



**2025-26 Parent/Scholar Handbook
Galapagos Rockford Charter School**

Our Mission

Galapagos Rockford Charter School is dedicated to preparing scholars to be responsible, productive, college educated adults capable of adapting and prospering in a changing global economy.

Galapagos Rockford Charter School (GRCS) Campuses

Lower Academy (K-4)
2605 School St
Rockford, IL 61101
Main Office: (815) 708-7946

Upper Academy (5-8)
3051 Rotary Rd
Rockford, IL 61109
Main Office: (779) 368-0852

Lower Academy Hours

Monday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Thursday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Upper Academy Hours

Monday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Thursday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Administration:

Seprela Ellis
Dean of Instruction-Lower Academy
sellis@galapagoscharter.org
(815) 708-7946 x 404

Shelby Hildreth
Dean of Instruction-Upper Academy
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Kelly Jones
Dean of School Culture-Lower Academy
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John Oliver
Dean of School Culture-Upper Academy
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School Social Workers:

Pamela Moss
Social Worker-Lower Academy
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Lilly Burris
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Organizational Leaders:

Michael G. Lane

CEO/Founder

mlane@galapagoscharter.org

(815) 708-7946 x 470

Stephanie Boeddeker

Chief Academic Officer/Founder

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(815) 708-7946 x 451

School Website

The GRCS website is an excellent resource for scholars, parents, and guardians. The website contains a copy of the school calendar, a copy of the meal calendar, and other important information about the school. We encourage parents and guardians to bookmark the site. The website can be found at: www.galapagoscharter.org

Additional information can be found on GRCS's Facebook and Twitter pages. "Like" and follow us for the most up-to-date information.

The Facebook page can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/galapagosrockford>

The Twitter page can be found at: <https://twitter.com/GRockford>

The Instagram page can be found at: <https://www.instagram.com/galapagosrockford>

1-1 Technology

Galapagos Rockford Charter School provides all scholars with Chromebooks to ensure access to multiple learning platforms. Scholars and Parents are responsible for these devices and expected to use them only in ways that support furthering their education, and the mission of Galapagos Rockford Charter School as a whole.

Device Care Expectations

- Conduct yourself like a GRCS Scholar at all times when using the Chromebook.
- Remember to wash your hands prior to using.
- Use in a quiet, well lit area where you are able to focus.
- Use proper posture and keyboarding techniques.
- Do not eat or drink near the Chromebook.
- Do not place items on the Chromebook.
- Do not download, copy, or share copyrighted material.
- Do not customize themes, screensavers, or desktops.

Responsibility for Use

- Scholars are responsible for any damage to the device.
- Chromebooks are being issued as an education device and should be used in this capacity only.
- All labels and identification tags must remain on the device.
- If the Chromebook is malfunctioning in any way, contact GRCS immediately.
- Please do not attempt any home repairs.
- Chromebooks are the property of GRCS and content is monitored.
- Scholars should have no expectation of privacy.
- Google/Chromebook passwords are unique to each scholar and may not be shared between scholars, or family members.
- Scholars should log in & log out after every use.
- Families must report any concerns about inappropriate use or material to GRCS immediately upon discovery.

Damage to the equipment must be reported to GRCS immediately. The cost of missing or damaged equipment is as follows:

- **Damaged or lost cords cost \$25**
- **General damage \$35**
- **Negligent damage to CB \$75**
- **Missing Chromebook \$150**
- **Other damage may be billed at cost of repair.**

Activities Fee

An annual \$65.00 Activities fee will be charged for each scholar registered at GRCS. For families with more than one scholar enrolled, the fee will be \$65.00 for the first child and \$10.00 for the second sibling and \$10.00 for the third child. GRCS accepts money orders, debit, and credit cards. Existing parents will be asked to pay the Activities fee in the spring in order to reserve a seat for the following school year. Parents will be offered a discount rate in the late winter. This fee is non-refundable. If a family is in a FIT program (Families in Transition) or otherwise needs assistance we will ensure that no family is turned away.

Transportation

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to ensure that scholars have transportation to and from school. If scholars are eligible for school bus transportation, it will be provided by the Rockford Public Schools. In the event of a change of address, your scholar's bus stop may be affected and require a change. Transportation and Change of Address forms can be submitted through the Galapagos Rockford Charter School front office. All address changes require: 2 current (within the last 30 days) proofs of address from the scholar's Parent or Legal Guardian. Please be aware that changes do not take effect immediately. This process can take up to two weeks.

GRCS staff members are not permitted to drive scholars to or from school or to any other location in their private vehicles.

Absences

Daily attendance is essential for academic growth and development. Scholars are expected to be in school unless they are ill, are observing a religious holiday, have lost an immediate family member, or are experiencing a family emergency. In the event that a scholar is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to speak with the office staff or leave a voicemail message including the reason for the absence prior to 8:00 a.m. Homework may be requested when a parent or legal guardian calls the school prior to 8:00 a.m.

Scholars should not attend school if they have a fever above 99 degrees, if they have vomited, if they have had diarrhea, or if they have an illness/disease that is contagious. Scholars who come to school with a contagious disease will be sent home and not re-admitted until they have been cleared to do so with a doctor's note.

Excessive absences could violate Illinois' mandatory attendance law (105 ILCS 5-56) and result in a scholar being classified as truant. Additionally, **excessive absences may lead to the scholar being retained**. Final retention decisions will not be made until Q4 report card conferences and scholars are expected to be in attendance.

Scholars who accumulate more than 15 absences (excused or unexcused) or a combination of absences, tardies, or early dismissals that exceed 15 absences (excused or unexcused) are at risk of being retained and/or having to attend summer school.

1 full day = 1 absence

3 tardies = 1 absence

3 early dismissals = 1 absence

In order to qualify for perfect attendance, a scholar must attend school every day, all day, without any tardies or early dismissals.

Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

GRCS has designed its school day to efficiently use every minute of instructional time. It is imperative that all scholars **arrive at school on time** and **remain in school** for the entire school day. Scholars who are tardy and scholars who leave early miss out on valuable instruction.

Punctuality is an important life skill which our scholars will need as they enter higher education and the workforce. As such, GRCS enforces a strict tardy policy. Scholars who are not at school at 8:00 a.m. will be marked as tardy.

GRCS dismisses at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and asks that all doctor and dentist appointments are made accordingly. Scholars are expected to be in class until 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and 4:00 p.m. on regular school days. Scholars will not be dismissed after 12:15 p.m. on Wednesdays or 3:45 p.m. on regular school days.

Excessive tardies and/or early dismissals could violate Illinois' mandatory attendance law (105 ILCS 5-26) and result in a scholar being classified as truant. **Additionally, excessive tardies and/or early dismissals may lead to a scholar being retained and/or being required to attend summer school.**

Attendance Policy

Research shows that encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways to prepare your child for success—both in school and in life. When school attendance is a priority, scholars have a better chance of higher grades, developing healthy life habits, and ultimately having a better chance of graduating from high school. Regular attendance is also mandatory by law for minors. Excessive absence may result in truancy violations.

