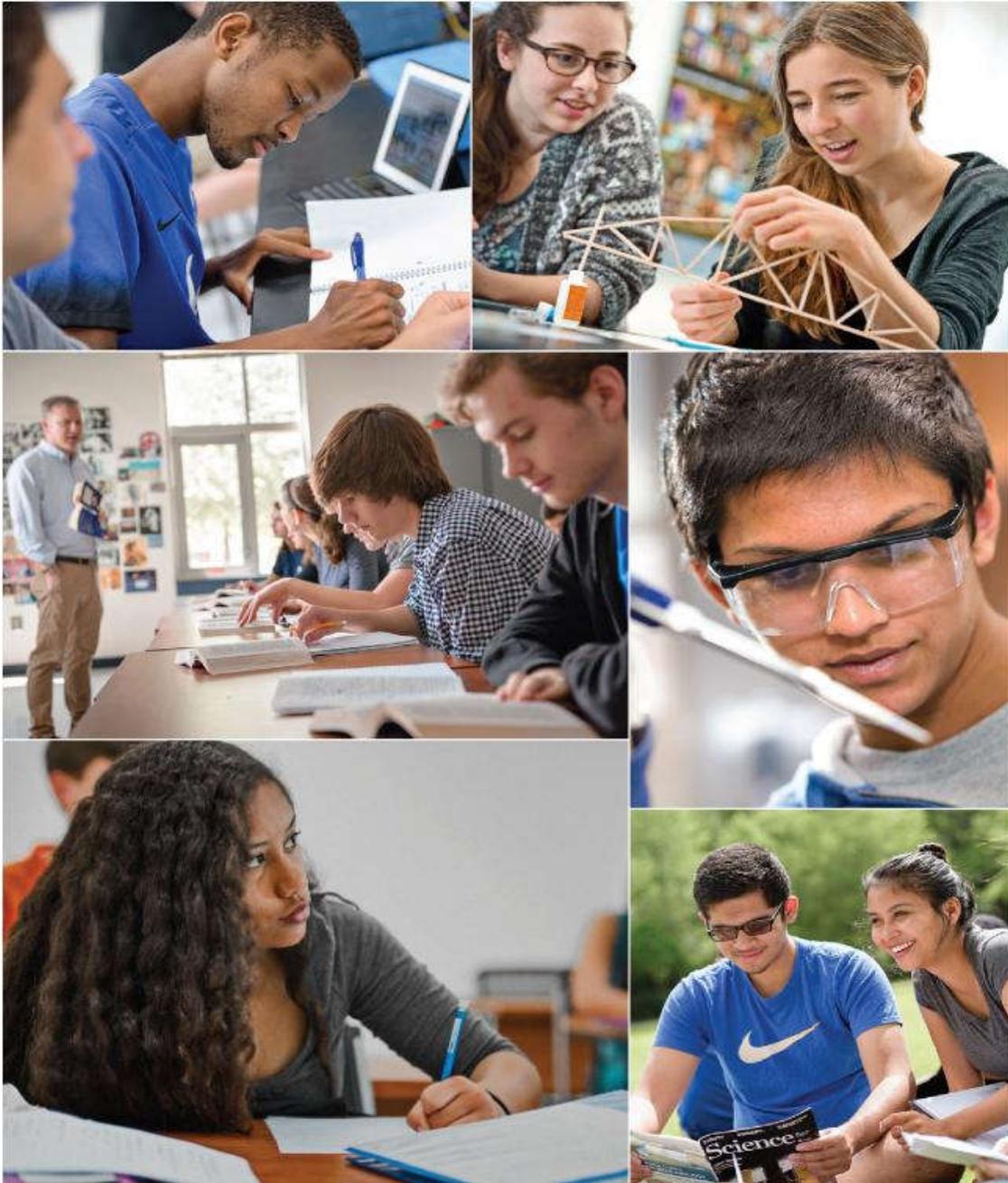




SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR
SCIENCE+
MATHEMATICS

Transforming Lives.



An employee handbook for working at the South Carolina Governor's School for Science + Mathematics

October 2022



GSSM seeks out and advances our state's most talented and motivated students, offering a **transforming** education in science, mathematics, and engineering that cultivates **joy** in **learning** and builds the **confidence** to engage as ethical leaders with the world's most significant issues.

GSSM Mission Statement
Adopted by the Board of Trustees
January, 2018

Disclaimer

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This guide may not contain all of the policies, procedures, or instructions that apply to GSSM employees. In the event that a policy or procedure described herein, or its absence, improperly contradicts employment policies, procedures, or statutes of the State of South Carolina, authoritative policy may take precedence without invalidating other parts of this guide. Policies that apply to state employees, but may not be contained within this document, may apply to GSSM employees and contractors.

All policies, procedures, and statements contained herein supersede policies, procedures, statements, and practices previously published or communicated by GSSM.

Acknowledged and Received:

Print Name

Signature

Date



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Introduction

At the South Carolina Governor’s School for Science + Mathematics (GSSM) our state’s most motivated and capable students discover their dreams and passions and develop the ability to achieve them. GSSM helps students understand and care about the world to get them ready to change it.

Our mission is to seek out and advance our state’s most talented and motivated students, offering a transforming education in science, mathematics, and engineering that cultivates joy in learning and builds the confidence to engage as ethical leaders with the world’s most significant issues. We recognize that children begin deciding who they are and what they can be at an early age. The scope of our work begins in these early years to teach young minds what they are and can be. Through lasting relationships spanning elementary and middle school years, we prepare these minds to reach, fail, learn, and reach further.

Working at GSSM means joining a community of talented and exceptionally able practitioners from many disciplines and backgrounds. We share a commitment to spreading the value of a GSSM education to as many people as possible. We dedicate ourselves to the growth and success of our expanding community.

We are a school that is dedicated to advancing the state of education in science, mathematics, and engineering. We recognize that to make meaningful contributions in these fields, students must understand the humanities. To develop their ability to compete, work together, strive, fall, and get back up with confidence, students must leave the safety of the classroom and encounter the experiences that come with athletics, travel, research, and leadership. GSSM is, therefore, far more than a rigorous STEM school. GSSM is a place for high-achieving students interested in STEM to experience a transformational education.

Our work is challenging and endlessly rewarding.



Welcome to GSSM.

History

GSSM opened in 1988, in facilities on the campus of Coker College in Hartsville. In 2003, the School and its 128 students moved across the street to a new, state-of-the-art building capable of housing 288 students. In 2010, two new wings were added: The Jay Lucas Academic Center, featuring more than 18 classroom and laboratory facilities, and the Gerald R. Malloy Student Activities Center, which includes a gym, weight room, engineering projects center, fully-equipped kitchen, game room, and space for students to relax. GSSM has consistently maintained the 10:1 student-teacher ratio, a world-class faculty, and an innovative curriculum during the expansion efforts. In 2015, the school reached maximum capacity of 288 students.

Strong Foundations

GSSM's foundations are built on a history of excellence. The school is where it is today because of the efforts of committed visionaries and a unique partnership of public and private organizations that continue to support the school today.

As a GSSM employee, you have joined a community of high-aspiring and high-achieving professionals who seek to create the best experiences for our students and families. As a member of this community, we invite you to think big, and commit yourself to supporting the growth and achievement that is the hallmark of this special school.

Envisioning the Future – Our Strategic Plan

In January 2018, the GSSM Board of Trustees approved a new strategic plan, which provides a blueprint for GSSM to reach and serve more students, provide more opportunities, and prepare more future leaders in the fields of science, mathematics, and engineering for South Carolina. The plan calls for GSSM to be recognized as a national leader in K-12 science and mathematics education, known for developing students who are exceptionally well-prepared to engage in global issues as creative and ethical leaders.

We recognize the importance of moving the school forward while retaining its defining characteristics of rigor, high achievement, and total commitment to our students and the families who entrust them to our care.

The GSSM Strategic Plan can be found at <https://www.scgssm.org/gssm-strategic-plan>.

Purpose

The General Assembly and the Governor of the State of South Carolina have established and sustained the SC Governor's School for Science + Mathematics to support economic development in our state by providing a supply of talented, technically astute, ethically aware leaders able to participate in the development of new knowledge, and the creation and growth of high-tech businesses.

Core Beliefs

The faculty and staff at the South Carolina Governor's School for Science + Mathematics believe in and strive toward the following ideals:

- To achieve and sustain academic excellence by seeking and retaining superior faculty and staff, who uphold exemplary personal and academic standards. Faculty members are responsible for designing, revising, and renewing an exceptional curriculum. Faculty define the equipment, laboratories, and other facilities needed to teach the curriculum, revising as necessary to meet realistic constraints. Staff members develop programs to support and educate the students outside of class, and determine the resources needed to implement them.
- To attract students who are among the most talented in the state, in academics, leadership, and character. These students require, and we will provide, a school community which creates a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment by encouraging mutual respect for one another, building character, and expanding awareness of and value for diversity, equity, and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff. We support growth and development academically, socially, morally, and physically, while fostering creativity and a spirit of exploration. We equip our students for success in college, in future careers, and in life.
- To maintain academic excellence which:
 - places the student first, giving highest priority to their successful education, with the goal of preparation for a lifetime of learning and of creative contributions to society.
 - values education at the highest level,
 - empowers faculty to make individual decisions about their classes and students, aiming at achievement of educational goals,
 - encourages innovation and supports achievement.
- To maintain a professional commitment to broadening, deepening, and renewing professional expertise and best practices, particularly in terms of teaching effectiveness.
- To provide an educational resource for the state, both on and off our campus, to provide a model for excellence, and facilitate the building of partnerships among public schools, institutions of higher education, and business and industry, to contribute to rising intellectual standards and expectations throughout the state.
- To promote mentored scientific research as an essential part of the GSSM education. This research should connect to real world applications and encourage knowledge of current issues in science and education.
- To evaluate and incorporate advances in educational practices, especially in gifted education.

Role Models

The young people in our community learn how to communicate, solve problems, and conduct themselves by observing and interacting with adults who they respect and look up to. Therefore, it is important that GSSM faculty and staff embrace their responsibility as role models, upholding the highest standards of caring and professional conduct at all times.

Breadth of Programs

As a statewide endeavor funded by all taxpayers in South Carolina, GSSM strives to provide value to as many communities as possible.

Our signature residential program brings the most capable and motivated students to our Hartsville campus for an intensive, multi-year, early college experience.

Our STEM Foundation program offers an online GSSM diploma to a cohort of at-home students across the state.

Our virtual programs, such as Accelerate, TEAM UP allow the school to offer advanced courses to high-performing student within their participating school districts or at home.

Our outreach programs identify talented students as early as elementary school providing them with inspiring and enrich learning opportunities which help prepare them to excel in GSSM's residential and virtual programs.

The integrated work of faculty and staff support all GSSM programs.

Organizational Chart

The Organizational Chart is available on the GSSM website.

Appointment

All GSSM employees, whether faculty or staff, are state employees. South Carolina is an at-will state. GSSM employees are assumed to continue employment unless properly notified otherwise. GSSM employees have all due process and grievance rights as state employees. More information can be found at: https://admin.sc.gov/dshr/state_ee_grievance_procedure

Staff may receive a salary letter from HR if a raise is provided with legislative approval of the budget in the late summer or early fall. Faculty will receive a salary letter from HR in late summer which will include normal step increases based on years of experience. This letter will also include any salary increases provided by the legislature to state teachers.

Community Service

Every GSSM employee is encouraged to be involved in the Hartsville and surrounding community where their expertise is needed and appropriate. Unless otherwise documented in writing by a school official, employees performing community service are working on their own behalf and their choice of service and activities do not reflect the beliefs or opinions of the school. Employees are reminded that even when acting on their own, they are ambassadors of the school and should conduct themselves responsibly and in ways that reflect well on themselves and GSSM.

Balancing Work and Life

Finding a balance between our commitment to excellence at work and our commitment to self, family, and friends can be challenging. Our minds, bodies, relationships, and community thrive when we maintain a healthy balance between our professional and personal lives.

To help maintain that healthy balance, we should:

- **Recognize unhealthy imbalances** if issues from work routinely disrupt your personal time, or if the reverse is true.
- **Respect personal spaces** by emailing, texting, and calling colleagues only during work hours whenever possible recognizing that GSSM is residential school and only closes to students during the breaks outlined in the academic calendar.
- **Keep an eye out for colleagues** who appear to be overwhelmed and offer to help if you can.
- **Take the vacation time** you have earned.
- **Maximize** your time away by trusting others to cover work or make decisions while you are away.
- **Allow colleagues** who are on leave to return before making decisions that impact their areas of responsibility.
- **Plan recovery time** when you find yourself burning the candle at both ends.
- **Seek help** when things become unmanageable.
- **Encourage each other** to find and keep balance in their lives and to respect the commitments we have to our families and friends.
- **Strive to stay healthy.**
- **Model a growth mindset.**

Religious Observation and Practice at GSSM

GSSM prohibits discrimination against any student, faculty, or staff member based on religious beliefs or the absence of religious beliefs.

As a public high school, GSSM avoids the appearance of coercion, admonishment, or proselytization for or against any religion. Faculty and staff members must likewise avoid active proselytizing or perception of coercion.

GSSM will provide reasonable accommodations to allow the observance of recognized religious holidays. Students' families should notify the Vice President for Student Development, depending on the nature of the accommodation, at the beginning of the school year, in order to determine a reasonable accommodation.

Faculty and staff members must notify their supervisor of the need for an accommodation at the beginning of the school year, and communicate to coworkers and students if needed. In all cases, all requirements for course work and for graduation must be met, and all work requirements remain in force. Appeals regarding religious and faith-related accommodations should be directed to the President.

Maintaining respect for individual religious beliefs when teaching scientific, historical, or other academic principles is necessary. Factual evidence and academic merit must be carefully distinguished from personal opinion or belief. When in doubt, seek guidance from the Dean of Curriculum and Assessment.

Employment

Hiring Process & Search Committee Guidelines

The process and procedures for the screening and selection of applicants for full-time positions at GSSM are set by the President's Executive Leadership Team. Creating a diverse community of committed, competent, highly qualified, and effective faculty and staff is a primary goal at GSSM. The processes stated in this guide are established in compliance with applicable laws and non-discrimination.

Search Strategy

The Human Resources manager will work with division leaders to initiate candidate searches.

1. A position description and outline of requirements/objectives will be submitted to Human Resources (HR) by the hiring manager once approved by the appropriate vice president.
2. The division leader and HR will determine the best strategy for the wording and placement of advertisements.
3. HR will publish vacancy announcements/advertisements which are paid for from division/department funds.
4. HR, the position's supervisor, and the division's vice president will determine membership of a search committee. Search committees will include a diversity of backgrounds to provide a wide variety of perspectives.

Responsibilities of Chair and Committee

The search committee chair manages the work of the committee and consults with HR throughout the recruitment and selection process. The chair ensures that all information about the screening and selection process is kept in confidence.

Duties of the chair include:

- Help organize the committee.
- Convene the committee for the initial orientation and planning meeting.
- Use the documents found in the HR section of the M: Drive for hiring committees.
- Collaborate with HR and committee members to create a screening guide, establish a timeline for application screening, schedule interviews, and check references.
- Collaborate with committee to develop interview questions by using GSSM interview instruction guidelines.
- Write a recommendation from the committee to the President and/or the respective VP for the candidates selected to move forward.
- Collect all notes and committee documents from the recruitment process and forward them to HR.



The position's supervisor or division leader will meet with the search committee to communicate:

- The nature of the position and a review of the position description
- The role of the committee, including its charge to recruit a diverse pool of candidates
- A preferred timeline
- How the committee will communicate its recommendations and how the chair will use the recommendations

Responsibilities of the committee members:

Committee members must fully understand the requirements and responsibilities of the position being filled in order to provide fair and consistent procedures to assess the candidates and recommend finalists to GSSM management. Committee members should be as open, consistent, and fair as possible, and should treat all applicants the same, especially if the applicants are internal.

They should also:

- Participate in communications and all called meetings
- Screen all received applications and select a group of semifinalists for more careful review
- Prepare appropriate documents for conducting the initial review
- Rate the candidates to determine the semifinalists.

As the search committee screens applications, it is important to apply the same standards to each candidate. The committee should use screening criteria such as:

- Does the candidate meet the basic requirements for the position?
- Are there gaps or inconsistencies in the candidate's resume?
- Is the candidate making a logical career move?
- Do periods of employment overlap?
- Does the resume create a positive impression?
- How complete is the application?

General Process

Committee members must remember that the purpose of the recruitment process is to select the best applicant for the position. They must treat all the information made available to them during the recruitment process confidentially. In accepting committee membership, each member assumes the responsibility not to disclose personally identifiable information concerning the candidates or information reviewed and discussed during committee meetings with any non-committee members. The identity of people who have revealed themselves through their candidacy and the integrity and candor of member-to-member discussion must be protected.

While committee size may vary depending on position, department, and area, a group of approximately five is recommended. It is highly encouraged to include students in certain aspects of searches, when appropriate. If students do not sit on a search committee, they should have the opportunity to meet candidates during their campus visits and provide input to the search committee. Students must be required to comply with all confidentiality expectations.

Time-Limited Positions

Time-limited positions are non-FTE (full-time equivalent) positions established to perform work directly associated with a time-limited project. The school creates time-limited positions for defined-term projects, or when funds are available for a position, but an FTE has not been acquired through the annual budgeting process. Applicants are fully advised about time-limited position conditions during the hiring process. If an employee is working in a time-limited position that has no projected end date, the school will attempt to convert that position to an FTE position during an upcoming budget cycle.

Employees in time-limited positions earn many of the same benefits as FTE employees, but have significant differences in how they accrue and transfer leave and other benefits. For teachers who are on a 202-day yearly schedule, compensatory time is not accrued. For more information visit: www.admin.sc.gov/humanresources.

Nepotism

S.C. Code Ann. Section 8-13-750 of the South Carolina Ethics Act provides that no public official, public member, or public employee may cause the employment, appointment, promotion, transfer, or advancement of a family member to a state or local office or position in which the public official, public member, or public employee supervises or manages. A public official, public member, or public employee may not participate in an action relating to the discipline of the public official's, public member's, or public employee's family member.

