Unsatisfactory

#### 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades Grading Scale

A – 90-100% Excellent Progress

B – 80-89% Above Average Progress

C – 70-79% Satisfactory Progress

N – 60-69% Needs Improvement

U – 0-59% Unsatisfactory Progress

### Assignment Percentages - K-2

5% Homework  
5% Participation  
30% Assessments  
60% Classwork

### Assignment Percentages - 3-5

10% Homework  
5% Participation  
30% Assessments/Projects  
55% Classwork

### Assignment Percentages - 6-8

10% Homework  
5% Participation  
30% Assessments/Projects  
55% Classwork

Students may receive a “0” for homework/participation. When assigned, homework should not count more than 5-10% toward each student’s grade.

## 4. D. Homework

Homework will include varied activities that reinforce the basic skills or extend and enrich concepts learned. Homework should not be utilized to introduce new concepts. Assignments will be made according to individual student needs and abilities. Homework assignments should not be punitive in nature.

The purpose of work that teachers would like the students to complete at home is to develop study habits in children early in their academic lives and for students to have the opportunity to share their learning with parents. If a child does not understand their assignment after attempting to complete it with you at home, please send a note to the teacher explaining the issue.

Teachers will provide regular feedback to students and parents regarding assignments. Parents should be notified when a student routinely does not complete homework. Appropriate completion of homework assignments will be reflected in mid-term quarterly reports and under the Expected Behaviors section of the report card.

## 4. E. Homework Policy

This is a general outline of the time required and days suggested for homework. In addition to this, unfinished class work may also be sent home for completion. All students are encouraged to read nightly. **Please note that homework may be assigned on Fridays and during school breaks.**

**Kindergarten – Third Grade: Students** at these grade levels will not be assigned any homework. They will be encouraged to read at least 20 minutes per night.

**Fourth-Eighth Grade:** Students should have 30-60 minutes of homework graduating with grade levels, four to five nights per week (Monday-Friday). Reading for enjoyment may also be assigned many nights. Social studies or science activities may also be assigned.

## 4. F. Academic Honesty

### 4. F.1. Cheating

#### A. Types of cheating

##### 1. During testing

- a. Looking at another student's paper.
- b. Holding paper so that another student can read and/or copy.
- c. Using "cheat sheets," or other concealed information.
- d. Opening book to answers.
- e. Giving another student or students answers or test questions.
- f. Writing answers on desk.
- g. Sharing information via cyber or electronic communication devices.

##### 2. Homework Assignments

- a. Copying another student's answers, papers, or assignments.
- b. Submitting written report without having read complete assignment, i.e. reading a summary instead of a book
- c. Plagiarism of any source including the Internet.

##### 3. Altering or changing answers on class papers.

##### 4. Passing answers or information to other students between classes.

##### 5. Paying or bartering with others to do schoolwork.

##### 6. Use of ANY Artificial Intelligence (AI) program to write papers or responses on behalf of the student.

#### B. Disciplinary action related to cheating.

**1st offense:** failing grade on work and parents notified.

**2nd offense:** failing grade on work and conference with an administrator, parents, and teacher. Other penalties will be determined at the conference.

**3rd offense:** parents notified; possible loss of credit in course, following an administrative hearing, consisting of parents, administration, management, and the student.

Cheating and Plagiarism constitutes academic dishonesty and students can be suspended for 1-5 days. Students may justly be denied awards, privileges, and honors that the school bestows on those students that uphold the integrity of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South. Furthermore, any student suspended for academic dishonesty is barred from participating in any field trips and after-school activities on the days they are disciplined, including sports, practices, and games.

#### 4. G. Special Services

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South offers ESE, ELL, speech, language, and OT/PT services for any student that qualifies. Documentation from your family physician or any other Doctor must be submitted, coupled with implementing, and completing the MTSS process before any special services can begin. Contact your student's teacher should you feel your child needs these services.

#### 4. H. Character Education

Character Education is one way to enhance every child's self-concept, improve behavior, enhance learning gains, reduce tardiness, absences, and misconduct that results in student suspensions. In addition, Character Education will increase a sense of purpose, citizenship, responsibility, and community. GCCAS School Administration will oversee the Character Education curriculum and will disseminate the information that needs to be addressed by teachers to their students.

#### 4. I. Conferences

Parents are required to contact their child's teacher when they wish to arrange a conference. Please send a note, email, or call the teacher directly and indicate two or three dates and times that are convenient for you. At least one-day notice should be given to the school unless it is an emergency. There will be at least **two scheduled conference nights during** the school year. Parents will visit the school to meet with one or more teachers and said conferences will be scheduled in advance. All conferences will have a strict time limit.

#### 4. J. Textbooks

Students are expected to take diligent care of textbooks. All students must assume full responsibility for the care of books issued to them. Books are issued by the subject area teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the school year or upon withdrawal from school.

Responsibility for textbooks rests with the student to whom the textbook is issued. Lost books are no excuse for not doing class assignments.