If an absence should occur for any reason; please make sure to notify the front office using the PickUp Patrol web-based app at www.pickuppatrol.com and note the reason for your absence.

If you do not have daily access to a smartphone, tablet or computer, please call your academy's front office to report an absence-if they do not immediately answer, leave a detailed voicemail:

Lower Academy: (815) 708-7946

Upper Academy: (779) 368-0852

Reporting an Absence

How PickUp Patrol works: Parents enter changes prior to the absence using a smartphone, tablet or computer. PickUp Patrol automatically sends a secure daily email to the office.

Getting started with Pickup Patrol: A “welcome email” with information and instructions will be sent to families that provide GRCS with an email address (For security, there is a 48 hour "window" to sign in and create your free account. After that time you will be locked out – if this happens, notify your Dean of School Culture so a new “welcome email” can be sent to you:

LA: Ms. Kelly Jones- kjones@galapagoscharter.org

UA: Mr. John Oliver- joliver@galapagoscharter.org

Making Changes with Pickup Patrol:

- Log into app.pickuppatrol.net
- Select “Change Plans” at the bottom of the screen
- Selected the date of the absence.
- Select your scholar’s name
- Click Plan Change Options and select “Absent”
- Write the Valid Cause of Absence: Illness, Observance of Religious Holiday, or Death of Immediate Family Member.
- Confirm the date, and click Submit
- You will receive an e-mail confirmation of the change

Arrival

Lower Academy

The Lower Academy opens at **7:45 a.m.** **Scholars who arrive prior to this time will not be allowed in the building.** Scholars are expected to be in the building at their assigned seats before 8:00 a.m. Breakfast is served prior to the start of the school day. Scholars who wish to eat breakfast should arrive at 7:45 a.m. Parents/guardians

who have a scheduled meeting with an instructor or an administrator at the Lower Academy prior to 7:45 a.m. should use the front door and doorbell to sign in and gain access.

Upper Academy

The Upper Academy opens at **7:45 a.m.** **Scholars who arrive prior to these times will not be allowed in the building.** Scholars are expected to be in the building at their assigned seats before 8:00 a.m. Breakfast is served prior to the start of the school day. Scholars who wish to eat breakfast must arrive by 7:45 a.m. Parents/guardians who have a scheduled meeting with an instructor or an administrator at the Upper Academy prior to 7:45 a.m. should use the front door and doorbell to sign in and gain access.

Dismissal

Scholars will be dismissed from their classrooms and adhere to the following:

Car-Riders and Walkers

Car riders and Walkers names will be called and will proceed to the area below:

Lower Academy – Front Door (School St.)

Upper Academy – Front Door

Scholars in grades 1st through 8th will be allowed to walk home if a *Permission to Walk* form has been completed and returned to the main office. Kindergarten scholars must be picked up by an authorized adult and will only be allowed to walk home if they are accompanied by an older sibling and have completed and returned a *Permission to Walk* form.

Bus Riders

Buses will be dismissed one at a time beginning at 3:57pm (12:27 on Wednesday). Scholars assigned to a bus route will be dismissed to the bus loading area at dismissal each day.

Lower Academy— Gate on Day Ave.

Upper Academy— Front Circle on Rotary Rd.

Dismissal Changes

If a scholar has an assigned bus route and an adult authorized to pick up the scholar wishes to pick them up on a given day, the guardian of the scholar will need to use the **PickUp Patrol** web-based application at least one hour prior to the end of school (before 3:00 M,T,TH,F/ 11:30 W) to inform us of the change. Scholars will then be escorted to the designated area at dismissal each day.

Lower Academy – Front Door/Front Lawn

Upper Academy – Front Door

*No dismissal changes may be made past 3:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday, and 11:30 a.m. on Wednesdays

Late Pick-Up

GRCS staff will not supervise scholars after 4:10 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays or 12:40 p.m. on Wednesdays. All scholars will remain outside after dismissal and will not be allowed back into the building. Scholars will not be supervised after 4:10. To ensure the safety of all of our scholars it is imperative that parents or guardians pick up scholars during the scheduled dismissal time frame.

GRCS reserves the right to call additional family members and contacts including the police department if any scholar is not picked up after 4:10 p.m. or 12:40 p.m. on Wednesdays.

After School X Program Dismissal

To ensure the safety of all scholars, parents or guardians **must meet their scholar at the front door and sign out their scholar** before the instructor dismisses the scholar. Parents may not pick up their children from their cars or pull/grab their scholar out of line. Scholars must be picked up from after school programming at 5:10 p.m. Scholars who are not picked up by 5:10 p.m. are at risk of losing their spot in the after school programming.

Uniform

All GRCS scholars are expected to be in full uniform at all times. No exceptions will be made unless they are religious in nature. The approved GRCS uniform is as follows for both boys and girls:

Shirt

- GRCS polo, short or long sleeved, available for purchase on the GRCS website.
- GRCS sweatshirt, available for purchase on the GRCS website.
- Unmarked white, gray or black undershirts may be worn under the uniform.
- Shirts must be tucked in before scholars enter the building and throughout the day.

Pants

- Black **uniform** pants; no jeans, yoga pants, athletic pants, or tight fitting pants allowed (even if they are all black)
- Uniform pants must not have any rips or holes
- Black belt with a traditional buckle and no decoration (mandatory for K-4 for pants with loops and mandatory for 5-8th graders)

Shoes

- Black shoes; athletic shoes are fine as long as they are majority black
- No open toe shoes, sandals, or flip flops allowed
- Plain black shoelaces

Scholars may **not** wear:

- Skirts or dresses (unless religious beliefs require it)
- Long sleeved shirts underneath short sleeved uniform polos
- Sweaters or jackets
- Scarves or bandanas (unless religious beliefs require it)
- Hats

- High boots or shoes with wheels
- Toys, gadgets, or purses

Note: Items not listed above but deemed to be a distraction will be removed at the discretion of GRCS staff.

In the event that families are not able to obtain any components of the required school uniform, please notify the Dean of School Culture immediately. While we make no exceptions to the dress code, we are more than happy to work with families to ensure scholars have what they need to be considered in full uniform.

Galapagos Specialty Shirts may be provided to scholars for specific programming or achievements earned by the individual scholars. Galapagos speciality shirts may be worn any day throughout the week along with uniform pants and black shoes. Examples of such shirts include graduation shirts, club shirts such as the Model UN or honor roll shirts.

Electronics

GRCS does not permit scholar use of pagers, electronic games, other electronic devices, or cell phones unless they have been given permission and are being supervised by an instructor. Classroom storage cabinets are available and must be used for scholars in grades 5-8. Scholars in grades kindergarten-4 must turn in their cell phones to their instructor or have them turned off and left in their lockers. GRCS reserves the right to confiscate cell phones from individuals who do not comply with this policy. Confiscated electronics **will not** be returned to scholars at the end of the day. In the event that an electronic device is confiscated, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to come to the school to retrieve the device. Scholars who use cell phones during the instructional day will face disciplinary consequences. GRCS is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen electronics. Electronics are not permitted on any Galapagos field studies, After School X programming, College 101 programs or Project Passport programs.