Work Schedules

The residential class day typically begins at 8:00am and generally lasts until 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. The class schedule for virtual programs is set each year in collaboration with our school districts partners, but typically the classes are conducted between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. Sometimes labs, field trips, and other planned events will cause the class day to start earlier or extend beyond 4:00pm.

Administrative offices of the school generally conduct business between 8:30am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday.

It is sometimes necessary for academic and administrative activities to be offered on weekends or evenings beyond those regularly planned such as campus life programs..

The operation of the school requires a variety of different annual and weekly work schedules based on the needs of each office or department. Work schedules are determined by work requirements and are defined by the supervisor, based on the operating needs of the school and the department. Reliable attendance and punctuality are essential elements of effective job performance; unscheduled absences and lateness have a disruptive effect on the school's operations.

All staff are required to meet the needs and expectations of their jobs and offices as defined by their supervisors, their schedules, and their work requirements.

Working Extra Time

The demands of the academic year, emergencies, or other situations occur in a residential community that may require unusual work commitments beyond the normally established schedule.

Each employee is hired with the understanding that there may be occasions that require overtime or emergency call-in work. Every effort will be made to provide employees with reasonable notice of overtime requirements. All overtime work must be approved by an employee's supervisor. Non-exempt salaried employees shall report extra time/overtime worked to their supervisor and will normally receive compensatory compensation time at the rate of 1.5 hours per overtime hour worked in lieu of overtime pay. Teachers, who are exempt employees, work a fixed number of days per year and therefore do not accrue compensatory time.

Professional Development & Growth

As a learning community, GSSM expects every employee to approach their work with a growth mindset and seek to improve their skills, abilities, and understanding. All employees are expected to be professionally active and current in their fields. To support this, GSSM will provide professional development opportunities throughout the year. Employees are strongly encouraged to participate in these activities, especially when they have direct applicability to their work.

When a supervisor assesses that an employee requires special training or a course of study, they may, with their division head's approval, authorize the employee to receive such training or coursework which will be paid for by the school.

Some positions within the school establish regular participation in professional development activities. Employees may, with the approval of their supervisor, participate in professional conferences in their field which will be paid for by the school.

All employees participate in a performance review each year. This process is not intended to replace ongoing, productive feedback and engagement between the employee and supervisor. The purpose of the review is to give an employee and their supervisor a facilitation of communication, enhancement of employee focus, goal setting and determination of training needs.

The Human Resources department supports the campus-wide employee performance review.

The results of the annual performance review are shared with the employee and becomes the foundation for the following year's employee plan.

Employee's Performance Management System (EPMS) for staff: Staff will provide their supervisor with a Self-Assessment summarizing successes, challenges, and areas for professional development requests. The supervisor can include notes from this document in their notes in the GSSM Employee's Performance Management System Document.

A professional growth review date is the first day which marks the beginning of a new review period. If an employee does not receive a performance evaluation prior to the performance review date, the employee shall receive a "meets performance requirements" rating by default.

Specific and measurable goals should be used. One way to ensure both the employee and supervisor are focused in Professional Growth is to use the SMART Goal. SMART is an acronym that stands for **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Trackable**.

The GSSM Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) Document includes several sections:

- GSSM Self-Assessment Document (required)
- Essential Job Functions - collaborate and revise Position Description
- Professional Development form (with signatures)

The supervisor will request an updated GSSM Employee Self-assessment. The supervisor may choose to incorporate self-assessment date in the EPMS document.

The supervisor will document ratings and comments on the GSSM Staff Professional Growth document prior to meeting with employee.

The supervisor will share rating and discuss comments and Essential Job Functions with the employee.

The supervisor and employee will review (provide a copy) and discuss with employee and submit signed copy to Human Resources.

Benefits

The health of you and your family are important to us at GSSM.

GSSM offers qualifying employees a comprehensive benefits package. These benefits provide custom options to meet your specific needs and include two insurance plans, retirement plans, paid leave, and pre-tax flexible spending account opportunities.

The South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) administers the State Health Plan. The State Health Plan (SHP) is a comprehensive health plan that provides you and your covered dependents with medical benefits if you become sick or are injured.

The State Health Plan gives you two options to cover your expenses: The **Standard Plan** or the **Savings Plan**.

The Standard Plan

- Higher premiums
- Lower deductibles
- Copayments
- Prescription drug coverage

The Savings Plan

- Lower premiums
- Higher deductibles
- Copayments
- Health Savings Account

Other Health Benefits

PEBA offers the following insurance benefits to eligible members:

Prescription Benefits - The State Health Plan coverage includes prescription benefits at no extra cost. Prescription drugs are a significant benefit to you and a major part of the cost of our self-insured health plan.

Dental Insurance - The State Dental Plan provides some payment to help offset your dental expenses. Dental Plus generally covers the same treatments, but with higher allowed amounts at a minimum rate.

Vision Care - The State Vision Plan covers a variety of vision care benefits.

Life Insurance - Basic life insurance coverage is automatic for members enrolled in a health plan. This coverage is available at no cost to the member. You can also add Optional Life, Dependent Life-Spouse, and Dependent Life-Child coverage at a reduced group rate.

Long Term Disability - Basic long-term disability coverage is automatic for eligible State Health Plan members. This coverage is available at no cost to the member. Supplemental long-term disability coverage is also available, and the employee will have a premium cost for this coverage.

MoneyPlus - MoneyPlus is a tax-favored accounts program. It allows employees to pay eligible expenses before taxes. In turn, employees can increase their take-home pay.

Adoption Assistance - PEBA administers the State Employee Adoption Assistance Program for eligible state employees. It can help pay some of the expenses associated with adopting a child.

To learn more about the health benefits and costs, you may access the insurance benefits guide at www.peba.sc.gov/assets/insurancebenefitsguide.pdf.

Retirement Plans

The South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) administers two types of primary retirement plans as well as a voluntary, supplemental retirement savings program.

- The South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS) – This plan provides a fixed monthly benefit based on a formula that includes your years of service, earnable compensation, and a benefit multiplier, not on your account balance at retirement.
- The State Optional Retirement Program (State ORP) - This plan provides an account into which you and your employer contribute. You select your investments from the options available, and your retirement benefit is based on your account balance at retirement.
- Voluntary Supplemental Retirement Savings Program - Empower Retirement currently administers this plan. Deferred Comp and is a voluntary retirement savings program that provides participants an opportunity to supplement their retirement savings through its 401(k) and 457B plans. You have access to a local retirement plan advisor who will meet with you one-on-one to assist you in planning for your financial future.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.peba.sc.gov/employees> or PEBA TV, the YouTube channel, also features a variety of videos that provide overviews of health retirement benefits and highlight other helpful topics.

Annual Leave

This regulation governs the annual leave policies for employees in full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

Eligibility

Annual leave shall be earned and granted to:

1. Full-time employees in FTE positions
2. Part-time employees in FTE positions who are:
 - a. Scheduled to work at least one-half the workweek of the agency on a 12-month basis, or
 - b. Scheduled to work in the equivalent of one-half of the workweek during the full school or academic year of nine months or more.

This regulation shall not apply to teaching personnel and other 10-month employees.

Annual Leave Earnings

Computation

1. Employees who are in pay status one-half or more but not all of the workdays of the month shall earn annual leave for the full month. If they are in the pay status for less than one half of the work days, they shall earn no annual leave.
2. Employees shall earn annual leave while on annual leave, sick leave, or other authorized leave with pay. Employees shall not earn annual leave while on leave without pay.
3. Employees' annual leave earnings are computed based on the number of hours in the employee's workday.
4. Employee's annual leave earnings are based on the employee's leave accrual date.
5. The leave accrual date reflects:
 - a. All State service in an FTE position, including part-time service, adjusted to reflect periods when there was a break in service
 - b. All service as a certified employee in a permanent position of a school district of this State; and
 - c. At the discretion of the agency head or their designee, all services in any temporary capacity counted towards the employee's probationary period.

Five-Day Workweek Schedule of 37.5 or 40 hours per week

To determine the number of hours in a workday, divide the total number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work during a week by five (regardless of the number of days the employee actually reports to work).

Service of Ten Years or Less

Employees on a five-day workweek schedule with a service time of less than ten years shall earn annual leave at the rate of $1\frac{1}{4}$ work days per month of service in each calendar year. (See Chart #1 and Chart #2 below.) In addition, all services as a certified employee in a permanent position of a school district of this state must be used to calculate the leave accrual date.

Service of More Than Ten Years

Employees on a five-day per workweek schedule with State service time of more than ten years shall earn a bonus of 1 ¼ workdays of annual leave for each year of service over ten years. (See Chart #1 and Chart #2 below.) In addition, all services as a certified employee in a permanent position of a school district of this State must be used to calculate the leave accrual date.

Chart #1

Five Days, 37.5 Hours per Workweek Schedule

(May be rounded to the nearest two decimal places)

Years of Service	Days Per Year	Earning Rate Hours Per Month
1-10	15.00	9.375
11	16.25	10.156
12	17.50	10.937
13	18.75	11.718
14	20.00	12.500
15	21.25	13.281
16	22.50	14.062
17	23.75	14.843
18	25.00	15.624
19	26.25	16.406
20	27.50	17.187
21	28.75	17.968
22 & over	30.00	18.750

Chart #2

Five Days, 40 Hours per Workweek Schedule

(May be rounded to the nearest two decimal places)

Years of Service	Days Per Year	Earning Rate Hours Per Month
1-10	15.00	10.000
11	16.25	10.833
12	17.50	11.666
13	18.75	12.500
14	20.00	13.333
15	21.25	14.167
16	22.50	15.000
17	23.75	15.833
18	25.00	16.667
19	26.25	17.500
20	27.50	18.333
21	28.75	19.167
22 & over	30.00	20.000

Schedules Other Than a Five-Day Workweek of 37.5 or 40 Hours Per Week

All employees earn the number of days per year based on their years of service. However, the earning rate in hours per month varies according to the length of the workday. If the workday differs from eight hours, divide the number of hours in the workday by eight, then multiply this ratio by the earnings rate in the last column of Chart #2 above. Examples of such schedules could include:

Part-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 20 hours per week. Twenty hours divided by five equals a workday of four hours; or

Full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 39 hours per week. Thirty-nine hours divided by five equals a workday of 7.8 hours.

Maximum Accrual and Carryover

Employees shall be permitted to carryover from one calendar year to the next any unused annual leave up to a total accumulation of 45 workdays; EXCEPT THAT, employees of an agency which provided for maximum accumulation in excess of 45 workdays as of June 2, 1972, shall not forfeit the excess, but shall retain excess leave which shall be the maximum amount the employee may carry over into future years. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of such leave carried over, the reduced amount, if in excess of 45 workdays, shall become the employee's maximum carryover into future years. If the employee further reduces the amount of such leave carried over to 45 workdays or less, 45 days shall become the maximum amount of unused annual leave the employee may thereafter carryover. During the calendar year, an employee may earn annual leave in excess of the 45 workdays; however, the employee may only carryover 45 days to the next calendar year.

An employee who changes from being full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time, without a break in service, shall retain the annual leave hours previously earned. If this change results in the employee having a maximum accumulation in excess of 45 workdays of the effective date of the change, the employee shall not forfeit the excess. The employee shall retain this excess leave which shall be the maximum amount the employee may carry over into future years. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of such leave carried over, the reduced amount, if in excess of 45 workdays, shall become the employee's maximum carryover into future years. If the employee further reduces the amount of such leave carried over to 45 workdays or less, 45 days shall become the maximum amount of unused annual leave the employee may thereafter carryover. During the calendar year, an employee may earn annual leave in excess of the 45 workdays; however, the employee may only carryover 45 days to the next calendar year.

Using and Scheduling Annual Leave

If leave taken under this Section qualifies as Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, it will run concurrently.

To the degree possible, an employee's request for a specific period of annual leave shall be approved. Agencies may consider workloads and similar factors when reviewing the requests.

Agency approval is required for the specific periods the employee shall be on annual leave, to include beginning and ending dates and computation of total hours.

Maximum Days used Per Year

The Maximum number earned days of annual leave that may be used in any one calendar year shall not exceed 30 workdays.

- **Exception**
 - For Family and Medical Leave Act or other disability related qualifying reasons, an agency may allow an employee who has used all eligible sick leave and 30 days of annual leave to use any remaining annual leave for:
 - Emergencies or serious health conditions of the employee;
 - Emergencies or serious health conditions of the employee's immediate family.

For emergency or extreme hardship conditions as referenced in South Carolina Code of Laws, the agency head or designee may allow an employee, who has used all accumulated sick leave and thirty days of annual leave any remaining annual leave which he has accumulated.

An employee may request review by the State Human Resources Director for the denial of the use of annual leave as provided in this section.

Increments for Use of Annual Leave

Use of annual leave shall be calculated at either the actual time or in the quarter hour increments.

Holiday During Leave

When a holiday is observed by the agency while an employee is using annual leave, the day shall be considered a holiday, not a day of annual leave for the employee.

Transfer from One State Agency to Another

- An employee who transfers without a break in service from one agency to another shall transfer earned annual leave.
- When a full-time employee transfers to an agency that has a different workday, their annual leave at the transferring agency shall be converted to equivalent days of annual leave at the receiving agency.
- When an employee transfers from a position in which he earns both sick and annual leave to a teaching position of academic rank at a State supported institution of higher learning, the employee shall be paid for earned annual leave.
- When the employee with a maximum carryover in excess of 45 workdays transfers from one agency to another, the employee shall retain the higher maximum carryover at the receiving agency. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of such leave carried over, the reduced amount, if in the excess 45 work days, shall become the employee's maximum carryover into future years. If the employee further reduces the amount of such leave carried over in 45 workdays or less, 45 days shall become the maximum amount of unused annual leave the employee may thereafter carryover. During the calendar year, the employee may earn annual leave in excess of 45 workdays; however, the employee may only carryover 45 days to the next calendar year.

Payment Upon Separation from Employment

Upon separation from State employment, a lump sum payment will be made for unused annual leave, not exceed 45 days, unless a higher maximum is authorized, and without deducting any earned leave taken during the calendar year in which the employee separates. If the employee has experienced a break in service, the agency shall not pay out any unused annual leave. However, an employee who transfers or is reassigned to a teaching position or position of academic rank at an institution of higher learning, as referenced in 8-11-680 of the S.C. Code of Laws, should be paid out for any unused annual leave. Upon the death of an employee while in active service, the estate of the deceased employee shall be entitled to the lump sum payment not to exceed 45 days except as included in South Carolina Code of Laws 8-11-610.

Records

The agency shall maintain all annual leave records for each employee eligible for annual leave. Such records must include at least the following:

- The annual leave accrual rate for each employee;
- The number of annual leave hours earned and used during the current calendar year;
- The number of annual leave hours carried forward from the previous calendar year, but not exceeding the maximum accrual authorized;
- The number of hours in the employee's workweek and workday; and
- The number of hours paid out upon separation.

Annual leave records shall be reviewed by or reported to the employee no less than once per calendar year and be supported by the individual leave requests.

Holidays

Each year, the State Department of Administration publishes a State Holiday Schedule. In general, GSSM employees are able to observe these holidays. However, the school's responsibility to students living on campus and the need to engage with working families makes it necessary to work on some state holidays.

When the school is operating on a published state holiday, all employees are required to report to work unless ill or they have made previous arrangements with their supervisor.

Employees required to work on a holiday will earn holiday compensatory time equal to all hours worked during the holiday, not to exceed the employee's average workday. Employees typically have 90 days to use holiday compensatory time. Use of holiday compensatory time must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

This regulation governs the observance of holidays by employees in full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

All 12-month employees in FTE positions shall be allowed to observe with pay those holidays listed in the section below. Faculty holidays are based on an academic schedule.

State Holidays

New Year's Day	January 1 st
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
George Washington's Birthday/Presidents' Day	Third Monday in February
Confederate Memorial Day	May 10 th
National Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11 th
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday Following Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve	December 24 th
Christmas Day	December 25 th
Day after Christmas	December 26 th

Holiday Observance Procedure

Holidays are to be taken on the prescribed day unless the agency requires the employees to work. The agency shall give employees who must work on holidays prior notice if possible.

When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it shall be observed on the preceding Friday or the following Monday, respectively, by employees working a Monday through Friday schedule. Employees shall observe the holiday on the designated day or receive holiday compensatory time.

12-month employees in FTE positions who do not work a normal Monday through Friday workweek shall receive no more nor any fewer number of holidays than those employees who work the normal Monday through Friday workweek.

The length of an employee's holiday is computed based on the number of hours in the employee's average workday. To determine the number of hours in a holiday, divide the total number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work during a week by five (regardless of the number of days the employee actually reports to work).

When a holiday falls during a period of leave with pay, that day will be counted as a holiday, not as a day of leave.

Employees who are on leave without pay the day before a holiday shall not be paid or receive holiday compensatory time for holidays falling during this period of leave without pay.

The holiday schedules of public colleges and universities, including technical colleges, shall not be in violation of this section so long as the number of holidays provided in this section are not exceeded.

Holiday Compensatory Time

- An employee, except an employee of an agency following an academic schedule, who is required by the agency to work on a holiday shall be given holiday compensatory time at the convenience of the agency within 90 days of such holiday.
- An employee of an agency which follows an academic schedule who is required by the agency to work on a holiday shall be given holiday compensatory time at the convenience of the agency within one year from the date of the holiday.
- An employee who must work a portion of the holiday due to a shift that begins on one day and ends on another shall be granted holiday compensatory time equal to all hours worked on the holiday.
- All nonexempt employees who are not allowed to take holiday compensatory time earned for working on a holiday within the 90-day period, or the one-year period in the case of employees who follow academic schedules, shall be compensated for the holiday by the employing agency at the straight hourly pay rate of the employee. Exempt employees shall not be paid for unused holiday compensatory time. An agency head or designee may extend the 90-day period for an additional 90 days because of limited staffing.
- All nonexempt employees shall be compensated for all holiday compensatory time upon separation from employment. Nonexempt employees shall be paid out for any unused holiday compensatory time prior to transferring to another agency. Exempt employees shall not be paid for unused holiday compensatory time upon separation of employment.