The full purchase price shall be collected for lost, destroyed, or unnecessarily damaged textbooks unless the book has been in use for more than one year. For books over one year old, a replacement fee will be determined (not less than 50% of the cost of a replacement text). This fee has to be collected prior to a student receiving any further issuance of free textbooks. Loss of books due to theft or other circumstances shall not be accepted as an excuse for non-payment. If the book is found and returned, the bookkeeper shall make a refund to the student. An invoice will be sent to the parents for payment. Any non-payment on a lost textbook will be entered into the Gulf Coast Charter Academy South main computer system and will prevent the student from graduating or attending events.

#### 4. K. Pledge of Allegiance 1003.44 (1)

Each school board may adopt rules to require, in all the schools of the district, programs of a patriotic nature to encourage greater respect for the government of the United States and its national anthem and flag, subject always to other existing pertinent laws of the United States or of the state. When the national anthem is played, students and all citizens should stand at attention, men removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. The Pledge of Allegiance statement, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," shall be rendered by students standing with the right hand over the heart.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag shall be recited at the beginning of the day in each public elementary, middle, and high school in the state. When the pledge is given, citizens should show full respect to the flag by standing at attention, men removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. A student has the right not to participate in reciting the Pledge and must be excused from doing so upon written request from his or her parent(s) or guardians. A student has the right not to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, but the student must stand.

#### 4. K. 1. Free Speech/Expression

- Students have the right to refrain from any activity which violates the precepts of their religion.
- Students have the right to form and express their own opinions on controversial issues without jeopardizing their relations with their teacher or school.
- Students have the responsibility to act in a manner that preserves the dignity of the occasion.
- Students have the responsibility to respect the religious beliefs of others.
- Students initiating a petition or survey have the responsibility not only for the reasonableness of the request, but for the accuracy of the content.
- Students have the responsibility to make efforts to become informed and knowledgeable about controversial issues and express their opinions in a manner that is suitable for the forum in which the discussion is taking place.

#### 4. L. School Parties

Any classroom parties, or any other parties on campus, **MUST** be approved by the school administration. Soda **may not** be served in the school at any time - only water, milk, or fruit juice are acceptable drinks. Approved parties may **ONLY** take place during the last thirty minutes of the school day, as per Federal Lunch Program guidelines. Any snacks brought to school from home should be healthy and purchased from a store. Any snack purchased for a party must come in with a student or leave it at the front desk. **NO PARTY DECORATIONS ARE PERMITTED.**

#### 4. M. Student Birthdays

**Birthday parties are not held at school.** Classroom teachers will acknowledge a student's birthday in a variety of ways IF family beliefs allow. Parents are permitted to bring in a store-

bought treat to recognize their child's birthday. The timing of this will also be restricted to the final thirty minutes of the school day. **Invitations for home parties must be distributed to the entire class**, so as not to interfere with our academic program, or to cause hurt feelings. Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to your child at school. They will not be delivered to the classroom as doing so would disrupt the academic focus of our work. Additionally, items of this nature are not permitted on buses.

#### 4. N. School Pictures/ Yearbooks

School pictures are taken twice a year with scheduled make-up days following each session. Information will be sent home for parents to complete and return if they wish to order said pictures. For Fall Picture Day, students are required to wear the normal dress code. During our Spring Picture Day, students may dress out of uniform. School yearbooks will be sold in the spring with a cost to be announced. Information will be sent home regarding yearbook sales.

#### 4. O. School Supplies

This year GCCAS will be offering a school supplies bundle that includes all supplies needed for the student at the cost of \$40 per student. This bundle can be purchased online. This does not include extra supplies such as tissues and paper towels that the teacher may request to be donated to their classroom. The school provides everything needed for physical education and recess. **Therefore, students should leave their toys, games, radios, sports equipment, etc., at home. This will prevent items from becoming lost/broken or causing disruption to the school setting.**

#### 4. P. Club Activities

Clubs and organizations will be shared with all parents once schedules have been established. Students can join any club that is offered for their grade level. Research clearly suggests that involvement in clubs and activities is beneficial for most students. Additional clubs may be added throughout the school year, contingent upon student interest and coupled with securing a faculty sponsor and parent support. Permission forms must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian prior to a child participating in any club or activity.

#### 4. Q. Team Sports

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South will be offering a "team sports" program for students in grades 6-8. Our students will have the opportunity to participate in several sports throughout the year. Practices will be held after school from 3:50 p.m. until 4:45 p.m. If your child is not enrolled in the After Care School program, he/she must be picked up **promptly before 4:50 p.m.**, to avoid After Care School care charges. Those students enrolled in the After Care School program will be supervised until 6:00 PM. All students must be in good academic and behavioral standing before they can participate in any team sports activity or club. Students are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and teamwork to take part in Gulf Coast Charter Academy South team sports programs.



#### 4. R. Field Trips

The Gulf Coast Charter Academy South School Board believes that field trips, both in and out of the county, can be an integral part of the learning process in many areas of education. For purposes of this policy, a field trip shall be defined as an approved trip away from the school site. The field trips are for educational purposes and are aligned with Florida B.E.S.T. Standards and the School's vision and mission.