Medical Emergencies

Please ensure that the office has an emergency form on file with the phone numbers at which a parent or guardian may be reached during the school day. If, at any time this information changes, please contact the office immediately. When a scholar is sick or injured, the parent or guardian will be contacted first and given the responsibility of arranging transportation. **In cases of extreme emergencies, GRCS staff will call paramedics immediately. If it is deemed necessary, the scholar will be taken to the nearest hospital.**

Medication

If a scholar needs to take medication (prescription or nonprescription) at school, the medication must be sent in its original container with the original label or prescription label intact, and be accompanied by a written doctor's note which includes:

- Name of medicine
- Dosage
- Time
- Date(s)
- Information concerning whether the medication was purchased over the counter or with a doctor's permission (doctor's note attached, contact information must be included)

- Parent or guardian signature

Label all medications sent to school with the scholar's name, grade level, and instructor's name. Please send to school only the amount of medicine needed at school. This will help alleviate the need to send medicine back and forth from home to school. All medications (including cough drops) are kept in the office. **In accordance with Illinois State Law, GRCS will not distribute any prescription medicines without the written permission of a doctor.** Expired medications cannot be distributed to scholars. Please remember to provide the school with up-to-date prescriptions.

Parties and Celebrations

In order to provide optimal time for learning, maintain a distraction-free learning environment, and protect the feelings of all scholars, the following are not permitted:

- Classroom parties
- Special deliveries including, but not limited to, flowers and balloons
- The distribution of invitations at school

Scholars' Privacy and Release of Information

Per Illinois State Law, GRCS is not permitted to release scholar addresses or phone numbers for any reason.

Junk Food Policy

GRCS is proud to offer healthy food choices at breakfast and lunch. We consider ourselves fortunate to be able to provide scholars with an organic and healthy food experience. GRCS believes that a healthy individual is a happier, more productive individual. We want to expose our scholars to healthy eating habits that they can adapt into their everyday lives outside the doors of Galapagos. As such, GRCS is a **junk food free zone**. The consumption of any junk food (candy, soda, chips, etc) on school grounds is prohibited. All junk food will be discarded immediately. It will not be returned to scholars and compensation will not be provided for prohibited food. Any juices sent with school lunch should consist of 100% fruit juice and must come in the original container. Flavored water is not allowed. Please read the label carefully. We ask that parents respect this policy in order to support our efforts to improve the health of GRCS scholars.

Clues to help avoid certain foods	
Foods with tree nuts (We are a “nut free” school) Foods high in sugars Foods high in high fructose corn syrup Foods or drinks that promote "real juice flavor" Enriched flour	
Not Allowed	Welcomed
Common Culprits: Hawaiian Punch, Sunny Delight Capri Sun, Gatorade, PowerAde, soft drinks Common Culprits: candy, cookies and chips, Cheetos, Doritos, goldfish etc. Common Culprits: Gogurt, Trix yogurt, fruit snacks, fruit by the foot Common Culprits: sugary cereals (including but not limited to Captain Crunch, Trix etc, Pop-Tarts Common Culprits: “Lunchables” that include Nachos, Pizza, Candy, Cookies, Capri Sun	Good Alternatives: Water, 100% Juice, milk water Good Alternatives: Rice cakes, carrots, salad, pita bread/hummus, grapes string cheese, low sodium crackers, pretzels Good Alternatives: plain yogurt, fruit yogurt carrots, celery, bananas, oranges, berries, apples, grapes, raisins, craisins, dried fruit, cucumbers Good Alternatives: bagels, Kashi cereal Good Alternatives: “Lunchables” that include meat, cheese, and crackers only. Good Alternatives: A sandwich with whole wheat bread

Recycling

GRCS believes in creating a school community which minimizes its negative impact on the environment.

- GRCS uses “Green Products” in the cleaning of the school whenever possible
- GRCS purchases recycled products whenever feasible
- GRCS minimizes its use of resources whenever possible
- GRCS recycles paper and cardboard whenever feasible

Solicitation

GRCS prohibits parent or scholar solicitation on school grounds for any cause or organization. Solicitation includes the use of email outreach to Galapagos employees. Scholars may not sell any items for any programming not related to Galapagos.

Parent/Guardian Observations

GRCS encourages parents and guardians to visit their scholar’s classroom during the school year. All visitors are required to report to the first floor office, sign the visitor’s log and obtain a visitor’s badge.

There are some exceptions to observations; they are not permitted on:

- The first full day of school
- During class assessment times
- During standardized testing weeks

Volunteering

Any volunteers who will be in direct contact with scholars will be required to submit to a background check. Please visit the GRCS website if you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities at school.

Parent-Instructor Conferences

Conferences are an opportunity for parents/guardians and instructors to discuss the best way they can work together to provide the best education for each individual child. Scholars will be encouraged to attend conferences with their parents. All conferences for grades K-8 will be held at our Lower Academy. To sign up for conferences you can visit our school website and click “Report Card Conferences” under the Parent section. **Attendance at quarterly report card conferences is mandatory.** Report cards will not be given until the report card meeting has taken place and cannot be given to anyone besides a scholar’s parent or legal guardian. If, for some reason, the parent or legal guardian is unable to attend a scheduled conference, please arrange an alternate date/time for the conference. If a parent or legal guardian wishes to set up a conference with an instructor separate from a quarterly report card conference, we encourage them to contact their child’s instructor to do so.

Scholar Files

All scholar records will be kept at the school site. Parents/guardians who wish to inspect their child’s scholar records are asked to contact the Campus Manager to arrange consent. A written request must be submitted with a minimum of three business days. GRCS will only provide access to files to individuals who have legal guardianship over the scholar.

Parental Grievance

GRCS hopes to proactively address any concerns about the operations at the school and make timely adjustments to strategies and practices that prove to be ineffective. The parental grievance process is as follows:

1. An initial grievance must be addressed to the scholar’s instructor.
2. If a consensus cannot be reached, then the parent may address it to the Dean of Instruction, an appointment will be made with the parent to discuss the issue.
3. A final decision will be made by the administration.
4. If a consensus cannot be reached, then the parent may address it to the CEO.
5. Finally, a parent may address the Galapagos Rockford School Board; at the next scheduled GRCS Board meeting (meeting dates can be found on the GRCS website under the Parent tab under calendar or at the bottom of the first web page under Legal Notices

Withdrawal from School

Any parent who wishes to withdraw their scholar from GRCS must notify the Scholar Recruitment Manager and meet with a Dean before any withdrawal. . Legally, the parent or guardian must inform GRCS what school the child will attend and fill out a formal transfer form to be submitted to the main office. No fees will be refunded for withdrawal or school supplies.

It is important to note, that no Galapagos staff member may ever ask or require a parent to withdraw. If a staff member does so, please contact our compliance manager at bkennedy@galapagoscharter.org .