- **Holiday Compensatory Time Records**
 - Records shall be maintained for all employees who receive holiday compensatory time. Information contained in the record must include:
 - Compensatory time earned and used in terms of hours; and
 - The number of hours per week the employee is normally scheduled to work and the employee's average workday.

All leave must be approved in advance by the employee's direct supervisor.

If compensated time is used, it must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor.

Employees must use compensation time within 90 days. They are expected to keep track of accumulated compensatory hours and their use, and share the requested information with their supervisors' and/or vice presidents among request.

Sick Leave

GSSM encourages its employees to practice safe and healthy living habits and provides resources to help employees achieve their health goals. When injury or illness prevents employees from working, the state's sick leave policies apply. This regulation governs the sick leave policies for employees in full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

Eligibility

Sick leave shall be earned by and granted to full-time employees in FTE positions, and Part-time employees in FTE positions who are scheduled to work at least one-half the work-week of the agency on a 12-month basis, or scheduled to work the equivalent of one-half of the workweek during the full school or academic year of nine months or more.

Sick Leave Earnings/ Computation

Employees who are in pay status for at least one half or more of the workdays of the month shall earn sick leave for the full month. If they are in pay status for less than one-half the workdays, they shall earn no sick leave.

Employees shall earn sick leave while on sick leave, annual leave, or other authorized leave with pay. Employees shall not earn sick leave while on leave without pay.

Employee's sick leave earnings are computed based on the number of hours in the employee's workday.

Rate of Earnings

- **Five-Day Workweek Schedule of 37.5 or 40 Hours Per Week** - All employees in FTE positions shall earn sick leave beginning with the date of employment at the rate of 1 ¼ workdays per month of service or 15 days per year. To determine the number of hours in a workday, divide the total number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work during a week by five (regardless of the number of days the employee actually reported to work)



- **Schedules Other Than a Five-Day Workweek of 37.5 or 40 Hours Per Week** - To calculate sick leave earnings for employees working schedules other than a five-day workweek of 37.5 or 40 hours per week (including part-time, variable, and nonstandard work schedules), the agency must determine what a workday is for each such employee. To determine the number of hours in a workday, divide the total number of hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work during a week by five (regardless if the number of days the employee actually reported to work). Examples of such schedules could include:
 - Part-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 20 hours per week. Twenty hours divided by five equals a workday of four hours; or
 - Full-time employees who are regularly scheduled to work 39 hours per week. Thirty-nine hours divided by five equals a workday of 7.8 hours.

Maximum Accrual and Carryover

Full-time and part-time employees in FTE positions shall be permitted to earn up to 195 workdays. Full-time and part-time employees in FTW positions shall carryover from one calendar year to the next any unused earned sick leave up to a total maximum carryover of 180 workdays.

Exceptions

- Any employee, who prior to January 1, 1969, earned and carried over unused sick leave in excess of 180 workdays pursuant to the agency's policy existing at the time, shall not forfeit the excess, but shall retain such excess leave which shall become the maximum amount the employee may carry over into future years. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of sick leave carried over to 180 workdays or less, 180 workdays shall become the maximum amount of unused sick leave the employee may thereafter carryover; or

An employee who changes from being a full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time, without a break in service, shall retain the sick leave hours previously earned. If this change results in the employee having a maximum accumulation in excess of 180 workdays, as of the effective date of the change, the employee shall not forfeit the excess. The employee shall retain this excess leave which shall be the maximum amount the employee may carry over into future years. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of such leave carried over, the reduced amount, if in excess of 180 workdays, shall become the employee's maximum carryover into future years. If the employee further reduces the amount of such leave carried over to 180 workdays or less, 180 workdays shall become the maximum amount of unused sick leave the employee may thereafter carryover. During the calendar year, an employee may earn sick leave in excess of 180 workdays; however, an employee may only carry over 180 days into the next year.

Additional Leave May Be Granted

- An agency may advance up to 15 workdays of additional sick leave to an employee in extenuating circumstances.
- The agency may advance this leave only upon documentation from a health care provider that the employee is expected to return to work within that period of time.
- Upon return to work, the employee, will have all earned sick leave applied to the leave deficit at the rate of 1 ¼ days per month (or if part-time, the monthly earning rate) until the deficit has been eliminated.
- If an employee separates from employment before satisfying the leave deficit and returns to state employment, the leave deficit will need to be satisfied upon reemployment.

Using and Scheduling Sick Leave

If leave taken under this Section qualifies as Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, it will run concurrently.

Reasons an employee shall be allowed to use sick leaves are as follows:

- Personal illness or injury that incapacitates the employee to perform duties of the positions;
- Exposure to a contagious disease such that presence on duty could endanger the health of fellow employees;
- Appointment for medical or dental examination or treatment when such appointment cannot reasonably be scheduled during network hours;
- [Note: if possible the date on which sick leave for disability is to begin shall be at the request of the employee based on the determination and advice of a health care practitioner.]
- Sickness during pregnancy or other temporary disabilities;
- [Note: If possible, the date on which sick leave for disability is to begin shall be at the request of the employee based on the determination and advice of a health care practitioner.]
- Treatment for alcoholism;
- [Note: In accordance with 8-11-110 of South Carolina Code of Laws which recognizes alcoholism as a treatable illness, sick leave will be granted for the purpose of participating in public and private treatment and rehabilitation programs which have been approved by the South Carolina Department of Mental Health]
- Caring for ill members of immediate family;
- [Note: Employees earning sick leave may not use more than ten days of sick leave annually to care for ill members of their immediate families. For purposes of this section, the employee's "immediate family" means the employee's spouse and children and the following relations to the employee or the spouse of the employee: mother, father, brother, sister, grandparent, legal guardian, and grandchildren]
- Caring for an adoptive child;

- [Note: An adoptive parent who is employed by this State, its departments, agencies, or institutions may use up to six weeks of their earned sick leave to take time off for purposes of caring for the child after placement. The agency shall not penalize an employee for requesting or obtaining time off according to this section. The leave authorized by this section may be requested by the employee only if the employee is the person who is primarily responsible for furnishing the care and nurture of the child.]

Verification

The use of sick leave shall be subject to verification. A doctor's note is required when absence is more than three consecutive days. The agency designee may, before approving the use of sick leave, require the certificate of a health care practitioner verifying the need for sick leave and giving inclusive dates.

Increments for Use of Sick Leave

Use of sick leave shall be calculated at either the actual time or in quarter hour increments.

Use of Sick Leave Before Going on Leave Without Pay

In qualifying sick-leave situations, the employee shall use all sick leave before going on leave without pay unless the agency head or their designee grants an exception at the employee's request.

Holiday During Sick Leave

When a holiday is observed by the agency while an employee uses sick leave, the day shall be considered a holiday, not a day of sick leave for the employee.

Request for Leave

An employee with a personal emergency may request sick or annual leave from the appropriate pool account by completing creating a leave request in the SC Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). Employee are provided a secure account to SCEIS when they are hired.

GSSM employees can contribute their unused leave to a pool for the use of other GSSM employees whose leave has run out. The SC Department of Administration approves use of leave hours in the pool. While there is no limit to the number of separate requests that an employee may submit to the employing agency, each separate request shall be limited to no more than 30 workdays. For more information visit:

https://www.admin.sc.gov/sites/default/files/state_hr/Leave%20Transfer%20Guidelines.pdf.

Leave Approval

Under guidelines established by the Department of Administration, the agency head of the employing agency may, upon receiving a completed request, review all necessary information and approve recipients from within the agency to participate in the leave transfer program. Unless the personal emergency involves a medical condition affecting the leave recipients, the employing agency may consider the likely impact on morale and efficiency within the agency in approving a leave recipient to use transferred leave.

Use of Sick or Annual Leave

If leave taken under this Section qualifies as Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, it will run concurrently.

Under guidelines established by the Department of Administration, the employing agency may transfer all or any portion of the sick leave in the pool account to the sick leave account of the leave recipient, and all or any portion of the annual leave in the pool account to the annual leave account of the leave recipient.

Upon approval of a request, an employee may use sick or annual leave from the appropriate pool account in the same manner and for the same purposes as if the employee had earned the leave in the manner provided by law.

Sick or annual leave earned by the leave recipient must be used before using any leave from a leave transfer pool.

Sick or annual leave transferred under this program may be substituted retroactively for periods of leave without pay or used to liquidate indebtedness for advanced sick leave.

Other Leave

Other kinds of leave are available to employees such as Workers Compensation Leave, Extended Disability Leave, etc. To learn more about other leave categories, please visit www.admin.sc.gov/humanresources.

Benefit Continuation

While employees are on covered leave, their group health and life insurance benefits and credit for length of service continue under the same terms as provided to other employees, up to the maximum allowed by law.

Non-Discrimination

GSSM believes that diversity builds the collective strength of our community. Therefore, the school strives to identify and hire individuals of many different backgrounds. Discrimination is prohibited in all employment practices including, but not limited to, hiring, training, compensation, benefits, and advancement. GSSM prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, spousal affiliation, age, veteran status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, disability or any other protected characteristic as may be required by law.

Further, GSSM is committed to providing equal access to educational and employment opportunities regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy (including childbirth or related medical conditions), age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity status, genetic information, spousal affiliation, or any other protected characteristic as may be required by law. GSSM affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and/or harassment.

Harassment/Discriminatory behavior that denies civil rights or access to equal educational opportunities includes comments, name calling, physical conduct or other expressive behavior directed at an individual or group that intentionally demeans the race, color, religion, national origin, age, immigrant status or English-speaking status, sex, or disability of the individual or individuals or creates an intimidating or hostile or demeaning environment for education.

GSSM will use the grievance procedures set forth in policy to process complaints based on alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Equal Pay Act of 1963; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; and Titles I and II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (referred to as “civil rights grievances”).

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries, questions, and grievances regarding the GSSM’s nondiscrimination policy: Anne Brumley. Any person who is unable to resolve a problem or grievance arising under any of the laws and regulations cited above may contact: United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Washington DC (Metro) 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-1475 Telephone 202.453.6020 Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov.

Title IX

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Policy Statement:** The South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) is committed to creating and maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from unlawful discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in Education Programs or Activities and Title VII, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment. sexual harassment and Retaliation under this Policy will not be tolerated by GSSM, and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, permanent dismissal from GSSM and/or termination of employment.
- 1.2 Purpose:** GSSM takes all reported sexual misconduct and sexual harassment seriously. GSSM will apply appropriate sanctions to individuals within its control who are found responsible for violating this Policy. Additionally, reported sexual misconduct, harassment, and retaliation that does not meet the definitions and jurisdiction of this policy will be referred for review under the student or employee conduct policy.
- 1.3 Applicability:** This Policy applies to students and employees as follows:

To Students: Where the Respondent is a student at GSSM at the time of the alleged conduct, the alleged conduct includes sexual harassment under this Policy, the alleged conduct occurs in GSSM’s Education Program and Activity, the alleged conduct occurs against a person in the United States, and the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in GSSM’s Education Program or Activity.

To Employees: Where the Respondent is an employee at GSSM at the time of the alleged conduct, where the alleged conduct includes sexual harassment under this Policy, the alleged conduct occurs in GSSM’s Education Program and Activity, the alleged conduct occurs against a person in the United States, and the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in GSSM’s Education Program or Activity.



- 1.4 Title IX Coordinator and Key Title IX Officials:** The Title IX Coordinator is GSSM’s administrator who oversees GSSM’s compliance with Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for administrative response to reports and Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator is available to discuss the grievance process, coordinate supportive measures, explain GSSM’s policies and procedures, and provide education on relevant issues.

Any member of GSSM’s community may contact the Title IX Coordinator with questions. GSSM’s Title IX Coordinator is:

Brock Heron

Email: bheron@governors.school

Phone: 843 383-3901 x3906

Location: 401 Railroad Ave, Hartsville, SC 29550

In addition to the Title IX Coordinator, GSSM appoints investigators, decision makers and informal resolution facilitators who have roles in the formal grievance process more fully explained in later sections of this policy.

The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and informal resolution facilitators will receive annual training in compliance with Title IX. All administrators in these roles will not rely on sex stereotypes and will provide impartial investigations and adjudications of Formal Complaints of sexual harassment. All materials used to train these administrators will be publicly made available on GSSM’s website (www.scgssm.org) in accordance with Title IX requirements.

The Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and informal resolution facilitators shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant or Respondent.

- 1.5 Notification:** GSSM may use email, phone calls, or USPS for purposes of communication and notification under this Policy.
- 1.6 Dissemination of Policy:** This Policy will be made available to all GSSM, faculty, staff, and students online at www.scgssm.org and in the student handbook and employee handbook.
- 1.7 Effective Date:** The effective date of this Policy is August 1, 2022.
- 1.8 Retaliation and False Statements Prohibited:** Neither GSSM nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this Policy or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this Policy.

Alleged violations of Retaliation will be referred to the student or employee conduct policy.

Charging an individual with a conduct policy violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this Policy does not constitute Retaliation prohibited under Policy. However, a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

- 1.9 Other GSSM Policies:** This Policy takes precedence over other GSSM policies and procedures concerning sexual harassment under Title IX in the event of a conflict.
- 1.10 Modification and Review of this Policy:** GSSM reserves the right to modify this policy to take into account applicable legal requirements. GSSM will regularly review this Policy to determine whether modifications should be made.
- 1.11 Additional GSSM Policy Violations:** Alleged violations of the student or employee conduct policy that arise from the same events as alleged sexual harassment under this policy will be investigated and resolved under the grievance process in this policy unless the sexual harassment has been dismissed under Section 5.2 of this policy.
- 1.12 Role of Parent or Guardian:** Nothing in this Policy may be read in derogation of any legal right of a parent or guardian to act on behalf of a “Complainant,” “Respondent,” “party,” or other individual, subject to this Policy including, but not limited to, filing a Formal Complaint.
- 1.13 Role of Advisor:** Either party may be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice. However, neither party’s advisor will be permitted to question witnesses. Neither party’s advisor may participate in interviews or meetings in which the represented party is not a participant.

Section 2: Definitions

2.1 Definitions of Prohibited Conduct Under this Policy

2.1.1 Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

(1) An employee of GSSM conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of GSSM on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

(2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to GSSM’s education program or activity¹; or

(3) Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence or Stalking as defined in this Policy.

2.1.2 Sexual Assault means an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including Rape, Fondling, Incest, and Statutory Rape as defined in this Policy.

¹ A severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive assessment includes, but is not limited to, a consideration of the frequency of the offensive conduct, the nature of the unwelcome sexual acts or words, such as whether the harassment was physical, verbal or both; whether the harassment was merely an offensive utterance; and the number of victims involved and the relationship between the parties including, but not limited to, the ages of the harasser and the victim. In evaluating whether conduct is severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, GSSM will look at the totality of the circumstances, expectations and relationships.



2.1.3 Rape² means the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

2.1.4 Fondling³ means the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

2.1.5 Incest⁴ means sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

2.1.6 Statutory Rape⁵ means sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

2.1.7 Dating Violence means violence committed by a person—

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

The length of the relationship,

The type of relationship,

The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.

² Rape as defined in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) includes:

Forcible Rape: The carnal knowledge of a person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

Forcible Sodomy: Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

Sexual Assault with and Object: —To use an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her youth or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

³ Fondling is referred to as Forcible Fondling in the UCR.

⁴ Incest is a Nonforcible Offense in the UCR.

⁵ Statutory Rape is a Nonforcible Offense in the UCR.



2.1.8 Domestic Violence includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by:

a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim,

a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner,

a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of South Carolina, or

any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of South Carolina.

Stalking means engaging in a Course of Conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a Reasonable Person to—

fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or

suffer Substantial Emotional Distress.

2.2 Definitions Related to Sexual Harassment: Consent, Course of Conduct, Incapacitation, Reasonable Person, Substantial Emotional Distress

2.2.1 Consent is affirmative, conscious, voluntary, and revocable. Consent to sexual activity requires of each person an affirmative, conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity. Consent may not be given in some circumstances based upon incapacitation, force, coercion or age.

It is the responsibility of each person to ensure they have the affirmative consent of the other to engage in the sexual activity. Lack of protest, lack of resistance, or silence do not, alone, constitute consent. Affirmative consent must be ongoing and can be revoked at any time during sexual activity.

The existence of a dating relationship or past sexual relations between the Complainant and Respondent will never by itself be assumed to be an indicator of consent (nor will subsequent sexual relations or dating relationship alone suffice as evidence of consent to prior conduct).

The Respondent's belief that the Complainant consented will not provide a valid defense unless the belief was actual and reasonable. In making this determination, the decision-maker will consider all of the facts and circumstances the Respondent knew, or reasonably should have known, at the time. In particular, the Respondent's belief is not a valid defense where:

(1) The Respondent's belief arose from the Respondent's own intoxication or recklessness;

(2) The Respondent did not take reasonable steps, in the circumstances known to the Respondent at the time, to ascertain whether the Complainant affirmatively consented; or

(3) The Respondent knew or a reasonable person should have known that the Complainant was unable to consent because the Complainant was incapacitated, in that the Complainant was:

asleep or unconscious

unable to understand the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual activity due to the influence of drugs, alcohol, or medication

unable to communicate due to a mental or physical condition.

2.2.2 Course of Conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the individual directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person's property.

2.2.3 Incapacitation means that a person lacks the ability to actively agree to sexual activity because the person is asleep, unconscious, under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that the person does not have control over their body, is unaware that sexual activity is occurring, or their mental, physical or developmental abilities render them incapable of making rational informed decisions. Incapacitated is a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication. A person is not necessarily incapacitated merely as a result of drinking, using drugs, or taking medication.