1. An Authorization for Trip Form signed by the parent must be on file at the school for each K-8 student for him/her to make the trip.
2. Students may be denied the privilege of participating in field trips, social and/or extracurricular activities if said student(s) have been disruptive and have violated the student code of conduct or fail to conform to school rules and regulations. The final decision on whether the student may participate shall be made by the administration with documentation and input from pertinent staff. If student(s) remains on campus during an assigned field trip, the teacher is responsible for planning for the student to be supervised in another classroom. The teacher will also provide work for said student(s).
3. **ONLY** approved Level 2 Volunteers may attend and assist in supervision on field trips **per the Jessica Lunsford Act of 2005.**

#### 4. S. Internet Use

The school district maintains an Internet content filter as does FORZA Education Management. All Internet access by all students must utilize these filters to restrict student access to material harmful to minors as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Public school student use of telecommunications services, through school equipment or authorization, will be supervised. District procedures that comply with CIPA guidelines include technology protection measures that block or filter visual depictions that are obscene, include child pornography, or are harmful to minors. A parent or guardian wishing to deny access to the Internet must notify the school in writing. Unauthorized users of the Internet will be subject to disciplinary action.

Email use by students is not allowed without specific instructional purposes and must be monitored at all times for appropriate content. This use requires prior approval by Gulf Coast Charter Academy South to assure compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (NCIPA).

Unauthorized access, including so-called hacking or other unlawful activities, will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, cancellation of privileges. Written parental permission is required prior to a student's participation in online programs that transmit personally identifiable information. The district will make all reasonable efforts in selecting online programs that ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the student and comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). For more information on FERPA refer to section 1. H. of this document.

#### 4. T. Cell Phone and Smartwatch Guidelines

The office and classroom telephones are business phones, and not to be used by students except in a true emergency. School staff will assist children in placing such calls. Students will not be allowed to use the phone to make personal arrangements, such as requesting permission to go home with another student. Only emergency messages shall be taken for students. Students shall not be called from class to use the telephone or receive telephone calls.

Cell phones and Smartwatches are not permitted unless otherwise directed or instructed by Gulf Coast Charter Academy South staff or Administration. This includes having such devices in any silent, vibrate, or visual-only mode. Students may keep a cell phone in their bag for emergencies, but it must be turned off. Any student that is found using a cell phone or Smartwatch during the day, including on the school buses, will have the electronic device confiscated and their parent or guardian may be required to pick up the device. A second offense will result in an automatic referral and the student will not be permitted to bring the phone to school for the remainder of the year.

Personal electronic devices, i.e., electronic games or any unnecessary devices deemed potentially disruptive shall not be permitted at school. The same consequences as having a cell phone will be adhered to.

Students bringing any electronic devices for a class project must make arrangements with the teacher or administration for safekeeping. Students are not permitted to record videos on their electronic devices while on school property, including whilst on the bus or on a field trip. Students should not wear a school uniform in any videos recorded for use on social media platforms whilst off campus.

Cellular devices shall be defined as any electronic device that reproduces, transmits, or records (voice, pictures, text, or any other type of media.)

**The school shall not accept responsibility for any student's personal property including electronic devices.**

### Section 5- Discipline

The design of the Student Handbook and Collier County Student Code of Conduct enables the school to enforce its provisions consistently and uniformly. In accordance with F.S. 1006.07, teachers, Principals, and administrators have the authority to take customary and reasonable measures to maintain proper control and discipline among students placed under their care and supervision. The Principal may modify any disciplinary action. The administration is responsible for discipline and determines the level of the offense and its appropriate consequence. Discipline will be enforced for any violation occurring on school property and at school-sponsored events, as well as the Gulf Coast Charter Academy South bus stops. It is expressly understood that when law enforcement personnel are involved in a matter, students are to respect the authority of the officer or officers involved or risk the consequences of obstructing actions of law.

If a student continues to violate school rules and regulations or if a student commits a crime off school property, reassignment to another school may occur. Students may be disciplined for engaging in other objectionable conduct even if the conduct is not specifically described below.

Students are required to follow all classroom and school rules and regulations. The teacher will send students to the office after the teacher has exhausted every strategy in the classroom.

### 5. A. Video and Audio Surveillance Equipment

Some school facilities/buses employ video and audio surveillance equipment for security purposes. This equipment may be monitored at any time. All security videos remain the property of the Board. Videos involving identifiable students are confidential records and protected by the rules and procedures for the confidentiality of student records.

### 5. B. Bullying

**Bullying** is a repeated form of aggression and occurs when a person(s) who perceives a power imbalance, willfully subjects another person (victim), whomever he/she may be, to intentional, unwanted, and unprovoked hurtful verbal and/or physical action(s) which result(s) in the victim feeling oppressed (stress, injury, discomfort) at any school site, bus stop, or school-sponsored activity or event.

**Bullying** may also occur as various repeated forms of hazing, including initiation rites perpetrated against a new student or a new member of a team. Students who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments to include verbal or written reprimand, out-of-school suspension, or change of placement and/or expulsion.