Mandated Reporting of Abuse/Neglect

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately. Once a staff member becomes aware that a scholar may be the victim of abuse or neglect, they must:

1. Notify the administration
2. Call the Department of Children and Family Services hotline at (800) 25-ABUSE
3. Complete an incident report

GRCS will not release the name(s) of staff members who filed the DCFS report.

Grading

Each grade level has a set of performance indicators for each subject area. The performance indicators are the skills and concepts that a scholar must demonstrate proficiency in by the end of the school year in order to be promoted to the next grade level. Performance indicators are based on the skills and concepts taught in GRCS's grade appropriate, state aligned curricula.

Instructors will use informal and formal assessments to determine if a scholar has met the expectations for his/her grade level. All formal assessments used at GRCS will measure scholars' acquisition of skills and concepts.

Grading Scale

Label	Min Value	GPA Value
M	90 to 100	4.00
P	80 to 89	3.00
AP	70 to 79	2.00
E	60 to 69	1.00
NY	0 to 59	0.00

M = Mastery
P = Proficient
AP = Approaching Proficiency
E = Emerging
NY = Not Yet

The GRCS grading scale reflects its belief of high standards and its commitment to ensuring achievement for all scholars. GRCS is committed to providing individualized instructional opportunities to ensure scholar success.

GRCS grades are solely based on assessments that measure scholar proficiency of the performance indicators. Formal grades will not reflect homework, behavior and attendance/ truancy. GRCS wants to ensure that mastery is based upon demonstrated performance and what is considered mastery in one classroom is the same as in another.

GRCS believes that this better reflects whether a scholar has truly grasped a concept as opposed to simply displaying a preliminary understanding of the concept. Finally, although a child will be able to pass with a E (60-69%), a scholar scoring in this range will be considered to be approaching grade level expectations and therefore not achieving mastery levels. In such a case, an early intervention may be implemented and the scholar may receive extra assistance through a PASS plan. [See PASS Plan]

Honor Roll

Honor Roll Recognition-A celebration of scholars, parents, family members, and all stakeholders of Galapagos Rockford Charter School for the grit, drive, and growth mindset of scholars who have achieved a 3.5 GPA or better during a grading quarter of the academic school year.

Promotion

GRCS believes that scholars must master concepts and skills before being promoted in order to have the skills and knowledge necessary for continued academic success. The GRCS promotion policy is intended to promote scholars who have demonstrated comprehension of concepts and skills so that they may successfully progress to the next grade level. GRCS does not endorse social promotion. GRCS will look at a combination of grades, assessment data, behavior, attendance, and maturity level to determine scholar promotion.

Notice of Failure to Promote

The following will take place throughout the year to ensure that parents/guardians understand the promotion criteria for GRCS and are informed of their scholar's academic progress and attendance record.

- Frequent opportunities for parent/instructor communication will be made possible through planned meetings, phone conferences, email, letters, etc. concerning promotion. Instructors will be required to make frequent parent connections throughout the school year to keep parents informed.
- Parents/guardians will be informed regularly of their child's academic progress through quarterly report card conferences (refer to GRCS calendar).
- Parents/guardians will be informed quarterly of their child's attendance record.

Although promotion decisions will be made in June of each year, parents/guardians will be apprised of their child's progress on a regular basis. Any parent/guardian whose child is in danger of not being promoted will receive notice by the end of April.

Galapagos Rockford Charter School believes that behavioral management should not be premised on consequences or punishments. It should be based upon developing skills, developing community, and developing relationships. Galapagos Rockford Charter School continually works towards these goals with a focus on a supportive and empathetic community.

Where and When the Discipline Code Applies

The standards set forth in the Discipline Code apply to behavior:

- in school during school hours,
- before and after school, while on school property,
- while traveling on buses to and from school or on trips,
- at all school-sponsored events,
- on social media and
- on other-than-school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the school community.

When misbehavior involves communication, gestures or expressive behavior, the infraction applies to oral, written or electronic communications, including but not limited to texting, e-mailing, and social networking.

Classroom Management Overview

Instructors' interactions with scholars should consistently be caring and professional in nature. When we do this, scholars begin to connect our high expectations and strict adherence to these expectations with our desire to see them be successful. It is our responsibility as the adults in our school to continuously work to foster positive and deep relationships with our scholars.

- Level 1-are low-level, minor disruptions that interfere with the learning environment but do not pose safety risks. These behaviors are managed by the classroom instructor using redirection, classroom management strategies, and restorative practices.
- Level 2-when Level 1 behaviors become chronic despite documented classroom interventions. An administrator intervenes when the behavior escalates to a high-level offense (e.g., safety concern, direct insubordination, harassment) and the behavior significantly disrupts the learning environment beyond the

instructor's ability to manage the actions occurring. These actions will then result in immediate referral (IR) with the administration removing scholar(s) from class and responding accordingly.

Consequence Level	Possible Responses
Level 1- Instructor Controlled Consequence	The Instructor may... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss with scholar. ● Facilitate an apology. ● Issue a logical or restorative consequence. ● Issue a phone call home. ● Issue a lunch detention. ● Issue an after school detention with the instructor. ● Invalidate the assignment/assessment.
Level 2- Referral	The Administrator may... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue an after school detention with the Dean. ● Conduct a restorative conference. ● Assign to Supportive Learning Environment (SLE) with the Dean. ● Issue a suspension. ● Recommend the scholar for expulsion hearing.

Category: Academic Integrity
Inappropriate Scholar Behavior
<p>Level 1 Instructor Consequence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not prepared for class (no materials) ● Incomplete homework ● Does not complete class work ● Late to class ● Sleeping in class ● Doing other work in class ● Not citing sources/plagiarism ● Copying answers from the book ● Copying answers from a friend ● Telling answers to others/allowing others to copy ● Using calculator or other materials that are not allowed on classwork ● Performing group work to determine answers when individual work is required ● Looking at another scholar's paper during an assessment

Level 2 Referral

- Stealing answer documents
- Distributing stolen answer documents
- Using a cell phone

Category: Defiance

Inappropriate Scholar Behavior

Level 1 Instructor Consequence

- Not following directions the first time
- Not tracking
- Negative attitude
- Untucked shirt
- Refusal to work in class
- Junk food
- Traveling without a pass (with permission)
- Minor uniform violation that can be fixed immediately (undershirt)
- Non-responsive to instructor requests or directions
- Taking too long to return to class (with a pass)
- Minor uniform violation that can not be fixed immediately (shoes, socks, belt)

Level 2 referral

- Major uniform violation (uniform shirt & pants)
- Leaving the campus without permission

Category: Language

Inappropriate Scholar Behavior

Level 1

- Verbal insults or put-downs about a scholar, not directed at a scholar Inappropriate language directed at scholar(s)
- Verbal insults or put-downs directed at another scholar
- Minor teasing or taunting
- Verbal insults toward an adult
- Inappropriate response

Level 2 Referral

- Repetitive bullying/taunting
- Encouraging/inciting fights
- Obscene or profane language or gestures
- Threats of physical harm towards an adult
- Bomb threats
- Repetitive threats of physical harm towards another scholar
- Extortion or coercion