A person violates this policy when they engage in sexual activity with another person who is Incapacitated and a Reasonable Person in the same situation would have known that the person is Incapacitated. Incapacitation can be voluntary or involuntary. Signs of Incapacitation may include, without limitation: sleep; total or intermittent unconsciousness; lack of control over physical movements (e.g., inability to dress/undress without assistance; inability to walk without assistance); lack of awareness of circumstances or surroundings; emotional volatility; combativeness; vomiting; incontinence; unresponsiveness; and inability to communicate coherently. Incapacitation is an individualized determination based on the totality of the circumstances.

2.2.4 Reasonable Person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

2.25 Substantial Emotional Distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may but does not necessarily require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

2.3 Other Defined Terms

2.3.1 Actual Knowledge means Notice of Sexual Harassment allegations to any employee of GSSM (Officials with Authority), except that Actual Knowledge is not met when the only individual with Actual Knowledge is the Respondent.

2.3.2 Business Day means any weekday not designated by GSSM as a holiday. When calculating a time period of Business Days specified in this Policy, the Business Day of the event that triggers a time period is excluded.



- 2.3.3 Complainant** means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Complainants and Respondents are referred to collectively as “parties” throughout this Policy.
- 2.3.4 Disciplinary Sanctions** are imposed only after a finding of responsibility through the grievance process or an agreement through the informal resolution process.
- 2.3.5 Education Program or Activity** includes locations, events, or circumstances over which GSSM exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs. This includes conduct that occurs on GSSM’s property, during any GSSM activity.
- 2.3.6 Formal Complaint** means a document filed by a Complainant (or parent or guardian of the parent) or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that GSSM investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.
- 2.3.7 Official with Authority** means any employee of GSSM.
- 2.3.8 Remedies** are designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM’s Education Program or Activity. Remedies may include, but are not limited to, the same individualized services as Supportive Measures; however, Remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the Respondent.
- 2.3.9 Respondent** means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Complainants and Respondents are referred to collectively as “parties” throughout this Policy.
- 2.3.10 Retaliation** means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for conduct policy violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or Formal Complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this Policy.
- 2.3.11 Supportive Measures** means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the Complainant or the Respondent before or after the filing of a Formal Complaint or where no Formal Complaint has been filed.

Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM’s Education Programs or Activities without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or GSSM’s educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.



Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the property, and other similar measures.

Section 3: Reporting sexual harassment and Preservation of Evidence

3.1 Reporting to GSSM

3.1.1 Reporting to Title IX Coordinator: Reports of sexual harassment may be made to the Title IX Coordinator in any of the following ways, by anyone, at any time: email, phone, in person or by USPS mail. After Title IX Sexual Harassment has been reported to the Title IX Coordinator, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly offer supportive measures to the Complainant, regardless of whether the Complainant was the reporter of the sexual harassment.

3.1.2 Reporting to Employees of GSSM: If employees of GSSM are notified of sexual harassment, they shall promptly report such sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator who will take immediate action under this Policy.

3.2 Reporting to Law Enforcement: Reports may be filed with local law enforcement agencies. The Title IX Coordinator can assist with contacting law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement investigations are separate and distinct from the GSSM's investigations.

GSSM Public Safety – (843) 992-0377

Darlington County Sheriff's Office – (843) 398-4501

3.3 Reporting to Outside Agencies: Students and employees may report complaints to:

Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>

32 Old Slip, 26th Floor

New York, NY 10005-2500

646 428-3800

ocr.newyork@ed.gov

3.4 Time Limits on Reporting. There are no time limits on reporting sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or GSSM. If the Respondent is no longer subject to GSSM's Education Program or Activity, or if significant time has passed, GSSM may have limited ability to investigate, respond and/or provide disciplinary Remedies and Sanctions.

Section 4: Initial Response to Reported sexual harassment

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the Complainant, regardless of whether the Complainant was the individual who initiated the report. During the initial contact with the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator will:

Provide the Complainant with notice of their option to have an advisor;

Explain the process for filing a Formal Complaint;

Explain the Grievance Process;

Discuss the availability of Supportive Measures regardless of whether a Formal Complaint is filed;

Consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to Supportive Measures.

Section 5: Formal Complaint

GSSM will investigate all allegations of sexual harassment in a Formal Complaint.

5.1 Filing a Formal Complaint

A Formal Complaint must:

(1) Contain an allegation of sexual harassment against a Respondent;

(2) Request that GSSM investigate the allegation; and

(3) Be signed by the Complainant (or parent or guardian of the Complainant) or Title IX Coordinator.

In limited circumstances, if a Complainant does not sign a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator may sign a Formal Complaint. In determining whether to sign a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will consider factors that include but are not limited to:

Whether there have been other reports of sexual harassment or other relevant misconduct concerning the same Respondent whether or not the incidents occurred while the Respondent was an GSSM student or employee;

Whether the Respondent threatened further sexual harassment or other misconduct against the Complainant or others;

Whether the alleged sexual harassment was committed by multiple Respondents;

The nature and scope of the alleged sexual harassment including whether the sexual harassment was perpetrated with a weapon;

The ages and roles of the Complainant and the Respondent;

Whether GSSM can pursue the investigation without the participation of the Complainant (e.g., whether there are other available means to obtain relevant evidence of the alleged sexual harassment such as security cameras or physical evidence);

Whether the report reveals a pattern of perpetration (e.g., perpetration involving illicit use of drugs or alcohol) at a given location or by a particular group.



5.2 Dismissal of a Formal Complaint.

5.2.1 Required Dismissal: The Title IX Coordinator will dismiss a Formal Complaint for purposes of sexual harassment if:

- (1)** The conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in this Policy even if proved;
- (2)** The conduct alleged did not occur in GSSM's Education Program or Activity; or
- (3)** The Conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint did not occur against a person in the United States.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint does not preclude action under other provisions of GSSM's policies and procedures. If a Formal Complaint is dismissed under this section, the matter will be reviewed to determine whether the matter will be pursued under GSSM's student or employee conduct policy.

5.2.2 Permissive Dismissal: The Title IX Coordinator may dismiss a Formal Complaint or any allegations within the Formal Complaint, if at any time during the investigation or hearing:

- (1)** A Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegations within the Formal Complaint,
- (2)** The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by GSSM, or
- (3)** Specific circumstances prevent GSSM from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or allegations within the Formal Complaint.

5.2.3 Appeal of Dismissal: Either party may appeal the dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein. See Section 9 for bases and process for appeals.

5.2.4 Consolidation of Formal Complaints: The Title IX Coordinator may consolidate Formal Complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one Respondent or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents where the allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Section 6: Grievance Process

The grievance process within this Policy is designed to treat Complainants and Respondents equitably. Remedies are provided to a Complainant where a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment has been made against the Respondent and Disciplinary Sanctions are not imposed against a Respondent prior to the completion of the grievance process.

6.1: General Grievance Process Information:

6.1.1 Burden of Proof and Burden of Gathering Evidence: All investigations and proceedings, including hearings, relating to sexual harassment will be conducted using a "preponderance of the evidence" (more likely than not) standard. The burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on GSSM, not the parties.



- 6.1.2 Presumption of Not Responsible:** The Respondent is presumed to be not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the end of the grievance process.
- 6.1.3 Time Frames for Grievance Process:** GSSM strives to complete the grievance process within ninety (90) calendar days, which begins the day after the Formal Complaint is signed by the Title IX Coordinator. Delays and/or extensions of the time frames within this Policy may occur for good cause. Written notice will be provided to the parties of the delay and/or extension of the time frames with explanation of the reasons for such action. Examples of good cause for delay/extensions include, but are not limited to, considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.
- 6.1.4 Medical Records:** GSSM will not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless GSSM obtains that party's voluntary, written permission to do so for the grievance process within the Policy.
- 6.1.5 Privileged Information:** GSSM will not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege.
- 6.1.6 Range of Disciplinary Sanctions:** The sanctions which may be applied if an individual is found responsible for violating GSSM policy, for students, are listed in the Student Handbook, and for employees, are listed in the Employee Handbook.
- 6.1.7 Notice of Meetings, Interviews, and Hearings:** Parties and witnesses will be provided notice of any meeting, interview, and/or hearing with sufficient time to prepare to participate. This notice will include the date, time, location, participants and purposes of the meeting, Interview and/or hearing.
- 6.2 Notice of Allegations:** Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide Notice of Allegations to the parties who are known. The Notice of Allegations will include:
- (1) Notice of the party's rights and options
 - (2) Notice of GSSM's grievance process
 - (3) Notice of GSSM's informal resolution process and options
 - (4) Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment including:

The identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known,



The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and

The date and location of the incident, if known.

(5) Notice that the Respondent is presumed not responsible of the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

(6) Notice that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, and that the advisor may inspect and review evidence.

(7) Notice of GSSM's conduct policy provision that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

The Notice of Allegations will be updated, and written notice provided to the parties if at any time during the investigation, GSSM decides to investigate allegations about the Complainant or Respondent that are not included in the initial Notice of Allegations.

6.3 Investigation of Formal Complaint. GSSM will conduct an investigation following a Formal Complaint and Notice of Allegations. During all meetings and interviews the parties may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice. The advisor's role is limited to assisting, advising, and/ or supporting a Complainant or Respondent. An advisor is not permitted to speak for or on behalf of a Complainant or Respondent or appear in lieu of a Complainant or Respondent.

6.3.1 Opportunity to Provide Information and Present Witnesses: Each party will be provided an equal opportunity to provide information to the investigator and present witnesses for the investigator to interview. The information provided by the parties can include inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. The witnesses can include both fact witnesses and expert witnesses.

6.3.2 Opportunity to Inspect and Review Evidence: Each party will be provided an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including evidence upon which GSSM does not intend to rely upon in reaching a determination regarding responsibility. This review includes inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that is obtained by a party, witness, or other source. Each party and their advisor (if any) will be provided an electronic copy of the evidence for inspection and review. The parties will have ten (10) business days to review and submit a written response to the investigator. The investigator will consider the written responses prior to completing an investigative report.

6.3.3 Investigative Report: Following the opportunity to inspect and review evidence directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, the investigator will create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence obtained during the investigation.

6.3.4 Review of the Investigative Report: At least ten (10) Business Days prior to the determination of responsibility the investigator will provide each party and the party's advisor (if any) an electronic copy of the investigative report for their review and written response.

6.3.5 Investigation Timeframe: The investigation of a Formal Complaint will normally be concluded within 30-60 calendar days from the filing of a Formal Complaint. The parties will be provided updates on the progress of the investigation, as needed.

Section 7: Question and Answer Period

After the investigation, the Decision Maker will afford each party the opportunity to:

- submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness;
- provide each party with the answers; and
- allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

7.1 Evidence and Questions Excluded: Decision Maker will make determination regarding relevancy prior to sending questions to parties or witnesses. The following questions and evidence are considered not relevant:

- a) **Sexual Predisposition or Prior Sexual Behavior of the Complainant:** Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove Consent.
- b) **Privileged Information:** No person will be required to disclose information protected under a legally recognized privilege. The decision-maker must not allow into evidence or rely upon any questions or evidence that may require or seek disclosure of such information, unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege. This includes information protected by the attorney-client privilege.
- c) **Medical Records:** Evidence or records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, are not permitted to be used during a hearing unless the party provides voluntary, written permission to do so for the grievance process within this Policy.

Section 8: Determination Regarding Responsibility

After the question and answer period, the Decision Maker will provide the Complainant and the Respondent with a written determination simultaneously. The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that GSSM provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or, if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely. The written notice will include:



- a) Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- b) A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the Formal Complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings held;
- c) Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- d) Conclusions regarding the application of this Policy to the facts;
- e) A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions that the GSSM imposes on the Respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to GSSM's Education Program or Activity will be provided by the GSSM to the Complainant⁶; and
- f) The procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant and Respondent to appeal.

Section 9: Appeals

Either party may appeal the determination regarding responsibility, or the dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein within three (3) Business Days of the receipt of the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal. The appeals must be made in writing and delivered to the Title IX Coordinator.

9.1 Bases for Appeal: Appeals of the determination of responsibility or the dismissal of a Formal Complaint may be made on the following bases:

Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;

New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; or

The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

9.2 Appeal Procedures: If an appeal is submitted, GSSM will

(1) Notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.

(2) Ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator.

(3) Provide the non-appealing party with five (5) Business Days from receipt of the notification of appeal to submit a written statement in support of the outcome of the determination or dismissal.

⁶ The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of any remedies.



(4) Issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result which may be from the following: Affirm the decision-maker's determination regarding the Respondent's responsibility and affirm the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable;

- Affirm the decision-maker's determination regarding the Respondent's responsibility and amend the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable;
- Remand the process back to the question and answer stage for the decision-maker to remedy any procedural irregularity or consider any new evidence;
- Reverse the decision-maker's determination of the Respondent's responsibility and amend the disciplinary sanctions and remedies, if applicable; or
- Affirm or amend the sanctions and/or remedies outlined in the determination issued under this Policy.

(5) Provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

9.3 Appeal Timeframe: The appellate decision-maker will release the written decision within twenty (20) Business Days of receiving the appeal.

Section 10: Informal Resolution Process

At any time after a Formal Complaint has been signed and before a determination regarding responsibility has been reached, the parties may voluntarily agree to participate in an informal resolution facilitated by GSSM, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. Types of informal resolution include, but are not limited to, mediation, facilitated dialogue, conflict coaching, and restorative justice and resolution by agreement of the parties.

10.1 Informal Resolution Notice: Prior to entering the informal resolution process, GSSM will provide the parties a written notice disclosing:

(1) The allegations;

(2) Consequences resulting from the informal resolution process, including that the records will be maintained for a period of seven (7) years but will not be used by investigators or decision-makers if the formal grievance process resumes.

10.2 Informal Resolution Agreement: Prior to entering the informal resolution process, the parties must voluntarily agree, in writing to the use of the informal resolution process.

10.3 Informal Resolution Availability: The informal resolution process is not permitted to resolve allegations that an employee committed sexual harassment against a student.

10.4 Informal Resolution Timeframe: Informal resolutions of a Formal Complaint will be concluded within 30 Business Days of notice to GSSM that both parties wish to proceed with the informal resolution process. Such notice that the parties wish to proceed with an informal resolution process will "pause" the counting of the timeframe to conclude the Grievance Process of this Policy, should the informal resolution process fail and the parties continue with the Grievance Process.



10.5 Informal Resolution Documentation: Any final resolution pursuant to the Informal Resolution process will be documented and kept for seven (7) years. However, no recording of the informal resolution process will be made and all statements made during the informal resolution process will not be used for or against either party (and the decision-maker and/or appellate decision-maker may not consider any such statement made during informal resolution) should the parties resume the grievance process. Failure to comply with an informal resolution agreement may result in disciplinary action.

Section 11: Emergency Removal and Administrative Leave

11.1 Emergency Removal: At any time after the Title IX Coordinator is on notice of sexual harassment, GSSM may remove a student Respondent on an emergency basis. GSSM will only conduct an emergency removal after:

- (1) Undertaking and individualized safety and risk analysis,
- (2) Determining that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and
- (3) Providing the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision to the Title IX Coordinator, within two (2) Business Days following the removal.

11.2 Administrative Leave: GSSM may place an employee Respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process in this Policy.

Section 12: Recordkeeping

GSSM will maintain all of the documentation related to reports of sexual harassment, Formal Complaints, the grievance process, and information resolution process for seven (7) years in accordance with state and federal records laws and requirements. The documentation of all records is private and confidential to the extent possible under law. Student records of the grievance process are disciplinary records under Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Employee records of the grievance process are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and applicable state laws and included in the employee's official employment record.

Section 13: Additional Conduct Violations Related to This Policy

Alleged violations of the terms in this section will be sent to the Office of the Vice President for Student Development for student Respondents or the Office of Human Resources for employee Respondents for investigation and adjudication under the GSSM student or employee conduct policy.

- a) Retaliation
- b) False Information
- c) Interference with Grievance Process
- d) No Contact Directive Violations

Employee Sex/Gender Discrimination and Harassment Procedures

Note: Upon receipt of a complaint under this policy, the GSSM personnel will consult with the Title IX coordinator for guidance. This policy does not apply to any conduct that rises to the level of sexual harassment, as determined by the Title IX coordinator, consistent with the 2020 Title IX regulations addressed in the Title IX policy.

These procedures are intended to do the following:

- discourage employees from subjecting employees or students of the district to sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature
- provide, at the lowest possible level, prompt and equitable resolutions to complaints based on sex/gender discrimination or harassment
- promote a harassment-free work and/or learning environment
- effectively and appropriately address sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature found to have occurred or be occurring
- establish ongoing education and awareness of the problem of sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature
- provide information about how to report allegations of sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature

Types of Behavior Which Constitute Sex/Gender Discrimination or Harassment of Employees

Sex/gender discrimination involves treating an applicant or employee unfavorably because of that person's sex, including discrimination against an individual because of gender identity, sexual orientation or because of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Sexual harassment of employees includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which does any of the following:

- is made an employment condition so that submission to such conduct is a term or condition of employment
- has an employment consequence, so that submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an individual employee
- is an offensive job interference, so that such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- verbal harassment including epithets, sexually offensive comments, or slurs
- physical harassment or physical interference with movement or work
- visual harassment such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings, or posters

Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the opposite sex as well as against members of the same sex. Gender-based harassment is another form of sex-based harassment and refers to unwelcome conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived sex. These types of sex-based harassment are also prohibited.

Behavior Prohibited of Administrators/Supervisors

No administrator/supervisor may condition any employment, employee benefit, or continued employment on the employee's agreement to any of the sexual behavior defined above.

No administrator/supervisor may retaliate against any employee because that employee has opposed a practice prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the South Carolina Human Affairs Law or has filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted by an authorized agency.

No administrator/supervisor will cause or tolerate the creation of a sexually hostile or offensive work environment by any subordinate employee or third party associated with schools who engages in sexual harassment.

No administrator/supervisor will destroy evidence relevant to an investigation of sexual harassment.