#### Examples of Bullying

1. **Physical Bullying** - punching, shoving, poking, strangling, hair-pulling, beating, biting and excessive tickling.
2. **Verbal Bullying** - hurtful name-calling, teasing and gossip.
3. **Emotional (psychological) Bullying** - rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure.
4. **Sexual Bullying** - many of the actions listed above as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment, and abuse involving actual physical contact and sexual assault. In many cases, gender and cross-gender sexual harassment may also qualify as **bullying**.
5. **Cyber-Bullying** - means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which may include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog

in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

6. **Stalking** - means engaging in a course of conduct or pattern of behavior that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her own or the safety of others, or to suffer substantial emotional distress from such course of conduct or pattern of safety behavior.
7. **Cyberstalking** - as defined in F.S. 784.048(1)(d), means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

**Bullying**, in most cases, is characterized by repeated harmful actions on the part of the bully. Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent bullying.

Bullying will not be tolerated and will lead to suspension, expulsion, and/ or transfer from Gulf Coast Charter Academy South School.

In addition, retaliation **will not be tolerated**. **Retaliation** is defined as “to pay back (an injury) in kind.”

## 5. C. Harassment

State and federal law specifically prohibit harassment. Instances of harassment may result in both civil and criminal liability on the part of the individual harasser as well as the school board. Harassing activities by students or employees will not be tolerated.

**Harassment** is when a person continually teases, annoys, threatens, or insults another person in either a verbal, physical, or written manner. Harassment occurs when a person subjects another person to any unwelcome conduct because of sex, race, origin, religion, etc., on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Persons who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments.

**Sexual harassment** is when a person bothers another person using sexual words, pictures, gestures, or conduct that the other person would find offensive. Sexual harassment can also occur when a person is forced by his or her location or situation to see or overhear sexual comments, gestures, or conduct that he or she finds offensive.

### Unwanted and Unwelcome Harassment:

May include, but is not limited to: sexual comments, jokes or gestures; suggestive comments; being “sexually rated” by an individual, for example, on a scale from 1 to 10; being pressured to go out with someone; being the recipient of catcalling; being touched in a sexual way; being intentionally brushed up against in a sexual way; spreading sexual rumors about a person; having

clothing pulled in a sexual way; being shown, given, or left sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes; being forced (because of their location) to view images of a sexual nature; being forced to kiss someone; being forced to do something sexual other than kissing; being called any term that denigrates sexual identity; having clothing pulled off or down; being spied on while dressing; or requesting sexual favors.

**Confidentiality** must be maintained as much as possible during any harassment investigation. Confidentiality is maintained when the identity of the people involved or the circumstances surrounding the incident are kept private. For example, you do not maintain confidentiality if you tell your friends the name of the person that harassed you.

**Gulf Coast Charter Academy South policy forbids harassment.** The school will not tolerate harassment of any kind at any of its sites or activities. Personnel, at all levels, are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent harassment. Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated, giving due regard to the need for confidentiality.

Information related to the prevention and correction of harassment shall be provided in writing to personnel and students. Persons who engage in such conduct shall be subject to a range of punishments. Proven allegations of harassment can have serious consequences for the party deemed guilty, including but not limited to the following:

1. The range of punishment for a party found guilty of harassment could include verbal and written reprimand, out-of-school suspension, change of placement, and/or expulsion.
2. If the party deemed guilty is a school employee, the range of punishment could include written reprimand, suspension without pay, and/or termination.
3. If the party deemed guilty is neither a student nor a school employee, appropriate steps shall be taken, which could include limiting the access of this party to school property and any other action deemed necessary.

#### **5. D. Disrespect, Harassment, Assault or Battery Upon School Personnel Inside or Outside the School Setting**

The orderly operation of schools and the accomplishment of their educational function require that students treat school personnel with respect and common courtesy both inside and outside the school settings. Students are prohibited from conduct in any setting which is disrespectful or harassing of school staff members or constitutes an assault or battery upon school staff. This includes, but is not limited to, any form of written or electronic communication that is derogatory or threatening in nature.

"Harassment," see also Rule 5. B & C. (Bullying and Harassment).

Whenever a student is charged with committing an assault, aggravated assault, battery, or aggravated battery upon any employee of the school, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the student shall be placed in an alternative school setting or expelled. Upon being

charged with the offense, the student shall be removed from the classroom immediately and placed in an alternative school setting pending disposition.

Assault or battery on a school employee inside or outside the school setting is also punishable under Section 784.081, Florida Statutes.

### 5. E. Insubordination- Disregard of Direction or Commands

A student shall comply with the reasonable directions or commands of all school personnel, regardless of whether a student is under their direct supervision, before, during, and after school hours while on school property or at school-sponsored activities, functions, or events. Teachers, guest teachers, teacher aides, secretaries, para-professionals, custodians, principals, administrative personnel, coaches, authorized volunteers and school bus drivers are considered school personnel. Reasonable directions or commands include but are not limited to appropriate behavior and dress at extra-curricular activities.