Category: Disruption to Learning Environment

Inappropriate Scholar Behavior

Level 1 Instructor Consequence

- Calling out
- Talking when others are talking
- Making unnecessary noises in the classroom
- Violation of sacred halls (talking)
- Writing and passing notes
- Verbal arguments with other scholars
- Screaming or yelling in the hallways or bathroom

Level 2 Referral

- Excessive yelling or screaming in the classroom that won't stop when directed
- Verbal arguments with instructors/staff
- Threatening emails, notes, calls
- Falsely pulling a fire alarm
- Erratic or irrational behavior that cannot be calmed down when removed from class

Category: Possession of Disruptive or Dangerous Items

Inappropriate Scholar Behavior

Level 1 instructor consequence

- Possession of prohibited technology
- Use of prohibited technology
- Possession of any object that disrupts the learning environment
- Showing others prohibited items

Level 2 Referral

- Possession of tobacco including vapes
- Possession of a lighter or matches
- Possession of any weapon like object
- Possession of paraphernalia or related item
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Weapons*
- Drugs with intent to deliver*
- Possession of controlled substances, including alcohol*
- Participation in sale of drugs*
- Display of gang symbols or paraphernalia (includes drawings)
- Illegal activity (i.e. gambling)

Category: Disrespect to Physical Environment
Inappropriate Scholar Behavior
<p>Level 1 Instructor Consequence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disorganized materials ● Messy desk/binder ● Not cleaning up area or picking up litter on the ground ● Littering ● Taking materials without permission ● Misuse of materials ● Throwing paper towel or toilet paper in the bathroom ● Not cleaning up tables after breakfast/lunch
<p>Level 2 Referral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Destruction of materials ● Tipping over chairs/desks ● Destruction of property ● Theft* ● Vandalism* ● Drawing gang symbols

Category: Safety
Inappropriate Scholar Behavior
<p>Level 1 Instructor Consequence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Violating someone's physical space ● Running in the classroom or hallway ● Throwing materials or items such as books, pencils, etc. around the classroom ● Initiating or participating in any unacceptable minor physical actions (rough housing)
<p>Level 2 Referral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fighting-two or more people ● Physical aggression ● Assault ● Aggravated battery* ● Premeditated fights

Category: Bus Safety	
Inappropriate Scholar Behavior	Progression of Consequences
<p>Level 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Derogatory remarks(600) ● Disobedience(601) ● Eating/drinking on bus (603) ● Failure to clear the aisle while others are loading/unloading (604) ● Failure to sit in assigned seat (605) ● Late to bus stop (607) ● Littering (608) ● Profanity/obscenity/indecent gesture (610) ● Pushing and shoving (non-aggressive) (611) ● Spitting on floor (612) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue a logical or restorative consequence ● Assign seating in the bus
<p>Level 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distribution, possession, exhibition of offensive materials (703) ● Damage to property (701) ● Discriminatory conduct (702) ● Excessive noise (704) ● Failure to remain in seat (705) ● Fighting (706) ● Gambling (707) ● Gang related behavior (708) ● Improper loading/unloading/crossing (710) ● Incendiary objects/lighters/matches (711) ● Indecent gestures (712) ● Physical abuse (713) ● Possession of harmful objects (714) ● Possession of stolen property (715) ● Profanity/threats at a staff member (716) ● Reckless behavior (717) ● Sexual misconduct (718) ● Spitting/biting another scholar (719) ● Temper tantrum/ out of control behavior (720) ● Theft (721) ● Threats/intimidation (722) ● Throwing objects inside the bus (723) ● Throwing objects out of bus window (724) ● Use of tobacco (727) ● Persistent Level 1 behavior (729) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue a lunch detention ● Review bus safety expectations ● Facilitate an apology ● Appoint a peer bus helper/monitor ● For physical abuse, loss of bus riding privileges (1-3 days) ● Assign to Saturday bus safety class
<p>Level 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improper use of school bus emergency exit (807) ● Sexual harassment (811) ● Vandalism less than \$30 dollars (817) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate an apology ● Issue a loss of extension (5-8) ● Issue a restorative or logical consequence ● Review School bus expectations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Persistent Level 2 behaviors (819) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent notification ● Loss of bus privileges (2-5 days) ● Ride the bus to monitor behaviors
<p>Level 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distribution or sale of drugs or look alike drugs (803) ● Suspicion of being under the influence of drugs (808) ● Threats with a weapon (813) ● Vandalism over \$30 (817) ● Persistent Level 3 behaviors (819) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue an after school detention with the dean ● Parent notification ● Loss of bus riding privileges 3-5 days ● Issue a suspension
<p>Level 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arson/attempted arson (800) ● Battery (801) ● Possession of fireworks or explosives (809) ● Staff assault (812) ● Throwing objects at bus driver (814) ● Use/possession of a weapon (815) ● Use of a legitimate tool as a weapon (816) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Issue a suspension ● Recommendation for expulsion hearing

Any infractions which are preceded by an asterisk () also violate criminal laws, and GRCS reserves the right to notify police if the misconduct is serious and/ or the scholar persists in misconduct after being told to cease such behavior. Instructor discretion will be employed at all times and instructors have the right to look at all circumstances before deciding appropriate disciplinary actions. Scholars who are found to possess illegal drugs, firearms, or other dangerous weapons, or those who commit acts of misconduct which seriously disrupt the orderly educational process will be suspended immediately and face possible expulsion.*

Electronics:

- GRCS does not permit scholar use of pagers, electronic games, other electronic devices, or cell phones unless they have been given permission and are being supervised by an instructor.
- If scholars bring cell phones to school they will hand their cell phone to their Crew instructor first thing in the morning. The instructor will then lock them up in the classroom storage cabinets in fifth-eighth grade. These cabinets are locked by the instructor until the end of the day. Right before dismissal scholars will be given their cell phones back. Scholars in grades kindergarten-fourth must turn in their cell phones to their instructor or have them turned off and left in their lockers.
- GRCS reserves the right to confiscate cell phones from individuals who do not comply with this policy. Confiscated electronics will not be returned to scholars at the end of the day. In the event that an electronic device is confiscated, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to come to the school to retrieve the device.
- Scholars who use cell phones during the instructional day will face disciplinary consequences.
- GRCS is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen electronics.
- Electronics are not permitted on any Galapagos Field Studies, After School X Programming, College 101 Programs or Project Passport Programs.

Logical or Restorative Conference: For grades K-8, a scholar is encouraged to, and held accountable for, completing a task or having a conversation that addresses the issue caused by the initial infraction. At GRCS, we believe that discipline is most effective when it focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and teaching scholars to take responsibility for their actions. We use restorative discipline as a core approach to guide scholar behavior, help scholars learn from mistakes, and strengthen our school community.

What Is Restorative Discipline?