Types of Behavior Which Constitute Inappropriate Conduct of a Sexual Nature with Students

Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature with students includes inappropriate sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- engaging or participating in any dates, sexual activity, or other activity which contains a sexual or romantic overture
- leering at a student's body
- touching, grabbing, and/or pinching
- making comments, gestures, or jokes of a sexual nature
- manipulating clothing in a sexual manner
- displaying sexual pictures or objects
- spreading sexual rumors or comments
- teasing and/or bullying in sexual terms
- inflicting sexual assault or abuse
- any other behavior by an employee toward a student that would reasonably cause the student to feel uncomfortable or that would reasonably give the appearance of impropriety or unprofessional conduct, regardless of whether the behavior is overtly sexual and regardless of whether such behavior would constitute a crime

Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature is prohibited against students of the opposite sex as well as against students of the same sex. Additionally, students are prohibited from directing inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature toward employees, whether of the same sex or opposite sex. Gender-based harassment is another form of sex-based harassment and refers to unwelcome conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived gender. These types of sex-based harassment are also prohibited.

Behavior Prohibited of All Employees

No administrator, supervisor, or any other employee of GSSM will create a sexually hostile or offensive work environment for any employee by engaging in any sexual harassment.

No administrator, supervisor, or any other employee of GSSM will create a sexually hostile, offensive, or charged educational environment for any student by engaging in any sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct with a student.

No administrator, supervisor, or any other employee of GSSM will encourage or assist any individual in performing any act that constitutes sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct against any employee or student.

Preventive Action

GSSM will ensure the following on an annual basis:

- These policies and procedures will be fully referenced in employee handbooks and/or a copy will be provided to each employee.
- These policies and procedures will be available on the M drive: HR/Policies & Procedures and the GSSM HR office.
- All employees will be informed about the nature of sex/gender discrimination or harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the possible redress that is available.

Administrators and designated sex/gender discrimination and harassment contact persons are expected to be knowledgeable of GSSM's procedures regarding sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature and to understand how to address and/or investigate complaints. For example, they should be made aware of the kinds of acts that constitute sex/gender discrimination and harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature; and GSSM's commitment to eliminating and avoiding such conduct in the schools; the penalties for engaging in discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature; the procedures for reporting such incidents; and the procedures for conducting a sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature investigation.

Annually, administrators/supervisors will ensure that the provisions of GSSM's policy and procedures on sexual harassment as well as an orientation on the definition of sexual harassment, the procedures for registering a complaint about sexual harassment, and the redress which is available are reviewed with all employees and students.

GSSM HR office will make available information from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission about filing claims of sexual harassment with these entities.

GSSM's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is available on the GSSM's website.

Reporting and Response Procedures

Any employee who believes that he/she has been the object of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature is encouraged to file a complaint with his/her immediate supervisor or principal in accordance with this policy (except for situations covered below)

Any employee who believes that he/she has witnessed inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature toward an employee or a student must immediately report such a situation to his/her immediate supervisor or principal (except for situations covered below).

Under no circumstances will an employee be required to first report allegations of discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature to his/her immediate supervisor if that person is the individual who is accused of such conduct. In those cases, the employee will file the complaint with the Title IX coordinator.

All administrators/supervisors/contact persons will, within three working days, initiate an investigation of any incident of alleged sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature reported to them or observed by them, in consultation with the Title IX coordinator. The administration will be responsible for ensuring that reasonable efforts are made to prevent public disclosure of the names of all parties involved in the sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature allegation, except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation and comply with statutory obligations.

All administrators/supervisors will report to the Title IX coordinator in writing the results of any investigation of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including corrective or disciplinary action taken. GSSM will inform (to the extent permitted by federal law) the complainant and alleged perpetrator in writing of the outcome of the investigation, i.e., whether or not the alleged conduct occurred and/or was found to be a violation of policy.

Any employee who is found to have engaged in sex/gender discrimination or harassment, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, a recommendation of termination. Any student who is found to have engaged in sex/gender discrimination or harassment, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, a recommendation of expulsion. If a non-employee, including, but not limited to, an individual working in GSSM through another agency or third party, a contractor, a sales representative or a service vendor is determined to have engaged in sex/gender discrimination or harassment or engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature toward an employee or student, GSSM will take appropriate action against the individual, including severing the relationship with the individual or entity. GSSM will take all other appropriate steps to correct or rectify the situation.

All administrators/supervisors will follow up periodically on any incident of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature they were involved in investigating to determine whether the employee has been subjected to any further discriminatory, harassing or inappropriate sexual conduct since the corrective action was taken.

No administrator/supervisor of GSSM will retaliate in any way against an employee or student who has provided information as a witness to or victim of an incident of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

Record Keeping

GSSM's Title IX coordinator shall maintain a record of all reported cases of sex/gender discrimination or harassment to enable them to monitor, address, and prevent such repetitive behavior.

Additional Obligations of All Employees

All employees will report to their immediate supervisor any conduct on the part of any non-employee, including, but not limited to, an individual working at GSSM through another agency or third party, a contractor, a sales representative or a service vendor, which is believed to constitute sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

Any employee who has received information in his/her professional capacity which gives him/her reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 has been or may be sexually abused by an employee or third party must report such a situation. The employee must make the report to either the appropriate law enforcement agency or to the County Department of Social Services. If such a report is made, the employee must also advise his/her supervisor or the District's Title IX coordinator.



All employees will cooperate with and maintain the confidentiality of any investigation of alleged acts of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature conducted by the coordinator or by an appropriate state or federal agency. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action against the individual who failed to cooperate or who violated the confidentiality of the matter.

No employee of GSSM will take any action to discourage any other employee or student from reporting alleged sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature. Any person who intentionally provides false information in connection with a report or investigation of such an allegation will be subject to disciplinary action.

No employee will retaliate in any way against an employee or student who has provided information regarding an incident of sex/gender discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

All employees will be informed about the nature of sex/gender discrimination and harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the possible redress that is available.

Administrators and designated sex/gender discrimination and harassment contact persons are expected to be knowledgeable of GSSM's procedures regarding such conduct and should know how to address and/or investigate complaints. For example, they should be made aware of the kinds of acts that constitute gender discrimination, sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature; GSSM's commitment to eliminating and preventing such conduct in the schools; the penalties for engaging in discrimination or harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature; the procedures for reporting incidents of sex/gender discrimination or harassment and inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature; and the procedures for conducting such investigations.

Student Interactions

All employees, contractors, and volunteers at GSSM are expected to use proper judgement and care when interacting with minors in our care and their families. This includes, but is not limited to, students, applicants, visitors, guests, and outreach program participants. At all times, interactions with these groups must:

- Support the student's academic progress, safety, growth, and independent wellbeing
- Assist with the student's acceptance of personal responsibility
- Increase understanding and confidence in GSSM as an organization
- Increase the family's understanding of how GSSM works to provide for their child's safety, growth, and wellbeing
- Develop and maintain respect and confidence in your role within the school

Employees must avoid interactions with students and families that could intentionally or unintentionally:

- Distract the student from their academic and school responsibilities
- Reduce a student's sense of belonging at GSSM
- Cause a student to become uncomfortable with themselves, their cultural beliefs, or personal backgrounds
- Encourage conflict with others
- Create anger, distrust, or a loss of confidence in the school or any individual school employee or partner

When adults in the community model the behavior associated with integrity, positive engagement, and personal responsibility, each student's opportunity to make the most of their experience is maximized.

All employees will maintain a professional relationship with students at all times, both inside and outside of school. No employee may engage in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature with a student at any time. This includes any action or conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing, or electronically through such means as a telephone, cell phone, computer, or other telecommunication device, including email, text messaging, social media, and social networking.

Shared Responsibility for Students

Upholding the school's values and standards is a shared responsibility that every employee should take seriously.

All employees are required to promote and uphold GSSM's values, expectations, and standards in their interactions with students. To this end, they are required to know school policies and procedures and be able to both educate students about them and hold students accountable for them. Employees should consult with appropriate persons (the RLC on duty, the Dean of Students, the appropriate vice president, etc.) depending on the circumstance and severity of the rule violation, and should expect to be involved in investigation and follow-up in disciplinary situations.

Mandated Reporters

School employees who interact with students as part of their work responsibilities are considered to be mandated reporters by South Carolina law. The law cites educators including teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, nurses, computer technicians, and school attendance officers as mandated reporters. The GSSM administration interprets this list to indicate that all GSSM teachers, administrators, professional staff, nurses, and information-technology personnel are mandated reporters.

Mandated reporters must report abuse or neglect when, in their professional capacity, they receive information giving them reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health has been, or may be, adversely affected by abuse or neglect. A decision to report must be based upon a reasonable belief that a child has been, or may be, abused or neglected. Thus, mandatory reporters need not have conclusive proof that a child has been abused or neglected prior to reporting abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.



Reporting must be made promptly to either the SC Department of Social Services (DSS) or to a law enforcement officer. Since GSSM employs certified law enforcement officers in the building, they are a convenient and effective place to make reports. Employees may make their report to their supervisor first if such reporting does not significantly delay notification of state authorities. If a report is made to a supervisor, the reporting employee and supervisor must promptly notify DSS or law enforcement. In all cases, if an employee makes a report to a state authority, they must immediately notify the Vice President of Student Development or Dean of Students.

Any person who is required to report and fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, he or she may be fined up to \$500 or imprisoned up to six months, or both.

GSSM encourages all employees and contractors to report when they have reason to believe that a student is suffering abuse or neglect.

A person required or permitted to report pursuant to Section 63-7-310 or who participates in an investigation or judicial proceedings resulting from the report, acting in good faith, is immune from civil and criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of these actions. In all such civil or criminal proceedings, good faith is rebuttably presumed. Immunity under this section extends to full disclosure by the person of facts which gave the person reason to believe that the child's physical or mental health or welfare had been or might be adversely affected by abuse or neglect.

Duty to Report

Any GSSM employee who has reason to believe that a student, fellow employee, visitor, or other program participant is at risk of harming themselves or others is required to make a report as soon as possible. For students, employees should contact wellness counseling, health services, the Dean of Students and/or the Vice President for Student Development. For fellow employees, visitors, contractors, and/or program participants, Human Resources should be among the first points of contact. A member of the Executive Leadership Team and Public Safety should also be alerted. When the student attends a school other than GSSM, the employee will report the incident to that school's school and the parent.

Counseling, Crisis Intervention

GSSM employs licensed professional counselors to provide assistance, assessment, and counseling for students and support for their families. They alone are authorized to provide mental health counseling, assessment, and assistance in a health or emotional crisis.

Unless properly certified and authorized to do so, no teacher or other GSSM employee should attempt to assess the risk level or provide counselling to someone who seems distressed to the point of possibly harming themselves or others. A person expressing these feelings should be calmly escorted to health services or wellness counseling. If that is not possible, the lead nurse, lead wellness counselor, or dean of students should be called immediately.



Suicide Threat / Attempt

Faculty and staff should be aware of potential suicidal remarks or thoughts:

- Life isn't worth living.
- I feel there is no way out.
- Nobody understands me.
- My family would be better off without me.
- I'm a failure.
- Take this or take that, you can have it.
- Look for extreme sadness, depression and preparations to go away or say goodbye.

If you hear statements like these, you should:

- Always take the threat seriously even if stated in a calm voice.
- Notify a residence life staff member, the lead wellness counselor or Public Safety immediately.
- Consider your own safety – Make sure you are in a safe environment, and the person is not armed with a weapon and will not harm you!
- Stay with the person if possible.
- Do not handle the situation alone.
- Listen and observe – It is important for someone to listen and hear the person.
- Do not argue or be judgmental.
- Avoid false reassurances, but be supportive.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Tell the person that you don't want them to do or to harm anyone else.
- Don't act shocked or surprised at what the person says.
- Don't assume the situation will take care of itself.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy.

Emotional Support of Students

Untrained faculty and staff should not attempt to provide emotional counseling to students.

Teenagers in residence are especially vulnerable to issues associated with being away from their families. Employees must avoid encouraging personal relationships that could interfere with the development of independence or become an unhealthy proxy for supportive parental relationships.

When students begin to confide personal issues to, or seek emotional support or counselling from, employees, the employee should encourage the student toward supportive peers or authorized supports available for this purpose (student development, specifically wellness counseling and/or health services). If an employee believes that a student is becoming overly personal or dependent on their advice, they should consult with the wellness counselor to find a supportive solution.

Employees who offer counselling outside of their responsibilities without the proper training or authorization are accepting a level of personal responsibility for resulting outcomes. It is therefore best to leave such support to trained and authorized professionals.

Social Media Use

The presence of social media and other forms of electronic communication presents opportunities for engagement as well as misunderstanding between employees, students, families, and other groups.

Employees should expect that their activities on social media, even when privacy preferences are enabled, are viewable by students, families, colleagues, and school partners. Therefore, it is expected that each employee will conduct their social media presence with care not to diminish trust in themselves, or the school, in the eyes of others. To avoid workplace conflict, employees are discouraged from posting commentary on school issues or employees in ways that could be perceived as harassing or disruptive to school operations or that could impair an employee's ability to continue to serve in an effective manner.

Engaging Students on Social Media

Engaging with students in social media spaces can easily lead to misunderstandings. GSSM employees are discouraged from engaging or contacting students on social media platforms and **prohibited** from friending, following, or otherwise creating connections between their social media accounts and those of students, program participants, or prospective students. When students ask to be followed or friended, a good common-sense response is to decline the invitation with a friendly offer to accept when the student graduates.

Emergency Procedures

GSSM seeks to maintain a safe working environment for all employees. Safety on the job is a top priority and requires active participation of all members of the GSSM community. Employees are required to perform their work duties in a safe manner, observing safe and appropriate work practices, using common sense to protect themselves and others from hazardous situations and injury. Work areas, hallways, labs, offices, and classrooms should be kept uncluttered to reduce opportunities for accidents. Any employee who observes what they believe may be an unsafe condition should report it immediately to a supervisor, department head, security, or member of the facilities staff immediately.

If an accident does occur, employees are required to assist as they are able, to call additional assistance if needed, and to report the incident to Human Resources.

Armed Intruder

If you see a person with a weapon, hear gunshots or hear "Armed Intruder" over the PA system, you should:

- Not panic
- Remember **RUN, HIDE, FIGHT!**
- Run to the safest exit and proceed to our safe location if you are in an open area and are not able to get into a lockable room.
- If you are in a lockable room such as a classroom or dorm room, the room should be locked down using the lockdown button. Turn off lights, remain quiet and get out of view. Barricade doors if practical. Wait for help to arrive. Do not open the door! An official will announce themselves before entering the room.



- If you are confronted with an armed person, your life is in immediate danger, and you have no other options, attempt to incapacitate the subject by using physical aggression.
- Call security (843) 992-0377 or Public Safety and dial 911 when safe to do so.

When law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Raise hands and keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid quick movements, pointing, screaming and yelling
- Proceed in the direction from which the officers are entering the building
- Give the officers detailed information when asked to do so

Alert messages to all students' cellphones will be dispatched through our emergency notification system.

Bomb Threats

If you receive a bomb threat:

- Remain calm and keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Do not hang up!
- Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
- Try and obtain as much information as possible and use your bomb checklist (next page).
- Immediately after the phone call has ended, dial *57 if caller ID is not available. This will trace the call.
- Notify the Public Safety Officer on duty. Relay all information.
- DO NOT EVACUATE until police have arrived along with the Public Safety officer. They will determine if an evacuation is necessary.

Signs of a suspicious package

- No return address
- Excessive postage
- Stains
- Strange odor
- Strange sounds
- Unexpected delivery
- Poorly handwritten
- Misspelled words
- Incorrect titles
- Foreign postage
- Restrictive notes



DO NOT

- Use two-way radios or cellular phone: radio signals have the potential to detonate a bomb.
- Evacuate the building until public safety or the police evaluate the threat
- Activate the fire alarm
- Touch or move a suspicious package

Elevator failures

- If you get stuck on an elevator, **do not panic!**
- Either use the call button on the elevator to talk to GSSM security or use your cellphone to call GSSM security at (843) 992-0377. If these are not working/available, shout or whistle to alert others of your location.
- GSSM security will coordinate with facilities, if available.
- If the elevator is stuck on a floor, security or Public Safety will cut off the power to the elevator and reset it so that it will send it down to the first floor.
- Security, facilities or Public Safety will use a special tool to manually open the elevator door. Further instructions are on the interior elevator door.

Evacuation

Under some circumstances, GSSM may find it necessary to evacuate all students to another secure location in order to insure their safety and well-being. An evacuation could be the result from a notification by the Darlington County Emergency Management Office, Duke Power, the Hartsville Fire Department, etc. For nuclear evacuations, the Florence Civic Center will serve as the refuge. An evacuation could also be implemented because of an internal need to move students that would be directed by GSSM's President or designee. The T.B. Thomas Center or another designated location will serve as temporary refuge for other evacuations.

Evacuations will be communicated across our intercom system by a verbal alert "Go to a Safe Place" followed by the associated audible alarm. Listen to the intercom system for any changes that may take place. The "Go to a Safe Place" is the interior stairwells.

The Darlington County School District Transportation Director will be notified by the Public Safety Director or other school official of the need to move students. The buses will arrive at the rear entrance of GSSM. A roll call should occur before the buses depart. The nurse on duty should bring all of the students' necessary medications to the new location. Minibuses will be used if needed. The Facilities Director or designee will bring the emergency "go kit" to the new location as well as walkie-talkies.

Fire

If you discover fire or smoke- remember R.A.C.E.

- Rescue: Remove anyone from immediate danger: close doors to confine smoke and fire.
- Alarm: Pull fire handle to sound the alarm and notify security or Public Safety.
- Contain: Take immediate action to control the fire with available fire-fighting equipment (only if properly trained or safe to do so).
- Evacuation: Follow the evacuation protocol below.