### 5. F. Public Display of Affection

Kissing, embracing, fondling or other displays of affection are not appropriate behavior in a school setting. In establishing and maintaining a sound educational environment, emphasis must be placed on each student maintaining a feeling of self-respect, self-discipline, and a high standard of conduct. Respect for oneself, school and others is most often reflected in behavior of students. Affection for a boy or girl friend is a personal and private matter, and as such should not be demonstrated on school property. Students who engage in public displays of affection after a warning from school personnel will be guilty of willful disobedience, and disciplinary action will be taken.

### 5. G. Vandalism and Defacing School Property

Vandalism in our school can cost thousands of dollars and jeopardize our lease agreement. For the students' own protection, they should stay away from the school buildings when school is not in session.

Vandalism and the defacing of school property is a serious offense. Students guilty of these infractions to their own school or to other schools in any county shall face severe disciplinary action, which could include restitution, suspension and/or expulsion and the student shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and shall be subject to arrest and prosecution. This includes spray-painting buildings and similar types of vandalism. Any damage to school property by a student is the sole responsibility of the family of the student.

### 5. H. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

A student shall not possess, handle, or transport weapons of any type or any object that resembles a weapon.

Students violating this policy are subject to suspension, expulsion, transfer and/or arrest.

### Examples of Weapons:

Weapons may include, but are not limited to: guns, knives, dirks (daggers), razor blades, ice picks, explosives, chains, pipes, brass knuckles, Billy clubs, Chinese stars, mace, tear gas or any mixture of chemicals used as a weapon, dangerous instruments, toy guns, or anything that resembles or could be considered a weapon on school grounds and up to 500 yards from school grounds, or at related activities are prohibited. Any student that brings a weapon to school, a school function, or on any school-sponsored transportation may be expelled, with or without continuing educational services and referred for criminal prosecution following an administrative hearing.

## 5. I. Zero Tolerance Offences

Gulf Coast Charter Academy South has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for serious crimes involving violence, weapons, drugs, and behaviors that threaten the safety of students or personnel; illegal activities are intolerable. The 2001 Florida Legislature enacted CS/CS/HV 267 which requires school districts to adopt a policy of zero tolerance for victimization and prohibits any student who is adjudicated of certain specified felony violations against another student from attending the same school or riding on the same school bus as the victim or the victim's sibling(s).

Exceptional education students are not exempt from the provisions of this bill. However, the implementation in the case of ESE students must be provided within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C., and Chapter 33 as amended by: Public Law 105-17.

### 5. I. 1.Examples of Zero-Tolerance Offenses:

Zero-tolerance offenses may include, but are not limited to: alcohol; arson; aggravated battery, threat or intimidation of an Gulf Coast Charter Academy South employee, agent, or student; bomb threats or general threats to school population; breaking/entering of school board property; false fire alarms; homicide; kidnapping; major disruption to a school function; misrepresentation of facts resulting in public slander toward an Gulf Coast Charter Academy South employee; motor vehicle theft; passing counterfeit money; possession, use, or sale of a firearm, bombs, explosives or a weapon; possession, use, sale, distribution, purchase, or being under the influence of a controlled substance; possession, or purchase, either knowingly or unknowingly, of any drug paraphernalia; possession, or purchase, either knowingly or unknowingly, of any illegal contraband; sale or distribution, or purchase of any substance represented by a student as being a controlled substance; sexual battery; use of a non-weapon as a weapon; willfully and knowingly attempting to do bodily harm to an Gulf Coast Charter Academy South employee, agent or student, gang related activities i.e., robbery or possession of any weapon or firearm that resembles a true weapon or firearm.

### **Consequences of Zero-Tolerance Offenses:**

1. The student will be suspended immediately.

2. A parent or guardian will be notified.
3. The student may be suspended, expelled, or recommended for change of placement.
4. Referral to law enforcement agency as appropriate.

**Consequences of Felony Drug-Related Incidents:**

1. The student will be suspended immediately, and parents will be contacted.
2. The authorities must be contacted immediately.
3. Any student reprimanded with drugs or drug related incidents might be expelled or arrested.
4. The GCCAS and local school board will decide if the student is permitted to return to school.

**Tobacco or Tobacco Products Consequences:**

1. Mandatory parent conference.
2. Referral to law enforcement.
3. Mandatory anti-tobacco education as stated in F.S. Section 386.212 and Section 569.11.
4. Out-of-school suspension as determined by the administration.

**Fighting Consequences:**

1. Up to ten days out-of-school suspension and a mandatory meeting will be scheduled with a parent.
2. Referral to law enforcement as appropriate.
3. Student may be expelled or transferred to another school depending on the incident.

**\*\*Actions that were taken clearly in self-defense without prior physical or verbal involvement shall not be considered an intentional act under this rule, but a student will still be suspended for fighting or striking a student back.**

**Sexual harassment Consequences:**

1. Verbal and written reprimand.
2. Mandatory parent meeting
3. Out-of-school suspension; 1 to 10 days.
4. Change of placement and/or expulsion.