Restorative Discipline at GRCS is a philosophy and set of practices that:

- Focuses on accountability, empathy, and problem-solving rather than punishment.
- Encourages scholars to understand the impact of their actions on others.
- Provides opportunities for scholars to make amends and restore trust.
- Supports personal growth and builds community through structured conversations, reflection, and action.

Restorative discipline does not mean there are no consequences. Instead, consequences are designed to:

- Help scholars take responsibility.
- Repair harm done to others.
- Prevent future incidents by teaching new skills and behaviors.

Sample Restorative Actions by Age and Infraction

Infraction	K-2 Restorative Actions	3-5 Restorative Actions	6-8 Restorative Actions
Disrespect (Talking back, refusal)	Apology, drawing or letter, re-teaching expectations, circle conversation.	Verbal or written apology, reflective worksheet, restorative circle with peer or teacher.	Written apology or verbal conversation, peer mediation, restorative conference with affected parties.
Property Misuse/Damage	Help clean or fix item, guided reflection, apology drawing or verbal apology.	Repair or replace item, reflection sheet, restorative conversation with those affected.	Restitution(repair/replace), restorative conference, plan to prevent future damage.
Physical Conflict	Guided conversation with staff, apology drawing or verbal apology, re-teaching personal space.	Restorative circle with involved parties, apology letter, reflection and behavior skill-building.	Restorative conference, conflict resolution session, peer mediation, accountability agreement.

Repeated Disruption	Visual behavior plan, role play appropriate behavior, teacher-led restorative talk.	Reflection sheet, class community circle, action plan for improvement.	Restorative conference, class impact circle, behavior intervention plan with scholar input.
Bullying or Harassment	Teacher facilitated empathy lesson, restorative conversation, ongoing check-ins.	Restorative circle with target (if appropriate), ongoing monitoring and support, service to school community.	Restorative conference, formal accountability steps, ongoing restorative check-ins and coaching.

Key Takeaways:

- Restorative consequences are not "getting away" with behavior. They are meaningful, age-appropriate actions that teach responsibility.
- Scholars are expected to own their actions and work to rebuild trust with peers and adults.
- Families will be partners in the restorative process, and may be invited to participate in conversations when appropriate.

Temporary Removal From Group: Instructors may send scholars to “Alaska” (an area separated from other scholars), with clear reflection guidelines and a process for being accepted back into class. When a scholar has finished their reflection, the instructor will look over the reflection, and if completed correctly will tell the scholar to go back to their seat.

Supportive Learning Environment (SLE): At GRCS, we are committed to maintaining safe, respectful, and inclusive classrooms where all scholars can learn. When a scholar’s behavior significantly disrupts learning or poses a risk to themselves or others, they may be temporarily removed from the classroom and placed in the Supportive Learning Environment (SLE). This space is not punitive but restorative and reflective in nature, designed to help the scholar regain control, reflect on their choices, and prepare to rejoin their learning community productively.

The SLE serves as a calm, structured space where scholars receive:

- Time and guidance to regulate emotions and reflect on their behavior.
- Restorative coaching and support.
- Academic work to stay engaged in learning.
- A plan for reentry that includes scholar accountability and staff support.

Step-by-Step Process: From Incident to Return

1. Behavior Incident Occurs

- The classroom instructor follows the school-wide behavior management framework.

- If Level 2 behaviors occur (e.g., repeated defiance, physical aggression, unsafe behavior), and classroom interventions are exhausted or safety is a concern, the instructor submits an immediate referral (IR) in the behavior management system.

2. Immediate Referral (IR) (if needed)

- A member of the Support Team escorts the scholar to the SLE.
- The scholar is greeted by the Dean of School Culture or another trained support staff member who de-escalates the situation and begins the reflection and regulation process.

3. Initial Assessment in the SLE

- The Dean of School Culture assesses the scholar's emotional and mental state.
- If the scholar is unable to begin restorative work, they are given time and tools to regulate (breathing, calming activities, visuals, etc.).
- Academic work is provided based on what the scholar is missing in class.

4. Restorative Process

- The scholar completes a reflection form to identify what happened, how it impacted others, and what could be done differently.
- A restorative conversation is facilitated with the Dean of School Culture using restorative questioning techniques.
- The DOC determines whether a restorative conference with involved staff or peers is required before reentry.

5. Parent Communication

- The IR is logged, and a parent or guardian is contacted by phone the same day by either the Instructor, Social Worker, Behavior Aide, or Dean of School Culture.
- The staff member explains the incident, the scholar's response, and the next steps for support and reentry.
- A follow-up email or written summary may be sent depending on the severity of the infraction.

6. Decision to Return to Class

- The decision to return is made collaboratively by the Dean of School Culture and/or Dean of Instruction based on the scholar's emotional readiness, completion of reflection and restorative steps, and agreements made during any restorative conference.

7. Reentry to Class

- A reentry plan is created and reviewed with the scholar, which may include, restating class expectations, an apology (verbal or written) to peers or instructor, a check-in/check-out plan, and/or seating changes or

academic support. The classroom instructor is informed of the reentry plan prior to the scholar's return. A short reentry meeting may take place between the scholar and instructor to rebuild trust and clarify expectations.

8. Ongoing Monitoring

- Behavior data is monitored to ensure improvement.
- Additional supports (e.g., check-ins, behavior tracker, mentor match) may be introduced based on patterns of behavior.
- If a scholar has multiple removals, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) may be initiated in collaboration with the Special Education Team, if applicable.

Lunch Detention: A lunch detention will be monitored by the Dean of School Culture or another staff member.

Class/Group Apology: Depending on circumstances, scholars will give a class or group apology for their behavior. If an instructor is having the scholar apologize to the class for their behavior, the instructor will coach the scholar on how to give an appropriate apology. For class apology, scholars will apologize during their morning meeting or pathway time. If the Dean has given this consequence, the Dean will coach the scholar with an appropriate apology.

After School Detention With Dean: The Dean of School Culture may give after school detentions to scholars based on behaviors that caused the scholar to be removed from the classroom. The Dean will be responsible for notifying parents and informing them of the date and time. During these after school detentions the Dean of School Culture will be responsible for monitoring and creating plans on correcting scholar behaviors.

After School Detention with Instructor: An instructor may issue an after school detention to scholars based on behaviors or academic concerns. The instructor will be responsible for notifying parents and administration to inform them of the date and time. During these after school detentions, the instructor will be responsible for monitoring and creating plans on correcting scholar behaviors.

Suspensions: When a scholar is removed for a Level 2 infraction, the Dean of School Culture will investigate the situation. The Dean of School Culture will ensure scholars are treated fairly when facing disciplinary actions like suspension and/or expulsion (due process). This includes the right to notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present their side of the story. After the Dean has collected all of the information that is needed, the Dean may issue a 1-5 day suspension depending upon the specifics of the situation. After the suspension has been served, the scholar and their parents/guardians will attend a re-entry meeting with the Dean of School Culture and the instructor. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the school and parents work together to support the scholar. Scholars will not be able to return to class until they have had their re-entry meeting.