When the Fire Alarm Sounds

- Everyone should immediately exit the building using the nearest or safest stairwell and report to the front of the building.
- Girls should report immediately to the grass near the C wing.
- Boys should report immediately to the grass close to the student parking lot.
- Visitors should be escorted and assisted out of the building.
- Students with mobility issues who cannot or should not use the stairs should communicate with security via the intercom or cellphone (843) 992-0377. Someone will be designated to assist to them.
- Remain at your designated location until a member of the resident life staff or faculty takes roll and gives you further instructions.
- Do not return to the building until an “all clear” is given.
- **P.A.S.S. – When using a fire extinguisher:**
 - Pull the pin from the extinguisher.
 - Aim the hose or nozzle at the base of the fire.
 - Squeeze the handle to discharge the contents.
 - Sweep the extinguisher agent from side to side across the base of the fire.

If You Catch on Fire

- STOP where you are
- DROP to the ground
- ROLL over and over to smother the flames

First Aid/CPR If a person is non-responsive or in an obviously serious medical situation, you should:

- Send for help to get the health professional (843)-383-3901 ext. 3957 and the Public Safety Officer (843) 383-3901 ext. 4019.
- Appoint a person to call 911.
- Always wear proper personal protection equipment (PPE) and be aware of the hazards associated with bloodborne pathogens.
- Provide first aid or CPR if you are trained to do so.
- Send someone to get the closest AED or Blood-Clotting kit, if appropriate.
- Follow *Emergency and Quick Reference Guides* found in GSSM hallways.

If a Water Leak Occurs

- Notify GSSM Facilities Director immediately (843) 858-1364.
- If there are electrical appliances or outlets near the leak, use extreme caution. If there is any danger of electrocution, evacuate the area.
- If you know the source of the water and are confident of your ability to stop the flow (unclog drain or turn off the water), then do so.



- Be prepared to assist as directed in protecting objects that are in jeopardy. Take necessary steps to avoid or reduce immediate water damage, such as covering objects with plastic sheeting or moving small or light objects out of danger.
- If a sprinkler head is activated, notify a member of facilities or Public Safety immediately so the water control valve can be shut off. A single sprinkler will release approximately 50 gallons a minute.

Hazardous Material/Chemical Spill

- If there is an emergency spill which may present a hazard to people or the environment, everyone should evacuate the area.
- Notify surrounding rooms of the spill.
- Notify GSSM Facilities Director and a Public Safety Officer.
- If the need arises, the Hartsville City Fire Department and/or DHEC will be notified.
- Do not return to the area until an “all clear” has been given.

Lock Out

If we have a hazard or threat near GSSM, students will not be allowed to leave the security of GSSM buildings. A “lockout” procedure will be executed.

During a lockout all students, faculty, and staff remain inside the GSSM buildings with all doors and windows closed and locked. If students are outside of the building, they should get indoors as quickly as possible. Students off campus should find a secure shelter immediately. Visitors may not be allowed inside during a lockout, unless circumstances dictate that they must. Classes and activities inside GSSM should continue normally, yet situational awareness should be increased. Lockout may occur when a vicious dog is on campus, a dangerous or suspicious person is near GSSM, a manhunt by law enforcement takes place near campus, a local emergency happens that could compromise GSSM safety, etc.

This announcement over the public address system lets everyone know a lockout is happening:

“Attention. Attention, please. GSSM is now in LOCKOUT. No one should leave the building. If you are outside, please come inside promptly. Maintain normal activities.”

The message will be repeated. Similar Alert messages may also be sent out via text, voice, and email. If you hear this message, please comply immediately. The “all clear” will be given when Public Safety deems the situation safe.

Tornado/Severe Weather

When dangerous weather is imminent to GSSM, and Public Safety determines that students could be in danger, we will announce over the school-wide intercom system to **“Go to a safe place.”** The associated audible tone will also be activated. Our safe place is the interior stairwells that lead to the residential wings of our building, because of strength and lack of glass. All students, faculty, staff, and visitors should report to this area immediately. Males will use the “A” side stairwell while females will use the “B” side stairwell.

Students

- 4th floor residential students will go to the stairwell area between floors 3 and 4. Sit down on the stairs in this area. Leave enough room on your left for people to be able to walk up and down the stairs.
- 3rd floor residential students will go to the stairwell areas between floors 2 and 3. Sit down on the stairs in this area. Leave enough room on your left for people to be able to walk up and down the stairs.
- 2nd floor residential students will go the stairwell areas between floors 1 and 2. Sit down on the stairs in this area. Leave enough room on your left for people to be able to walk up and down the stairs.

Faculty, Staff and Visitors

All others will fill in where there are open spaces in the appropriate stairwells. Leave space on your left for people to be able to walk up and down the stairs.

Resident life staff or faculty, depending on the time of day, will take roll. Everyone should remain calm and stay in the stairwells until you are given further instructions from a GSSM official. If you are caught outside, go to the nearest safe retreat.

Hazardous Weather

When hazardous weather approaches, the safety of GSSM's students is our highest priority. The school depends on all employees to be prepared to take control and ensure that students follow instructions for their safety.

GSSM encourages employees to take all reasonable precautions to protect themselves and their families during hazardous weather events. These include assessing travel conditions and staying off roads until they are safe. Each employee is responsible for contacting their supervisor if they believe it is unsafe to report to work.

Some employees are considered *essential personnel* for campus operations and safety. These employees are required to make their best efforts to report to campus for regularly scheduled shifts or at the request of the school.

Some weather events require delaying school opening or closing it altogether. When these delays happen, the school will communicate this information via the scgssm.org website, email system, and the school's social media. Additionally, the school may use the emergency alert system.

If the governor declares a state of emergency, essential employees should report to work. If the governor does not declare a state of emergency, employees with the approval of their supervisors, are allowed to use annual or compensatory leave to account for any lost work time.

Domestic and Workplace Violence

In compliance with SC Executive Orders 2016-02 and 2016-03, and the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, GSSM strives to furnish every employee a safe and healthy work environment.

It is the policy of GSSM to have zero tolerance regarding acts or threats of violence in the workplace, including violence committed or threatened against school employees or members of the public. Such acts will be investigated fully and may result in disciplinary action and notification of law enforcement.

All forms of workplace violence are prohibited. These include, but are not limited to, violence committed by or against school employees or members of the public in the workplace, on duty but off-site, or using state resources. GSSM recognizes four types of workplace violence:

- Physical – the use of force in order to harm
- Threat – a communicated intent to inflict harm or loss on a person or a person’s property
- Harassment – substantial and unreasonable words, gestures, or actions that are intended to frighten, alarm, or abuse another person in a way that would cause a reasonable person mental or emotional distress
- Property Damage – intentional damage to property owned or leased by the state, employees, visitors, or vendors

Any employee who observes or has a reasonable expectation of workplace violence should call 911 and report it to GSSM security immediately. Everyone should be removed from the area of threat and secured until the threat has been addressed. In the event of a campus intruder, the employee should follow the armed intruder protocol to alert law enforcement, secure the campus, and protect students and themselves.

For definitions of workplace violence types and details about how it is addressed, please visit www.admin.sc.gov/humanresources.

Purchasing

The key to purchasing supplies at GSSM is to plan ahead. Every purchase requires a pre-approved purchase order issued by the South Carolina Department of Administration (SCDA). The process to get a purchase order can take up to three weeks.

The purchasing process starts with identifying the products to buy and completing a purchase order requisition form, also known colloquially as a *goldenrod* for the color of the form. Goldenrods may be found in a cubby near the faculty/staff mailboxes or can be printed from the M: Drive.

Purchases of different amounts require different processes:

- **If the total amount to be purchased is less than \$10,000**, then no other quotes are necessary and completing the goldenrod is all that is necessary.
- **If the amount to be purchased is more than \$10,000 but less than \$25,000** then the purchaser must obtain two other quotes for the identical product. It is expected that the vendor providing least expensive quote will be awarded the purchase.
If the amount to be purchased is \$25,000 or higher, an advertised bid must be issued. This involves documentation and processing that involves the purchasing department at SCDA and can add several weeks to the process.

Note that products listed on the SC State Contract site (<https://procurement.sc.gov/agency/contracts>) can be purchased without additional quotes or bids. Purchasing off of the SC State Contract can save significant time and money.

Budgets

GSSM budgets are established and approved by the school's Board of Trustees annually. Purchases may not exceed a department's allocated budget. The Business Office provides budget activity reports once per month. Each department head is responsible for keeping track of expenditures and remaining budget balances.

Unused budget balances remaining at the end of the fiscal year may be rolled over to be used in the next fiscal year.

Travel

For help planning your GSSM-related travel, the Business Office is your first stop.

When travelling on GSSM business, employees must get approval from their supervisor in advance. Overseas travel may require additional approval from other state agencies.

The first step in planning GSSM travel is to establish your itinerary and gather costs for plane fares, hotels, and any registration fees that may apply.

Once you have made your plans, complete a goldenrod outlining expected travel expense for your supervisor's signature. Unless otherwise approved, travel expenses must come from departmental funds. Business Office staff will then help with any additional travel forms that may be required.

While traveling, employees should ensure that their essential job functions are properly covered.

Chaperones

Any employee who supervises students off campus assumes the responsibility of a chaperone: both ensuring the success of the trip, student safety, adherence to community standards, and personal needs like nutrition, medical needs, and room checks. See the Field Trip Checklist and Expectations (located in the Academic section of the M: Drive) for complete information on chaperone responsibility.

Copiers

There are three high-speed, color copiers for employees to use. They are located in the administrative wing near the mailboxes, the faculty office hallway in the kitchenette, and in the faculty work room on the first floor of the academic wing.

Each copier can print on large or small paper, punch holes, staple and print booklets. In addition, they can scan, send scanned images to email addresses, and scan/send/receive faxes.

GSSM computers are configured to print to these copiers, which is preferred to placing printers in offices. When you print to the printer labeled *CanonSecurePrintPS*, your print job will be held until you sign into any of the three copiers and release it for printing. If the printer closest to you is busy, just walk to another printer and release your job there. You must be at the copier to release your print job for security.

You must have an active GSSM network account to use the copiers. To use a copier for the first time:

1. Scan your GSSM ID card on the copier.
2. Enter your network username and password, the same ones you use to log into your computer.
3. Use the copier normally.
4. Log out when you are finished.

Once you log in to the copier, it will link your card with your username and password so you do not need to type it in again.

Copies and print jobs are billed by the page to your department several times a year.

Copier users are expected to know how to load paper, clear jams, and change toner as needed. If you need assistance, ask for help from a nearby employee or contact IT.

Personal Use of Facilities

GSSM provides facilities and programs for the benefit of students and program participants. Employees may use appropriate facilities when their use does not reduce access to students or create risk or added expense for the school.

Safety

GSSM seeks to maintain a safe working environment for all employees. Safety on the job is a top priority and requires active participation of all members of the GSSM community. Employees are required to perform their work duties in a safe manner, observing safe and appropriate work practices, using common sense to protect themselves and others from hazardous situations and injury. Work areas, hallways, labs, offices, and classrooms should be kept uncluttered to reduce opportunities for accidents. Any employee who observes what they believe may be an unsafe condition should report it immediately to a supervisor, department head, security, or member of the facilities staff immediately.

If an accident does occur, employees are required to assist as they are able, to call additional assistance if needed, and to report the incident to Human Resources.

Fitness Center

Employees can use GSSM's fitness center before work, during their lunch break, or after work. Each employee must receive instruction from the athletic staff and sign a waiver before using the equipment in the center.

Health Services

Employees should look to their personal physicians and community healthcare facilities for the diagnosis and treatment health conditions. When not busy with a student, and when no students are waiting to be seen, employees may see the school nurse to seek guidance for a personal health issue. Such use should be infrequent.



Wellness Counseling

The school employs licensed professional counselors to assist with the emotional and mental health of students. Employees may seek advice for personal referrals to qualified services. While the wellness counselors will respond to emergencies, employees should not seek them for personal counseling and therapeutic services.

Flu Vaccination:

Health Services partners with a local pharmacy and sponsors a flu vaccine clinic annually for students and employees.

Gymnasium

The school's gymnasium is available for employee use when not needed for student programs, practices, games, or other scheduled events.

Wi-Fi

The school's Wi-Fi network is intended to support the academic and operations needs of the school. Employees may connect to the Wi-Fi network with their personal devices using the **guest Wi-Fi** network.

Dining Hall

The dining hall accommodates the nutritional needs of students and guests. As a convenience to employees, and to encourage casual interaction with students, employees may eat in the dining hall during any regularly scheduled serving time. The school's food service vendor sets the price for meals and usually offers discounted meal tickets that allow pre-purchase of meals in various quantities. Employees are required to personally pay for each meal consumed.

Classrooms and Other Facilities

Employees in good standing may schedule classrooms and other non-lab portions of the campus for their use so long as:

- The use is consistent with school values and does not conflict with the school's interests.
- Approval from the Vice President for Student Development and Professional Growth is obtained.
- Proper supervision and provisions for clean-up are planned.
- No money is collected from participants.
- The use does not impede or disturb school operations or events.
- The employee accepts responsibility for the behavior of participants.
- School supplies are not used.

School Vehicles

GSSM vehicles including, but not limited to vans, mini-buses, buses, electric vehicles, and maintenance vehicles may only be used for official school business.



Parking

Parking facilities are available in several campus locations. School-owned vehicles may only be parked in specifically reserved areas. Personal vehicles may only be parked in marked locations and may never be parked on school driveways, sidewalks, or grassy areas (with the exception of overflow parking along Jordan Avenue).

Parking spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Employees should not park in spaces reserved for busses or visitors. During move-in/move-out days and days when families are bringing their students back to campus after a break, employees are encouraged to leave the spaces closest to the building open for visitors.

When traveling overnight on behalf of the school, employees are encouraged to park their cars in spaces further from building entrances for the convenience of others.

GSSM cannot assume responsibility for any vehicle or its contents while being driven or parked anywhere on school property.

Pets

Service, Emotional Support and Therapy Animals

GSSM only allows certified service and certified therapy/emotional support animals or those used for scientific purposes in the building. Employees are not allowed to have personal pets in their offices or classrooms. Animals used for academic purposes should be kept in the locations associated with instruction, and students' personal pets cannot be stored or maintained in science laboratories. Additionally, students are not allowed to keep any animal in the residence hall that conflicts with the pet policy outlined in *The GSSM Student Handbook*.

Employees and students requesting accommodation for a disability that includes a service animal may be asked the following questions if it is not obvious what service an animal provides: (1) Is this a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Employees or students requesting accommodation for a disability that includes an emotional support or therapy animal may be required to contact the Human Resource department and provide the documentation from a qualified physician, psychiatrist, or other mental health professional establishing the disability (if not readily apparent) and the disability-related need for the emotional support animal. Official emotional support animal (ESA) certification is also required. Employees who present paperwork documenting a verified need and get approval from the Office of Human Resources to have service or support animals are responsible for any damage to the building or any community member caused by their animals. Only approved service animals are permitted in the dining hall. Support or therapy animals may not enter the dining hall. For residence life coordinators who have documented needs for service or support animals, the Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students will work with the Human Resources Director in setting parameters before approval is granted. Priority will always be given to the safety and welfare of the students. Live-in staff members (RLCs and RAs) are not allowed to have pets. Emotional support animals will be considered for RLCs with the proper documentation and verification.



Requirements of service, support or therapy animals and their owners include:

- Animals need to be registered with the Emotional Support Animal Center or another body who certifies therapy animals.
- All animals need to be immunized against rabies and other diseases common to that type of animal. All vaccinations must be current.
- Animals must wear a rabies vaccination tag.
- Animals must wear an owner identification tag (which includes the name and phone number of the owner) at all times.
- Animals must be in good health.
- Animals must be on a leash or harness or another type of restraint unless the owner is unable to retain an animal on a leash due to a disability.
- The owner must be in full control of the animal at all times. The care and supervision of the animal is solely the responsibility of the owner.

Many of our students miss their family pets and enjoy having them visit the campus. Understanding the therapeutic value to students, GSSM welcomes having parents bring their family pets to the GSSM campus when they visit. Additionally, employees are encouraged to bring their pets to campus periodically, especially during outdoor festivals (e.g., fall festival, spring fling, and carnival) and outdoor athletic events. Pet owners must be aware of their pet's temperament and how it interacts in certain settings. Below are the parameters for pet visitation:

- Families and employees are welcome to bring their pets to campus, but the pets should remain outside the building. Only certified service, therapy, or emotional support animals will be allowed inside the building.
- The pet owner is responsible for the animal(s) at all times, and the pet should remain in their care when on GSSM property.
- Pet owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets while on campus, and for any damages caused during the visit.

Reasonable behavior is expected from service animals while on GSSM property. The owners of disruptive and aggressive service animals may be asked to remove them from GSSM property. If the improper behavior happens repeatedly, the owner may be told to not bring the service animal on GSSM property until the owner takes significant steps to mitigate the behavior.

Reserving Campus Spaces

Meeting rooms, common areas, and other facilities may be scheduled for use by employees. Non-classroom spaces that are commonly used for meetings have a calendar on the school's Outlook system.

To reserve a room for a meeting or event:

1. Log into your Outlook account and open the calendar.
2. Create a calendar event of the date and time of your meeting.
3. Enter the room by its number (i.e. B186) or its generally recognized name (i.e. Gym).
4. Outlook will show you if the room is available or not.
5. If it is not available, pick another location.
6. Invite people or add other details to the meeting as may be needed.
7. Save the event.

Outlook will send you an email confirming the availability of the room. If the scheduling for a room is managed by a person, you'll get a notice saying that your reservation is *pending*. Once the room manager approves the event, you'll get a message confirming the reservation.

Electronic reservations are visible to the entire community and therefore take priority over any other form of reservation. Signs reserving a room may be placed on a door, but the room must still be reserved electronically.

To schedule any athletic facility for an event, please contact the Director of Athletics.

Tobacco-Free Campus For the health and comfort of the GSSM community, the use of tobacco products, including vaping, is prohibited on any part of the campus and in school-owned vehicles.

Directory Information

Information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful, or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, is referred to as *directory information*. Directory information may be released by the school without the student's or family's permission, with some exceptions.