**Drug Possession Consequences:**

1. Out-of-school suspension 1 to 10 days and mandatory parent meeting.
2. Referral to law enforcement.
3. Referral to the Juvenile Drug Court Program.
4. Permission to attend a regular school program if the student participates in a Drug Court program and/or treatment center.
5. Failure to successfully complete Drug Court program and/or treatment center may result in a recommendation for a change of placement and/or other sanctions.



6. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South and local school board will decide if the student returns to school.

## 5. J. Behavior Consequences

There is a school-wide discipline plan, however, all teachers have their own classroom rules and regulations that all students must adhere to. Each teacher will be sharing this information with families. After all behavior strategies have been exhausted in the classroom, teachers may send a student to the office. **This is always a last resort for teachers!**

**\*SEVERE CLAUSE: Fighting, Profanity, Disrespect, or Disruptive behavior may result in immediate suspension from school (OSS). A parent will be contacted and may be called to pick up the student.**

**\*Please see your child's teacher to find out his/her management system.**

**\*Suspensions may be given to any student that is sent to the office for violating the rules and regulations listed in this handbook.**

**GCCAS uses the Collier County Code of Conduct as a guide to our discipline procedures, but the Administrative Team and FORZA Management have the final decision as they relate to disciplinary actions. Attached is a copy of the Code of Conduct levels of behaviors and consequences. <https://www.collierschools.com/Page/284>**

## 5. K. Search and Seizure

All students shall have the right to privacy and shall be free from unreasonable search as well as the seizure of personal property. These rights shall prevail unless there is "probable cause," then said rights must be set aside to protect the safety, health, and property of the students, staff, and school. One of our foremost goals is to ensure that each child attends a safe school where an environment exists in which teachers can teach and students can learn. Toward that end, Gulf Coast Charter Academy South School Board enforces a Zero-Tolerance Policy for possession of weapons or items that appear to be weapons at school.

Students have the right of privacy of their personal possessions unless there is reason on the part of the Administration or designee to believe that the student is concealing a weapon, illegal drugs or other material that is inappropriate and dangerous to themselves, others, or property; to be given prior notification of any searches unless in a case of emergency. Students have the responsibility not to carry, possess, or conceal any material that is prohibited by law, and to accept the consequences for their actions in cases where unlawful materials are found in their possession or in their lockers.

Students have the responsibility not to carry or conceal any such material, substances or objects that are prohibited by school rules or any law or which are illegal or would detract from the educational process or safe environment of the school. Students should willingly cooperate with reasonable administrative requests to show or surrender any dangerous or

illegal material, substances or objects when asked to do so. "Pat downs" are permitted by school officials. Strip searches are not permitted by school officials.

## 5. L. Search and Seizure Guidelines

### Search in School Buildings or on School Property by the Administration

The administration retains control over space loaned to students. The administration, therefore, has the right and duty to inspect and search students' desks. If the administration reasonably suspects, upon information received, that drugs, weapons, dangerous, illegal, or prohibited matter, or stolen goods are likely to be found on the student's person or belongings, search and seizure procedures may be used to enforce school discipline and to protect the health and safety of the student and/or the student body. The fruits of such a search may be turned over to law enforcement for inspection or examination and may be the subject of criminal or juvenile court prosecution or of school disciplinary proceedings. A parent or guardian can also request that their child's book bag be searched for any items that may not be his or hers. This request must be in writing. Law enforcement may be contacted and they may conduct a search of the student or their property in accordance with local laws.

If the administration has received reliable information, that evidence of a crime or stolen goods not involving school property of members of the school staff or student body is located in a certain student's locker, desk, or student's or nonstudent's automobile, and search is unrelated to school discipline or health and safety of a student or student body, the administration shall request law enforcement assistance, and procedures to obtain and execute a search warrant shall thereafter be followed.

The administration has the right and duty to interview students in investigating crimes, or reports thereof, committed during school hours or on school property without prior notification or the presence of parents. The administration may exercise its discretion in determining whether to request the assistance of law enforcement in investigating a crime, or allegation of a crime, committed in the school building or on school grounds during school hours. If assistance is requested, it shall be directed to the law enforcement agency of the municipality in which the school building is located.

If the administration requests assistance, a law enforcement officer may conduct a general investigation within the school building and interview students as possible witnesses in school during the school day. The administration or his or her designee shall be present during the interview. If the investigation focuses on a student as a prime suspect of a crime, the administration and the law enforcement officer shall follow the general guidelines herein set forth with respect to interview, search, and arrest.

If a student is a suspect or is accused of a crime committed in the school during school hours or on school property at any time, an administrator may interview the student without the presence of parents and without giving the student constitutional warning regardless of the source of information.

If a student is a suspect or is accused of a crime not involving the foregoing, or if an interview of a particular student is law enforcement instigated, the interview of such student by an administrator may be deemed “state action,” the student may be deemed “in custody,” a parent shall be notified, and constitutional warnings shall first be given to the student before a statement is taken. In any event, the voluntariness of any admission or confession of the student shall later have to be established in any criminal prosecution, juvenile court proceeding or school expulsion proceeding.