Prevention Meeting (formerly referred to as a Pre-Expulsion Hearing Meeting): A Prevention meeting will be held for any scholar who has 4 days of suspensions within one semester of school. The goal of the meeting is to develop strategies to help the scholar avoid more suspension and more specifically the possibility of reaching a point

where an expulsion hearing may be necessary. During the meeting, the Dean of School Culture will work with the parents, the scholar, and instructors on creating a plan of the changes that need to be seen and the behavioral goals and supports that will be put in place. The purpose of this meeting is to help develop a pathway so that the scholar can work towards a productive year at the school.

Expulsion Hearing (Not a pre-determination of an expulsion): An expulsion hearing will be held for any scholar who has received 5 days of suspensions in one semester of school or has committed a Level 2 infraction. All scholars are provided with full due process. For all GRCS expulsion hearings:

- A notice of an expulsion hearing will be prepared and the scholar's parents/guardians will be contacted notifying them of the hearing. A letter and phone call will serve as such notice.
- The notice will inform parents/guardians of the possibility of expulsion from the school.
- The notice will detail the scholar's behaviors/actions which led to the hearing.
- The notice will outline the date, procedure, and rights of the parents/guardians and the scholar for the expulsion hearing.
- The notice will inform the parents/guardians that the scholar has a right to have legal representation.
- The members of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board of Directors shall conduct a hearing, at which time testimony from all witnesses, as well as the scholar will be heard and documentary evidence may be introduced.
- The final determination of expulsion shall be made by the Galapagos Board of Directors.

No expulsion hearing will have a predetermined outcome. No scholar will ever be expelled for academic reasons. Special Education scholars will have had a Manifestation Hearing in which the determination is that the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability before an expulsion hearing may be held.

Supporting Scholars with Disabilities: At Galapagos Rockford Charter School, we are committed to providing an inclusive, supportive, and legally compliant educational environment for all scholars, including those with disabilities. We recognize the importance of individualized support and the need to ensure fair and appropriate processes when addressing behavioral concerns.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Disciplinary Procedures: Scholars with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are entitled to additional protections and considerations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- **Suspensions and Expulsions:**
Scholars with IEPs cannot be suspended for more than **10 cumulative school days** in a school year without a review to determine whether the behavior is related to their disability (Manifestation Determination Review, or MDR). If the behavior is found to be related to the scholar's disability, the school must provide appropriate behavioral support and cannot proceed with traditional disciplinary removal. If the behavior is not related to the disability, regular disciplinary measures may apply, but the scholar must continue to receive educational services.

- **Repeated Removals:**

Patterns of suspensions, even if each is less than 5 days, may be considered repeated removals. Scholars needing to be removed from class multiple times, but did not receive a suspension is considered repeated removals. These patterns may trigger a reevaluation of the scholar's IEP, additional supports, or the need for updated behavioral interventions.

Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs): When a scholar with a disability exhibits ongoing or significant behavioral challenges, the school may initiate additional steps to better support the scholar.

- **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA):** An FBA is a structured process used to understand the underlying reasons for a scholar's behavior. It is typically conducted when a scholar's behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others, or after a disciplinary incident that may lead to a change in placement. Parental consent is required to conduct an FBA.
- **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** A BIP is developed based on the results of the FBA. It outlines proactive strategies, supports, and specific interventions to address the scholar's behavioral needs. A BIP may be considered if a scholar has persistent behavioral difficulties, if they have been suspended multiple times, or if their behavior significantly disrupts their education.

IEP Review and Additional Supports: The IEP team, which includes parents/guardians, educators, and support staff, will meet to review the scholar's plan when:

- Suspensions or removals approach or exceed 5 days in a school year.
- New behavioral concerns emerge that may require different strategies or supports.
- The scholar is not making expected progress on behavioral or academic goals.

During these reviews, the team may:

- Modify the IEP.
- Add or adjust behavioral goals.
- Consider additional services or supports.
- Develop or revise the BIP.

Parent Participation and Rights: Parents/guardians are vital members of the IEP team and must be included in all meetings regarding changes to their child's educational or behavioral plans. Parents have the right to:

- Be informed of disciplinary actions.
- Provide input during IEP, FBA, or BIP processes.
- Request evaluations or IEP meetings at any time to discuss concerns.

Bullying Prohibited

Galapagos Rockford Charter School strives to ensure a learning environment that is physically and emotionally safe

for all scholars. The Galapagos mission is to ensure that all scholars become responsible, college-educated adults capable of adapting and prospering in a changing global economy. Bullying challenges the school's ability to fulfill this mission and creates an environment in which some scholars may feel unsafe. As a result, Galapagos Rockford Charter School prohibits acts of bullying. Bullying is contrary to school policy as well as contrary to state law.

Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

This policy is consistent with the policies of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School and the Galapagos Rockford Charter School board. This policy is based upon the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including scholars and parents/guardians.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a scholar or scholars that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Places a scholar or scholars in reasonable fear of harm to the scholar's or scholars' person or property;
- Causes a substantially detrimental effect on the scholar's or scholars' physical or mental health;
- Interferes substantially with the scholar's or scholars' academic performance; or
- Interferes substantially with the scholar's or scholars' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Galapagos Rockford Charter School.

Bullying may take various forms, including, without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, public humiliations, destruction of property, theft or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication. It includes, without limitation, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, social media communications or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated above.

Coverage of this Policy

Any bullying, including cyber bullying, is covered under this policy if the incident results in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment or the orderly day-to-day operations of Galapagos or any Galapagos program.

Cyber bullying is covered whether it is initiated from school devices or devices that are accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function or program.

Reporting and Investigations

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, includes procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all scholars involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as

appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Any act of bullying should be immediately reported to an administrator (Dean of Culture at the appropriated campus). The scholar or parent may also report an act of bullying to an instructor or social worker, who must then notify the Dean of Culture. Complaints against an administrator should be reported to the CEO. Complaints against the CEO should be reported to the President of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board.

The Dean of Culture or designee shall promptly investigate any reported act of bullying. Galapagos shall take all reasonable efforts to conclude the investigation within ten days. Following the investigation, the Dean of Culture or the designee shall determine whether a verified act of bullying occurred and will document all verified acts of bullying. The Dean of Culture or designee shall also promptly notify the parent or legal guardian of the victim of a verified act of bullying. If the perpetrator of the bullying is a minor, the Dean of Culture or designee shall also promptly notify the minor's parent or legal guardian. A verified act of bullying will result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action as is written in the Galapagos Rockford Parent/Scholar Handbook. This may include discipline up to suspension or, in severe cases, lead to an expulsion hearing for a scholar; discipline up to and including termination for an employee, prohibition to enter the school's premises for a parent, guest, or volunteer. Under certain, albeit rare, circumstances an individual may also be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, GRCS will provide parents and guardians of the scholars who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the dean or school administrator or his/her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

Consequences for bullying will be instituted with the below-listed factors taken into account.