Examples of student directory information, include but are not limited to:

- Name
- Local address
- Telephone number
- Home town and state
- Email address
- Dates of GSSM attendance
- Photograph or likeness
- Information about participation in officially recognized activities and sports at GSSM

Examples of common items that cannot be released as directory information:

- Race
- Sex, gender, or gender identity
- SSN or any part of the SSN
- GPA
- Country of citizenship
- Religion

Students or their families may place a restriction on releasing directory information to the public or third parties. Check with the office of the Vice President for Student Development to find out if a student or their family have restricted access to their directory information.

In limited situations, the school will share student information with third-parties for the purposes of providing required and desirable services to students. For example, the school will send lists of student names, expected year of graduation, gender, and GSSM email address to companies providing photography, yearbooks, class rings, etc.

Education Records

A student's education record is any information that is directly related to a student and maintained by GSSM or parties acting directly on behalf of the school. Records possessed by GSSM employees are treated the same no matter the medium (handwritten, email, print, digital, etc.).

Examples of education records includes, but is not limited to, personal information, grades, class schedules, class lists, graded assignments, and tests where the student is identified.

Students, and their families when they are under the age of 18, have the right to ask the school to produce for their examination any and all education records. Some exceptions apply.

Records that employees make themselves for their own use and are not accessible to other personnel are not considered to be education records.

Maintaining FERPA Compliance – Unintentional Disclosure or Loss

Passed in 1974, FERPA grants four specific rights to students and families:

- The right to inspect and review their educational records
- The right to request the amendment of inaccurate records
- The right to consent to disclosure of their public records.
- The right to file a complaint with the Family Compliance Office of the US Department of Education concerning any alleged failure by GSSM to comply with FERPA requirements.

Every employee is responsible for ensuring that student records are protected from unintentional disclosure, loss, or tampering.

Follow these practices to help ensure the security of education records:

- Do not send a student’s education record to anyone other than the student and a family member who is authorized to receive it.
- When transmitting records via email or fax, each document should be marked “confidential.”
- When transmitting records via email, encrypt the message or the file attachment.
- Use care when emailing records to address messages only to authorized recipients.
- Accounts which allow access to education records should be protected from sharing or unauthorized disclosure.
- Education records on paper or portable electronic media should be protected from loss and disposed of in a secure manner.
- Only discuss education records with family members who you know are authorized to receive the information. When in doubt, ask the Registrar or Student Development Office for information about which family members are permitted to review education records.

For more information about FERPA as it relates to students and families at GSSM, consult the GSSM Canvas online course, *Understanding GSSM FERPA Policy*.

HIPAA

Passed in 1996, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) describes how personally identifiable information maintained by healthcare providers and insurance companies should be protected from fraud and theft.

GSSM’s protections for education records extends to healthcare records collected from families and generated through its healthcare operations.

Every employee who comes into contact with student health information is responsible for ensuring that such information is protected from accidental or deliberate exposure to unauthorized parties.

Under HIPAA regulations, GSSM is a hybrid entity, meaning that the school performs some functions that are covered by HIPAA (health center, health records) and some that do not (all other school functions). Employees, who, due to their work responsibilities interact with student medical information, must comply with HIPAA regulations.

HIPAA regulations require covered employees to protect protected health information (PHI) from disclosure, loss, and tampering.

Some examples of PHI are:

- Names of individuals and relatives
- Mailing addresses
- Telephones and fax numbers
- Email addresses
- SSN or any part of an SSN
- Medical records, record numbers, or account numbers
- Health plan beneficiary information
- Full face photographic images

At GSSM, this kind of data can be found on food allergy reports, registration reports to the health services office, and the medical information folder kept in each GSSM vehicle. Therefore, all employees are expected to recognize the need to protect such information from accidental exposure.

Only employees who require HIPAA-covered information for their work responsibilities are given access to such information.

For more information about HIPAA as it relates to students and families at GSSM, consult the GSSM Canvas online course, *Understanding GSSM HIPAA Policy*.

Transfer

Between State Agencies

An employee who transfers without a break in service from one state agency to another shall transfer his earned sick leave. Any transferred sick leave shall be adjusted to the scheduled workweek of the receiving agency. In the case of an employee transferring from one agency under whose system the employee has, prior to January 1, 1969, a maximum accumulation in excess of that currently authorized by the receiving agency, the total sick leave balance shall be transferred. If the employee subsequently reduces the amount of sick leave carried over to 180 workdays or less, 180 workdays shall become the maximum amount of unused sick leave the employee may thereafter carryover.

Between A State Agency and School District

An employee of a state agency transferring to a school district of the State or a school district employee transferring to a state agency is permitted to transfer to and retain at his new employer all sick leave he earned at his former employer regardless of his employment status at the new employer.

Separation from Employment

Upon separation from employment, an employee shall forfeit all earned sick leave.

Retirement

An employee who is a class-two member of the South Carolina Retirement System or the Police Officer Retirement System shall receive service credit for no more than 90 days of his unused sick leave at no cost to the employee. The leave must be credited at a rate where 20 days of unused sick leave equals one month of service. This additional service credit may not be used to qualify for retirement.

Reduction in Force Rights

An employee who is reinstated within one year of the date of separation shall have his sick leave restored.

Up to Six Month Exception to Break in Service

An employee who has received prior approval for an extension to the 15-day break in service shall have sick leave restored if transferred or appointed to another FTE position within the approved time period.

Records

The agency shall maintain all sick leave records for each employee eligible for sick leave. Such records must include the following:

- The number of sick leave hours earned and used during the current calendar year
- The number of sick leave hours carried forward from the previous calendar year, but not exceeding the maximum accrual authorized
- The number of hours in the employee's workweek and workday

Sick leave records shall be reviewed by the employee no less than once per calendar year and be supported by individual leave requests.

Disciplinary Action and Termination

Employees must conduct themselves with courtesy and consideration for the public and other employees. They are expected to keep certain South Carolina Department of Administration (SCDA), South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and South Carolina Governors School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) information confidential and to have conduct standards that do not discredit their employment at GSSM or state government. Regardless of whether a particular offense is listed in this policy as prohibited, employees are obligated to avoid any conduct that creates the appearance of impropriety. Such appearances adversely affect the confidence of the public in the integrity of GSSM as well as in state government.

Additional Conduct Expectations

GSSM expects the staff of GSSM to strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and subsequently contribute to an appropriate school atmosphere. To that end, in dress, conduct, and interpersonal relationships, all staff should recognize that they are being continuously observed by students, other employees, parents/legal guardians, and community members, and that their actions and demeanor may impair their effectiveness as an employee. The personal life of an employee, including the employee's personal use of a district or non-district issued electronic equipment outside of working hours (such as through social networking sites, email, text messaging, personal portrayal on the Internet, etc.), will be the concern of and warrant the attention of GSSM if it impairs the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job responsibilities or as it violates local, state, or federal law or contractual agreements.

Unprofessional conduct may be subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with state law, federal law, and/or GSSM policy. No employee will engage in immoral or criminal conduct or commit or attempt to induce students or others to commit an act or acts of immoral or criminal conduct. If it appears an employee may have violated the law, the district will cooperate with law enforcement agencies. All employees will maintain a professional relationship with students at all times, both inside and outside of school. No employee may engage in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature with a student at any time. This includes any action or conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing, or electronically through such means as a telephone, cell phone, computer, or other telecommunication device, including email, text messaging, social media, and social networking. Employees who have personal social networking sites are required to secure these sites to prevent students from having access to them. Employees are prohibited from posting any student information or

student picture on the Internet unless it is posted directly on the school website, posted on GSSM approved web and social media sites, and is following GSSM policies, including web publishing guidelines, GSSM acceptable use policies, and social media procedures.

Initial Employment or Reemployment – The Probation period

Initial employment is defined as the employment of a person newly hired into State government in a classified or unclassified FTE position.

Reemployment is defined as the employment of a person following a break in service in a classified or unclassified FTE position.

Probationary Status – Upon initial employment or reemployment the employee shall be in probationary status.

Probationary Period – An employee in probationary status must complete a probationary period of twelve months' duration for staff and one academic year duration for faculty.

An employee who performs unsatisfactorily during the probationary period will be terminated before becoming a covered employee. Note, progressive discipline and/or Performance Improvement Plans are not applicable while in a Probationary Status.

Disciplinary Actions

The following are various types of disciplinary actions that may be implemented to address employee misconduct or violation of policies and procedures.

Oral Reprimand

The employee's direct supervisor shall counsel the employee in private and warn them that future occurrences will be subject to further disciplinary action up to and including termination. The employee shall then be afforded an opportunity to correct the problem. The supervisor shall then write a **letter of record** documenting this action. The original letter shall be given to the employee and a copy placed in the supervisor's file at their office. The employee and the supervisor shall sign and date the document. The employee shall be advised that signing the oral reprimand letter only indicates receipt and does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the document. If the employee refuses to sign the document, the supervisor shall request that another management-level employee witness and initial his/her notation that the "employee refused to sign." The employee's refusal to sign does not prevent or delay the action.

Written Reprimand

The supervisor shall consult with the appropriate GSSM administrator and coordinate recommended action with Human Resources prior to initiating a written reprimand. The supervisor shall write a record of the incident and discuss it with the employee. The **written reprimand** shall include, but not be limited to: a description of the offense, the date of the incident, a summary of any prior counseling and/or reprimands given that included a warning that future occurrences would be subject to further disciplinary action up to and including termination. The employee and supervisor shall sign and date the document. The supervisor shall advise the employee that signing the written reprimand only indicates receipt and does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the document. If the employee refuses to sign the document, the supervisor shall request that another management-level employee witness and initial his/her notation that the "employee refused to sign." The employee's refusal to sign does not prevent or delay the action. The original document shall be given to the employee and a copy sent to the supervisor and to Human Resources to become a part of the employee's permanent personnel file.

Performance Improvement Plan - Substandard Performance

If an employee is not performing satisfactorily on an on-going basis in any essential job function or objective which significantly impacts performance the supervisor may issue a Performance Improvement Plant due to substandard performance.

The requirements of a Performance Improvement Plan are: The notice shall be in writing addressed to the employee, labeled as a Performance Improvement Plan, and signed by the employee (witnessed, if employee will not sign). The notice shall list the job function(s) and/or objective(s) included on the employee's planning documents that are considered "unsuccessful," with an explanation of the deficiencies for each job function and/or objective. The notice shall include the time period for improvement and the consequences if no improvement is noted (i.e., dismissal, demotion, and reassignment). The notice shall include a plan for evaluating employee progress during the warning period. In addition, a copy of the notice shall be given to the employee and placed in the employee's official personnel file.

The "Performance Improvement Plan" must provide for an improvement period of no less than 30 calendar days and no more than 120 calendar days.

Should the employee's performance improve to the successful or higher lever during "Performance Improvement Plan" the rater should give the employee written notice indicating the improvements that were made. The notice is placed in the employee's personnel file and the employee continues to perform his/her regular job duties. This action does not alter the annual performance review date.

By the end of the warning period, if the employee is rated "unsuccessful" on any essential job function or objective which significantly impacts performance as noted in the "Performance Improvement Plan," the employee shall be removed from the position (i.e. terminated, reassigned, demoted).

Upon the third occurrence of a "Performance Improvement Plan" within a 365-day period, an employee shall be removed from the position without further notice.

Suspension

A suspension is always without pay. No sick or annual leave or accrued compensatory time can be taken during a suspension. All suspensions shall be coordinated with the appropriate GSSM administrator and approved by the GSSM president prior to any action being taken. Written notification of the agency's decision to suspend the employee shall be prepared, and the contents reviewed and approved by the SCDA Office of Human Resources. An employee may be suspended pending the outcome of an investigation. If it is ascertained during the course of an investigation that the suspension was warranted, the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken based on the facts, on a case-by-case-basis, up to and including termination. The employee and the supervisor shall sign and date the document. The employee shall be advised that signing the suspension notice only indicates receipt and does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the document. If the employee refuses to sign the document, the supervisor shall request that another management level employee witness and initial his/her notation that the "employee refused to sign." The employee's refusal to sign does not prevent or delay the action. The original document shall be given to the employee and a copy sent to the appropriate supervisor and to Human Resources to become a part of the employee's permanent personnel file. There may be situations when it is necessary to suspend an employee immediately, for example, if an employee's conduct may endanger the safety of persons or property or cause work disruption. The supervisor may tell the employee to leave the work property or may call a law enforcement official to remove the employee, if necessary. In this situation the usual suspension procedures are followed except that the written suspension notice to the employee is sent by certified mail.

Reassignment

Depending on the circumstances of a case, an employee may be moved from his/her current position and reassigned to another position of the same state salary range. Reassignment may be used as a disciplinary action when an employee's conduct requires that the employee cannot continue occupying his/her current position. All requests for reassignment must be reviewed and approved by the GSSM president and Human Resources to ensure that no inequities in classification, compensation, or other personnel areas are created as a result of the action. The employee and the supervisor shall sign and date the document. The employee shall be advised that signing the reassignment notice only indicates receipt and does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the document. If the employee refuses to sign the document, the supervisor shall request that another management level employee witness and initial his/her notation that the "employee refused to sign." The employee's refusal to sign does not prevent or delay the action. The original document shall be given to the employee and a copy sent to the appropriate supervisor and to Human Resources.

Demotion

An involuntary demotion occurs when an employee is assigned from one position to another position having a lower state salary range. If it is determined that a state employee could function more effectively in a position having less responsibility, in a state classification in a lower pay band, a demotion shall be considered. An employee who, has their position reclassified to a class with a lower

state salary range or is demoted in a lower state salary range may, at the discretion of GSSM management, be paid at a rate equal to or below the employee's current salary, but within the lower state salary range. Demotions shall be coordinated with the GSSM president and Human Resources before any action is taken. The employee and the supervisor shall sign and date the document. The employee shall be advised that signing the demotion only indicates receipt and does not necessarily indicate agreement with the contents of the document. If the employee refuses to sign the document, the supervisor shall request that another management level employee witness and initial his/her notation that the "employee refused to sign". The employee's refusal to sign does not prevent or delay the action. The original document shall be given to the employee and a copy sent to the appropriate supervisor and to Human Resources.

Termination

All terminations shall be coordinated with the appropriate GSSM management and approved by the GSSM president, in consultation with Human Resources, prior to the termination. The supervisor notifies the employee in writing of the termination and explains the reason(s) for the termination. If the employee is away from work or cannot be reached, the termination notice is sent by certified mail.

Voluntary Resignations

Employees who voluntarily fail to report to work for three consecutive workdays and fail to contact the agency during this time period will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. All performance-related problems should be addressed by the guidelines established in the Employee Performance Management System.

Dispute Resolution

It is always best when employees are able to resolve work-related concerns themselves. When this isn't possible, it is appropriate for employees to raise the concern with their direct supervisor. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, employees may make an appeal to human resources or a member of the President's Executive Leadership Team.

In all cases, employees should keep in mind that unresolved disputes take a toll on those involved, and often, those around them. Since each person's contribution to the school's successful operation is important and valued, a high value is placed on resolving issues that arise fairly and quickly.

Exit Interview

All GSSM permanent employees who are separating must participate in an exit interview, designed to identify the reasons for separation, to give the employee the opportunity to rate their employment with GSSM, and to ensure all state agency property is returned.

Files on exit interviews shall be maintained and summarized by the Office of Human Resources.

1. A separating employee shall submit a letter of resignation not less than two (2) weeks before their last day of work.
2. The letter of resignation shall be addressed to their supervisor with a copy to Human Resources.
3. Human Resources will schedule an appointment for the employee to sign any required forms prior to the employee's last day of work.



4. The exit interview questionnaire is a confidential document that is to be completed by the employee and submitted to Human Resources. The supervisor, in conjunction with Human Resources, should ensure that employees leaving the agency return all state property, i.e., identification badges, office keys, records, files, and any other applicable items.

Grievance Process

GSSM is committed to the fair treatment of all employees and strives to create a safe and collegial workplace. Employees are encouraged to attempt to resolve disagreements through engagement with their supervisor or division leader. If these efforts are unsuccessful, and, only after discussions with their supervisor or division leader is unsuccessful, the employee should submit their grievance to the president.

In rare circumstances, the employee may find it necessary to file an official grievance with the state Human Resources Office. Only employees in FTE positions who are working beyond their probationary period are eligible to file a grievance. For more information about filing a grievance, please visit www.admin.sc.gov/humanresources.

Office Assignments

Offices and other workspaces are assigned based on the needs of the school. Employees expected to work on campus are provided safe and comfortable spaces that are appropriate to their responsibilities and needs.

Teachers are traditionally offered offices vacated by other teachers. These offers are based on years of service to the school and always with the consultation and approval of department chairs and administration.

- Only vacant offices are re-assigned. No teacher may displace another from a currently occupied office other than for institutional needs.
- Vacant offices are assigned according to length of service at GSSM among those who apply for a vacant office. If the years of service between two eligible teachers are the same, then names are drawn randomly.
- A teacher displaced from their current office due to institutional need is temporarily placed at the top of the seniority list, receiving first choice among vacant offices for that one move only.
- The seniority list will be maintained by Human Resources who will provide this information to division heads as they oversee the re-assignment of offices.

Employees with job responsibilities that require little or no direct support of students may be assigned offices at GSSM's Uptown Campus.

Employees who perform most of their job responsibilities away from school may be provided more casual, shared workspaces for use when they are on campus.

Safe, Professional Attire

All employees shall dress in a professional manner that is appropriate to their work on typical work days. Specific work responsibilities may carry additional requirements for safety and compliance. Proper safety equipment is required at all times when working in labs, performing maintenance duties, or using potentially hazardous substances.

During formal academic proceedings like commencement and convocation, participating faculty and staff are expected to wear the appropriate academic regalia. Employees provide their own regalia for these ceremonies.

School Calendars

Website Calendar of Events

The Marketing & Communications Manager maintains the school's public calendar of events and activities found on the school's website. Events that are open to the public are listed there.