### 5. I. Arrest by Law Enforcement Officers

Ordinarily it should not be necessary for law enforcement officers to arrest or take custody of students during school hours at school for crimes committed outside of school hours.

No law enforcement officer shall arrest or take custody of any student in school during school hours unless upon lawful request by administration or unless the officer has “probable cause” to arrest for a violent felony or has an arrest warrant for a violent felony or juvenile commitment order, from a judge for an immediate appearance.

In cases where the student is to be taken into custody, the law enforcement officer shall first contact the administration and advise him/her of such a fact. The student shall first be summoned to the office by the administration.

In emergency situations, where the commission of a crime or offense involving felony or breach of the peace in school has been witnessed by a law enforcement officer, or if the law enforcement officer is in “hot pursuit” of the student for such crime, the officer has the legal right to take direct and unhindered action in schools. The administration must be notified of the action as soon as possible.

### 5. J. Student Bathroom and Lockerroom Use

It is the policy of the School that all students, faculty, personnel, and guests of the School will use bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms that correspond with the individual’s biological sex at birth. This means individuals whose designated sex at birth was male will be required to use those bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms designated for men, and individuals whose designated sex at birth was female will be required to use those bathrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms designated for women. Individuals may also use single occupancy bathrooms that are gender neutral. Students are not permitted to utilize bathrooms that are designated exclusively for the school faculty. In enforcing this policy, school personnel may reasonably rely upon representations made or documentation provided by the parent or guardian at initial enrollment, or such other records available to the administration. In the event of any inconsistency in the student’s records, the administration reserves the right to request additional documentation from the parent or guardian to verify the student’s biological sex at birth. This policy shall at all times be construed in accordance with state and federal law.

In carrying out this policy, school personnel are required to maintain the privacy of all educational records as set forth in Section 1012.22, Florida Statutes, and to respect the privacy interests of all students and parents.

## **Section 6-Health**

### **6. A. Child Abuse/ Neglect**

Under the law, teachers are obligated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Teachers are protected under the law against a lawsuit from parents for reporting a case.

### **6. B. Health Issues and Medication**

**Illness** – The health and physical well-being of all students is a matter of great concern to us. A student who is sick with a fever (100 degrees or higher), headache, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, open sores, or similar illness should not be sent to school. A student may not return to school if they have vomited or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours. A student must be without a fever for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication before returning to school. Health conditions such as pink eye are highly contagious and must be properly treated before your child may return to school.

**Medication** - Whenever possible, medications should be given at home. However, if it is necessary for your child to receive a prescribed or over the counter medication at school, the parent must bring the medication to school in the original container or packaging **with a Medication Authorization Form completed and signed by the prescribing physician and the parent/guardian.**

1. All medications must be brought to school by the **parent/guardian and signed in with the office staff.**
2. Medication must be delivered to school in the container in which it was purchased (dispensed). The medication label must indicate the student's name, name of the medication, physician's name, dosage, and time (frequency) to be given. If the medication requires equipment for administration (cup, spoon, or dropper), the parent is responsible for supplying the articles labeled with the student's name.
3. A separate supply of medication must be kept at school. Medication shall not be transported between home and school on a daily or weekly basis.
4. All medication must be kept in the school office; a student is never permitted to keep any medication. Students may not carry medications at school except in specific situations, which require the written approval of the physician, parent/guardian, and administration.
5. Only medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration will be accepted for administration at school.
6. Students may not bring vitamins, in any form, to school unless a Medical Authorization Form has been completed and signed by a prescribing physician.

If medication is discontinued, or at the end of the school year medication is not taken home by the parent, it shall be destroyed. Special arrangements must be made if a student is self-medicating.

**Inhaler use** - a student who has experienced or is at risk for life-threatening anaphylaxis may carry an inhaler and self-administer while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with parental and physician authorization. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health, shall adopt.

**Epinephrine use** - a student who has experienced or is at risk for life-threatening allergic reactions may carry an epinephrine auto-injector and self-administer epinephrine by auto-injector while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with parental and physician authorization. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health, shall adopt rules for the use of epinephrine auto-injectors. Gulf Coast Charter Academy South and its employees and volunteers shall be indemnified by the parent of a student authorized to carry an epinephrine auto-injector of all liability with respect to the student's use of an epinephrine auto-injector pursuant to this paragraph.

### 6. C. Student Illness or Accident in School

When a child becomes too ill to remain in class, the parents will be contacted. For this reason, it is most important that we are notified immediately if a telephone number is changed, as emergency contact information must be kept up to date. Facilities for emergency care in school are extremely limited.