- Adapted to the particular needs of the school and community.
- Contribute to maintaining school safety.
- Protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate.
- Teach scholars the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society.
- Serve to build and restore relationships among scholars, families, schools, and communities.
- Reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of scholars' behavioral health needs in order to keep scholars in school.
- Increase scholar accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Retaliation

Retaliation or false accusations against anyone who is a target of bullying, a witness to bullying, or who has reported reliable information about an act of bullying is strictly prohibited. Suspected retaliation or false accusations should be reported in the same manner as bullying. Retaliation or false accusations may result in disciplinary action.

False Accusations

An individual who falsely accuses another individual of bullying as an attempt to bully or as an attempt to retaliate shall be reported to the administration and an appropriate investigation shall ensue.

Interventions

As appropriate, Galapagos shall use a variety of interventions to address bullying. These interventions may include, but are not limited to counseling, social work services, social-emotional skill building, psychological services and community based services.

Assessment

The Dean or the Dean's designee must annually report to the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board all verified incidents of bullying and any resulting consequences, discipline, or referrals. The CEO shall be responsible for implementing this policy's provisions and procedures and shall develop administrative guidelines as necessary. Galapagos shall evaluate its bullying policy by collecting and analyzing the frequency and nature of bully activities throughout the school year.

The evaluation will include an evaluation process to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; scholar, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation will be made available on the Galapagos website (www.galapagoscharter.org).

Notifications

Galapagos Rockford Charter School makes this policy available through its website. This Policy is also incorporated into instructor, scholar, and parent/guardian handbooks and codes of conduct. GRCS reserves the right to make any changes deemed appropriate for the learning community. Any amendments to the GRCS Discipline Policy will be available in writing to scholars and parents. No disciplinary action will be taken on amendments until they are available to parents and scholars.

School-Parent Title I Compact

Mission: Galapagos Rockford Charter school is dedicated to preparing scholars to become responsible, productive, college-educated adults capable of adapting and prospering in a changing global economy.

Galapagos Rockford Charter School believes that children need the tools and skill sets to excel in their classrooms and to be able to adapt and prosper at the University level and beyond. In order to achieve this, Galapagos' instructors and staff must be dedicated to creating a learning environment that stresses the acquisition of core knowledge, promotes high standards, excites intellectual curiosity and accelerates learning opportunities for all scholars. To further empower scholars, staff are part of a team that promotes character development, leadership ethics, positive living habits and growth mindset. Furthermore, Galapagos is dedicated to ensuring access to high quality educational opportunities to all scholars.

CORE VALUES

Over the years, Galapagos Rockford Charter School has identified three core values which not only represent Galapagos Rockford Charter School but that are also found in successful Galapagos Rockford Charter School staff members.

These values are **grit, drive, and growth mindset**.

Grit

Grit is the ability to push through difficult times even when quitting seems to be the easiest option. Staff members and scholars who display grit understand that success is paved by lessons learned through hard work and setbacks.

Drive

Drive is the ability to understand that success requires stamina, continuous practice, planning and reflection.

Growth Mindset

Growth mindset is an essential component to both individual and the overall organizational success. A growth mindset requires that a person understands that we all still have unlocked potential and to realize that potential it will be necessary to challenge traditional practices and push oneself to be a continuous learner.

A learner must be willing to confront the challenges that accompany all attempts on the road towards improvement. These three values form the foundation of a successful Galapagos Rockford Charter School staff member as well as the values that we wish to impart to all of our scholars. Together these values will help to ensure that our scholars will become college-educated adults.

School Responsibilities: We, the faculty, staff, and administration of Galapagos Rockford Charter School will:

Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables our scholars to meet the State's student academic achievement standards.

- Encourage and support scholars' learning through data-driven decisions resulting in differentiated instructional practices for both in person and remote scholars.
- Maintain high instructional standards that will promote the development of standards and benchmarks.
- Respectfully and accurately inform parents of their child's progress.

- Have high expectations for scholars and be committed to continuous growth for all. Goal of 80% scholars meeting their MAP goals in reading and math. Goal of 95% attendance for all scholars.

Hold Parent-Instructor Conferences during which the individual scholar’s growth and achievement will be discussed within the framework of this compact.

- Conferences will be held four times a year, once per quarter, at the school. Information about conferences will be sent home and scheduling will occur on a flexible basis to accommodate parents’ schedules.
- Conferences can be arranged at a mutually agreed upon time with the instructor and the parent/guardian.

Provide parents with frequent reports on their children’s progress.

- Weekly Progress Reports (Kickboard Glows/ Scholar Dollar Reports) are available electronically and hardcopy (if requested).
- Report card issued at the end of each quarter.
- Updates when necessary.

Provide parents/guardians reasonable access to staff. Staff may be reached by:

- E-mail
- Phone calls
- Notes
- Additional conferences, as requested
- Staff will be in contact with the parent within 1 business day (24 hours)

Provide parents/guardians opportunities to volunteer/participate in their child’s class, and to observe classroom activities, including but not limited to:

- Chaperoning field studies
- Special school events
- School Leadership Team

Parent Responsibilities: We, as parents/guardians, will support our child’s learning in the following ways:

- Ensure that our child gets to school every day when healthy.
- Ensure that our child arrives on time and ready to learn.
- Ensure that our child is logging in online, in uniform, and prepared for learning if working remotely. Picking up and dropping off materials/supplies as needed.
- Read to or with my child at home on a regular basis and provide homework help when needed. Provide a quiet place for my child to work and study.
- Team with the instructors to help scholars with completing and submitting work.
- Review school work, progress reports, and report cards pertaining to the academic progress of my child.
- Work with instructors to ensure that my child understands and follows school and classroom rules.
- Stay informed about my child’s education and communicate with the school promptly by reading all notices and responding, as appropriate.
- Attend Parent/Instructor Conferences each quarter.

- Demonstrate interest in our child’s well-being by attending school functions and supporting school activities in person and online.

Scholar Responsibilities: As a scholar, I will share the responsibility to improve my academic achievement.

- I will come to school every day on time and be prepared to learn, participate, and speak up for help when I need it.
- I will follow the rules of my school and classroom.
- I will read every day outside of school time.
- I will share assignments, paperwork and information from my school with my parents/guardians every day.
- I will demonstrate academic achievement through completing assignments and submitting work on time.
- I will demonstrate respect for myself, other scholars, and adults.

I have read and understood my responsibilities in this Galapagos Rockford Charter School 2025-2026 Title 1 Parent/School Compact:

Parent Signature

Date

Scholar Printed Name

Grade



PARENT/ GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the 2025-26 Parent/Scholar Handbook. I agree to comply with these policies and all of the policies mandated by Galapagos Rockford Charter School.

I understand that Galapagos Rockford Charter School is a charter school and that my child's attendance at the school is a privilege, not a right. I understand that attendance at GRCS requires compliance with the school's mission and policies.

The policies and procedures described in this handbook do not constitute a contract with scholars, personnel, or parents. The administration reserves the right to interpret, revise, amend, or withdraw at its discretion.

Scholar Printed Name_____

Scholar Signature_____

Parent/ Guardian Printed Name_____

Parent/Guardian Signature_____

Date of Acknowledgement_____