Arrangements for taking your child home **must** be made promptly. If a serious illness or injury occurs, the parent will be notified immediately. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) may be called to render medical assistance, if deemed advisable by staff. The costs incurred in said emergency are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### 6. D. Communicable Disease

School personnel cannot decide if a child with a rash or sores has a communicable disease. Only a physician can certify that a child is free of communicable disease. We can only call the parents and request that the child is kept at home until an official clearance has been obtained, **in writing**. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

### 6. E. No "Nit" Policy

**"NO NIT" POLICY PROCEDURES:** Gulf Coast Charter Academy South has a "No Nit" policy. If a child is identified as having head lice, he or she shall be excluded from school and shall not be permitted to return to school until his or her head is free from lice and nits. Nits are the white eggs that lice lay which adhere to strands of hair. Parents are responsible to provide the appropriate treatment to eliminate head lice and nits before the child returns to school. A child should miss no more than one or two days of school due to head lice. Excessive absences due to head lice shall be addressed according to the provisions of the compulsory school attendance law.

1. If a student has signs or symptoms of head lice, the clinic aide or trained staff will

- check the student's hair and scalp to determine if live lice or nits are present.
2. If live lice or nits are present, the parent must pick up the child promptly and will be given instructions for treatment and removal of the nits and/or lice. All siblings will also be checked.
  3. The parent must accompany the child to school after treatment and be **present during recheck**. Students who continue to have live lice or nits upon recheck may not return to class.

Please check your child frequently and notify the office if lice and/or nits are found.

## 6. F. Stranger Danger Procedures

The single most effective prevention of danger from strangers is parents and concerned citizens monitoring all bus stops and routes that Gulf Coast Charter Academy South children take to and from school. The Collier County Sheriff's Office and Naples Police Department will continue to maintain enhanced and specialized patrols along these routes and at bus stops.

## 6. G. Safety and Security

Providing a safe and secure environment for students to learn is a top priority of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South. Measures have been taken to ensure that staff and students are prepared in the event a crisis occurs in the school. A comprehensive Crisis Management Plan has been adopted below to guide staff through a wide variety of situations. Fire drills, tornado drills, lockdowns, evacuations are practiced, to ensure that routines and safety procedures are well established and familiar to all staff.

## 6. H. Crisis Management Plan

When Gulf Coast Charter Academy South responds with emergency measures, its sole priority is to keep all students, faculty, and staff safe. Teachers and Substitute teachers must be cognizant of and prepared to follow and expedite all emergency procedures. Oftentimes, in cases of potentially serious school safety threats, students, faculty, and staff remain in the building under a lockdown even after the school day has ended. These measures are often frustrating for parents who want to remove their children from school during a threat. The parents of Gulf Coast Charter Academy South will need to appreciate that the school must protect itself from all potential incoming individuals-even if the incoming individuals are parents.

## 6. I. Universal Precautions

### 6. I. 1. Blood-borne Pathogens

Universal Precautions are the steps taken to reduce the spread of blood-borne diseases from one person to another. It is important that these steps be fulfilled within the school to protect children, staff members, vendors, visitors, and others who have contact with the facility.

1. It is a requirement to wear vinyl or latex gloves when touching body fluid.
2. Wash hands before and after all emergency procedures. If your skin comes in to contact with body fluid, wash the affected area immediately with soap and water.
3. If your skin comes in contact with body fluids, report the incident at once to a school administrator or immediate supervisor. Not all reported situations will automatically be considered “exposure incidents.” Each situation will be handled on an individual basis, including the determination by OSHA standards whether the Hepatitis B vaccine will be offered.
4. Never recap, bend, or break needles. Dispose of needles in red sharps containers.

The Exposure Control Manual is in the main office of the building. If you have any questions about the prevention of the spread of blood-borne pathogens, speak with a school administrator.

## **Section 7- General Information**

### **7. A. Important Phone Numbers and Websites**

For the most up-to-date and accurate information, including school closings coming directly from Collier County Public Schools, please rely on the school district’s emergency information sources:

- **Emergency Information Hotline** – call 1-888-994-NEWS (6397) for toll free updates in English and Spanish.
- **School District Website** – log on to <https://www.collierschools.com/>  
Your 24/7 source for all school and school district information.
- **The Education Channel** – tune in to Comcast, cable 99, for the latest emergency information and school-related TV programming.

### **7. B. General State, District, and School Websites**

- <http://www.myflorida.com>
- <http://www.collierschools.com>
- <http://www.gccas.org>

These sites offer educational activities that primary students enjoy:

- <http://alfy.com/>
- <http://funbrain.com/kidscenter>
- <http://primarygames.com/>
- <http://www.Khanacademy.org>
- <http://www.scratch.mit.edu>
- <http://www.code.org>

**The students at Gulf Coast Charter Academy South are, "TOTALLY  
ENGAGED, EVERYDAY!"  
POWERED BY FORZA**



**FORZAedu.com**

**“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn.”  
----Benjamin Franklin**



GULF COAST CHARTER ACADEMY SOUTH HANDBOOK  
AGREEMENT



Please sign and return this page of the handbook the first week of school.

I have read, understand, and reviewed the above policies with my child. I agree to abide by the policies. I understand that failure to comply with school policy may result in the dismissal of my child from Gulf Coast Charter Academy South.

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**Student Handbook Agreement**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_