Master Calendar

The master calendar in Outlook is available to all faculty, staff, and students and includes only events and activities that are open to the school community, or are in the community's interest to know. The calendar will not include regularly scheduled meetings of organizations except those of school-wide interest (i.e. Board meetings). Items for the master calendar are submitted directly to Outlook by the sponsoring department or division and should be submitted as far in advance of the date of the event as possible to help preclude scheduling conflicts. When listing events on the master calendar, authors will ensure that wording is appropriate for external audiences since events listed there may be published to digital signage, parent-accessible web sites, and other media available to the public. Do not invite people to master calendar events. Important dates like the beginning and ending of terms, long weekends, holidays, are entered in the master calendar by the Director of Academic Programs. It is the responsibility of anyone sponsoring campus events to consult the master calendar in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts with previously scheduled events.

School Provided Housing

Live-in staff, usually Residential Assistants and Residential Life Coordinators, are provided with safe and comfortable housing within the residence halls. Staff living in residence should remember that they are role-models for students and should always set the highest example of conduct and appearance.

Amenities

School housing includes water, electricity, heat, air-conditioning, cable-TV, and internet service at no cost to the employee. In-residence employees may use laundry facilities located on each residence hall. Cable TV packages are limited to the facilities available in the school. Basic cable is available but more comprehensive packages may not be. Internet services provided by the school are regulated by state and federal statutes that apply to schools. Therefore, not all services or content are available in staff apartments.

Insurance

Live-in residents are strongly encouraged to purchase renter's insurance for household contents. The school's insurance policy does not cover damage to personal property.

Appliances

Each apartment is equipped with a refrigerator and stove. These appliances must be kept clean.

Maintenance

Live-in residents are responsible for keeping their apartments clean to prevent pests which may migrate to student living spaces. They are also responsible for notifying maintenance promptly when repairs are needed, especially repairs to sinks, toilets, and showers.

Vehicle Policy

GSSM provides vehicles for employees' use in the conduct of school business, including the transportation of students. These policies are intended to ensure the safety of students, teachers, and staff as well as the public.

Appropriate Use of School Vehicles

School vehicles may only be used for GSSM school business. Employees must comply with speed limits, road signs, and road signals at all times. Occupancy limits for vans, mini-buses, and the large bus must be observed. Traffic citations received by employees while operating a GSSM vehicle are the responsibility of the driver.

Student Transport

When employees transport students for any reason, they assume a high level of responsibility for student safety. The driver must ensure that students use seatbelts when riding in passenger vans. Students should generally be transported in the smallest school vehicle that is available and safe for the trip. Each vehicle contains medical insurance information that can be used at a healthcare facility should a student require medical attention while on a trip overseen by the employee. This information is considered to be confidential and must be protected by the employee.

Employees should refrain from transporting students in private vehicles unless in emergency or extenuating situations. In the rare occasion that employees would need to transport students in their own vehicle, the employee should receive permission from their supervisor, and the student's parent, and is responsible for ensuring that their vehicle is properly registered, maintained for safe operation, and that all safety features in the car are in working order. Students may not be transported on motorcycles, mopeds, etc.

Certification

Before any employee may use a school vehicle, they must first complete a driving certification test. This test is administered by appointment with the GSSM Receptionist, direct supervisor, mentor and/or department chair and involves completing some paperwork and a road test.

Assignment and Reservation

In general, school vehicles are available for use on a first come, first served basis. When the need for vehicles exceeds the vehicles available, higher priority needs may take precedence.

Vehicles are assigned and reserved through the Vehicle Maintenance Assistant stationed in the main lobby. When unavailable or after hours, arrangements may be made with security personnel.

Vehicle Returns

Each time a vehicle is used, the Vehicle Condition Report should be completed and returned to the vehicle maintenance assistance. Any repair needs or damages noticed by the driver must be reported.

Vehicles should always be returned with at least a half tank of gas.

Vehicle Gas Cards

Each vehicle has a gas card which can be used to purchase fuel for the vehicle at most gas pumps which accept credit cards. These cards may only be used to purchase fuel for school vehicles and only for the vehicle to which it is assigned. Every employee is provided with a personalized PIN number that is required to use the card. Gas cards must be kept in its assigned vehicle.

Department Charges

Vehicle use and mileage is recorded in a log that is maintained in each school-owned vehicle. Each employee is required to properly complete the log at the end of every trip. The department sponsoring the use of the vehicle is charged per-mile at the standard IRS mileage rate as published by the SC Comptroller General. This rate is communicated regularly by the Business Office.

It is usually less expensive to use school-owned vehicles than it is to reimburse employees for the use of their own vehicles. Therefore, employees should always attempt to schedule an appropriate school-owned vehicle before driving their own vehicle on school business. If an appropriate school-owned vehicle is available, but the employee chooses to use their own vehicle to travel on school business.

Licensing Requirements

School vehicles may be operated only by properly licensed drivers. Authorization to drive a school vehicle is solely at the discretion of the school. Any driver the school has concerns about, regardless of licensure or driving history, may be denied the privilege of operating a school vehicle. GSSM may review an employee's driving record at any time and may change driving privileges at its own discretion.

Vans and mini-buses require only a current driver's license. Operating the large, 55-passenger bus requires a current commercial driver's license (CDL) with the appropriate class certification. The school maintains a list of qualified drivers who are authorized to operate the large bus.

New employees with out-of-state driver's licenses may operate school vehicles, but are expected to acquire a South Carolina driver's license as soon as possible.

Employees with suspended, revoked, or expired driver's licenses may not operate a school vehicle nor operate their personal vehicle anywhere on GSSM's campus or for school business.

Vehicle Registration

All vehicles operating on the GSSM campus must be properly registered.

Speed Limit

The speed limit on campus for all motorized vehicles is 10 mph.

Information Technology (IT)

GSSM provides robust technological solutions to help faculty and staff do their work. The use of technology at GSSM is governed by applicable state and federal regulations, GSSM policy, and the Appropriate Use Policy (AUP) that is updated from time to time.

Contacting IT

IT staff may be contacted directly via email, phone, or via Teams. Sending a message to it@governors.school for technical support may result in a quicker response as all members of the staff will receive that message.

Lifecycle

GSSM manages the life-cycle of computers, printers, and other devices according to a schedule that maximizes return on investment while avoiding reliance on obsolete equipment. New technology is usually purchased initially using department funds, unless the device being purchased is part of a scheduled, larger, leased acquisition. When new equipment is acquired on a scheduled lease, only the first year's lease payment is billed to the department. Future annual payments, and renewals, are integrated in the general technology fund.

The technology needed for employees to perform their duties are replenished on a standard schedule.

- Desktop computers – 4 years
- Laptop computers – 3-4 years
- Peripherals like printers, projectors, etc. – 5-7 years.

The Information Technology department (IT) must pre-authorize any technology purchases, and will assist in deploying, trouble-shooting, and technical support.

IMPORTANT: No member of IT will ever ask you for your password. You should never provide it to anyone who asks.

Every computer and major peripheral is logged in the state's asset system and assigned an asset number before it is distributed for use. No machine may be deployed to an office, or taken off campus, without an asset tag.

Restricted Devices

Computers used to access protected information have a red tag with *Restricted Device* in bold letters. Such computers may not be used by students, employees who should not have access to education records, or non-employees at any time. Computers used in offices are usually restricted devices.



Public Devices

Computers used in classrooms and other public areas by students and program participants have a green tag with *Public Device* in bold letters. Such computers may not be used to access education records or other protected information. Public devices are found mostly in classrooms.

Every computer should have either a red *Restricted Device* sticker or a green *Public Device* sticker. If you see a computer without such a sticker, please notify IT.

Assigning Equipment

Employees who need a computer for their work will be supplied with school-owned equipment suitable to their requirements. Generally speaking, office-based employees will be assigned a desktop computer and access to shared printers and copiers around campus. Laptop computers may be assigned when employees are expected to work from home or travel often. Except with special approval, each employee will be assigned one work computer.

Care, Damage, and Loss

Employees should always exercise good care when traveling with a school computer. A laptop may have education records, health records, and other information that must be protected from unauthorized access. When computers are lost, stolen, or damaged, they must be reported to IT immediately.

Centralized Management

Every computer, tablet, and phone is managed by the school's mobile device inventory management system, which lets us find a lost device or remove information if it is believed to have been stolen. Operating a mobile device without the school's management software, or tampering with the software is a violation of school policy and state regulations.

Loss Prevention

All files on computers connected to the GSSM network are part of a school-wide backup system. Any file in the Documents folder of a Windows PC is stored on the network either directly, or, in the case of laptops, via periodic syncing. Network files are backed up into the cloud to prevent loss. If a file is accidentally deleted from a computer or network folder, it may be possible to restore the file from the cloud backup. Contact IT for more information.

School Use

Use of GSSM's computers, networks, and services is intended to support GSSM work only. Such devices may not be used for personal businesses or activities. It is permissible to use the school's Internet resources for personal activities like checking email, paying a bill, etc. but these activities should be kept brief and not interfere with work responsibilities.

Technical Support

Technicians are on hand during business hours to assist with technical problems. Before calling for help, be sure that you've done all you can to find and correct the problem. Many problems can be resolved simply by restarting your computer. Others can be solved by Googling the problem you are having.

Account Security

Every employee who uses a computer and may have access to education records must exercise care to ensure such information is protected from loss or unauthorized exposure. Good account hygiene is an important place to start:

- Never share your account information with anyone.
- Select passwords that may not be guessed and which meet the school's complexity requirements (at least 8 characters, 1 letter, 1 number, 1 upper-case letter, and a special character).
- Passwords expire every 100 days.
- Do not leave your computer logged in when you are away. Press Windows-L to lock your computer.

GSSM Email Accounts

Every employee who needs email for their work is provided an account on GSSM's Outlook email system.

To make the best use of this powerful tool, employees are urged to:

- Remember that every message, file, and action (forwarding, deleting, etc.) in the school's Outlook system is logged and maintained in the system to comply with state regulations.
- All messages, files, and activity are intended to further the goals and operations of GSSM. The school reserves the right to inspect systems and accounts as needed to fulfill its responsibilities.
- To avoid inadvertently appearing insulting or giving offense, always use the highest standards of courtesy and respect that are expected and common in face-to-face conversations.
- Choose brevity and clarity over long and meandering messages.
- Avoid the urge to carbon-copy an employee's supervisor in order to pressure a desired or faster response.
- Use the blind-copy feature rarely and with care since it deprives the open recipient of knowing who else has received the information they have received.
- When possible, seek out the intended recipient in person or by phone and discuss the issue rather than use email.
- Help employees achieve healthy work/life balance by resisting the urge to send emails requesting action or attention during evenings, weekends, breaks, and holidays.



- Never use email to express dissatisfaction with an issue or person. Resolving problems is an important activity that is always best conducted in face-to-face discussions.
- Remember that deleted messages and files are preserved within the system in compliance with state regulations and record retention requirements.
- Remember that when a student's performance, discipline record, or behavior is discussed via email the message and any responses become part of that student's academic record and must be preserved for future reporting or FERPA disclosure. See the section *Student Records* for more information.
- Remember that only the school's email system should be used for school business. If a personal email address is used for GSSM business, the owner's account may inadvertently become a target for FOIA requests or litigation discovery.

Employees using the school's email system are required to:

- Use the email system in compliance with all applicable laws and policies.
- Use the email system only for GSSM business and to advance the interests of the school community.
- Protect access to email accounts so that others may not access messages or send messages improperly on behalf of the account user.
- Respect that an email that is marked or labeled confidential, private or personal may not be forwarded to any other recipient without the sender's permission.
- Avoid messaging or language that can be interpreted as intimidating or harassing.
- Ensure that student information or other protected records are protected from distribution lists or individuals who are not entitled to have access to it.
- Report attempts to compromise security, harassment, phishing, or hacking to Information Technology immediately.

Login Credential Policy

Identifying and authorizing who is accessing networks, information, and services are crucial to the GSSM community's effort to protect the security, accuracy, and availability of information and information resources available on the school's network. This policy is compliant with state and federal guidelines.

Access Accounts

GSSM will assign access accounts for identification and authentication purposes to each individual who has a need to access GSSM IT resources for work, participation in a school program, or to provide a contracted service. When assigned an account, the recipient will:

- Acknowledge and accept their responsibility to use GSSM resources appropriately and in accordance with the GSSM Appropriate Use Policy (AUP)
- Agree to keep their password secret from others and to notify GSSM if they suspect that their password has become known to others

Access accounts for non-students will:

- be created only by request from a division head, using an approved form and signed by the CIO or a designee
- remain active only for as long as access is needed
- For employees, this period ends immediately upon resignation, retirement, or termination.
- For contractors, this period ends immediately at the end of the contract period, or when contracted work is complete, whichever is sooner.
- be established at the lowest access level the account holder needs
- be temporarily disabled after six failed login attempts
- be deactivated if unused for 95 days

Access accounts for students will:

- be created for all students after the online registration deadline and authorized by the CIO or a designee
- remain active until the student graduates or is otherwise separated from the school
- not be granted to protected storage areas, database, or services unless they pertain to the student
- be temporarily disabled after six failed login attempts
- be deactivated if unused for 95 days

Credentials

Credentials to access accounts, most often usernames and passwords, may only be used by the person to whom they are assigned. Passwords and accounts must not be shared with anyone, including trusted friends or family members. Account users will be held responsible for any actions performed under their accounts. GSSM staff will never ask users for their passwords.

Standards for user names:

- Each username will contain information that identifies the person to whom it has been assigned. Shared accounts are not allowed.
- For faculty and staff members, the username will be constructed using the person's first initial followed by their last name.
- Very long, or hyphenated names may be shortened in consultation with the person to whom it will be assigned.



- If multiple employees share a first initial and last name, then middle initials, numbers, and other differentiators will be applied to achieve uniqueness.
- For contractors, their username will include a suffix abbreviation of their company name.
- Students returning after graduation to assist with summer programs will include a suffix of the last 2 digits of their graduation year.
- Current faculty and staff usernames which consist of only last names need not be changed.

Standards for passwords:

- Passwords must be at least eight characters long and include at least one lower case letter, one uppercase letter, and one number.
- Passwords may not contain birthdays, names, or any other personally identifiable information.
- Passwords must be changed at least every 180 days.

Applicable Systems

Access accounts are required to access any resource that contains, or provides access to, protected information, including but not limited to:

- Wi-Fi networks, even if the accessing device was not provided by GSSM
- Desktops, laptops, or other computers
- Tablets, smartphones
- Wired campus network
- Off campus services to which the school provides access credentials

Using GSSM WIFI with your personal devices

You may use GSSM WIFI with your phone, tablet, or laptop by connecting to the GSSM-GUEST network. The password for this network is always prominently displayed in the main lobby and may change from time to time.

The first time you use the WIFI, you must open your web browser and agree to the terms of use which will appear. If the terms of use do not automatically appear, simply browse to a web page. You may need to browse to a page you have not visited before.

Note: Devices that do not support web browsing (video streaming sticks, some game consoles, etc.) are not supported on the network.

Additional information may be found in the GSSM Appropriate Use Policy (AUP).

Appropriate Use Policy (AUP)

The Appropriate Use Policy (AUP) pertains to all users of GSSM networks, contracted services, and any and all other technologies provided by or on behalf of the school. The term *user* includes, but is not limited to, employees, students, alumni, visitors, contractors, program applicants, job applicants, program participants, and volunteers.

GSSM's computer network supports school operations, communications, research, and education by providing access to useful shared resources and facilitating collaborative work. Uses that support these purposes and facilitate school operations receive the highest priority. Other uses that interfere with GSSM objectives are prohibited.

By definition, a network is a shared resource. GSSM's network is shared by its students, teachers, and administration. Those who use the network accept the responsibility to use it appropriately. This Appropriate Use Policy describes those responsibilities and the rules that apply to users of the GSSM computer network.

IT Ethical and Behavioral Standards

Those who use the GSSM network are expected to follow the same standards of conduct and communication that would be expected in face-to-face encounters. Some responsibilities are unique to the environment created by computer networks and are addressed here:

Online Safety

GSSM cares about the safety of the community and is deeply concerned about the increasing incidents of assault by those who locate or arrange meetings with their victims through internet-based social networking services. These services can be dangerous when personal information, particularly information that can lead to the identification or location of a person, is published openly. GSSM strongly encourages everyone to secure their profiles so that they are not visible to strangers.

Online Harassment

GSSM's policies against harassment are in effect whenever and wherever community members encounter each other, including online encounters. The use of internet services within and beyond the control of the school to harass or defame another person is a violation of GSSM rules and will be vigorously investigated and prosecuted. When harassment involving non-GSSM services is observed or reported, the school may engage law enforcement agencies and the courts to compel the service provider to disclose identifying information about the harassing party.

Protected Information

Education records, health information, confidential information, and information which may be of a personal or private nature must be transmitted and stored in an approved encrypted format. Such information may only be accessed using authorized equipment maintained and authorized by GSSM and by authorized GSSM personnel. For more information, refer to the GSSM Information Security Policy. Hard drives, network folders, and other storage devices must be encrypted by IT before use.

Online Identity/Login Credentials

GSSM provides network users with credentials (username and password) to access network resources. These credentials may only be used by the person to whom they are assigned. Credentials assigned by GSSM must be kept secret and may not be divulged to anyone else. The person to whom network credentials are assigned is responsible for all activities that occur when those credentials are used. Further, it is a violation of GSSM rules and state regulations for a person to impersonate someone else by either using their credentials, or any other means that might obfuscate identity.



GSSM students and employees may be provided credentials to access online databases while using the Coker University library. While these credentials are issued by Coker University, their use is governed by this AUP. Unless otherwise authorized in writing, login credentials expire upon separation from the school (graduation, dismissal, withdrawal, or other termination).

Intellectual Property

As an educational institution that values research, GSSM strongly supports the rights of owners of intellectual property. Many internet services facilitate sharing and collection of digital content like music and movies in violation of the rights of their owners. Acquiring, possessing, or sharing digital content in violation of copyright is illegal and prohibited at GSSM.

Copyrighted media, online materials, and printed materials may be reproduced for educational purposes under Fair Use provisions.

Prohibited Access

Attempting to access protected information without authorization is a serious violation of GSSM rules as well as state and federal regulations. Users are prohibited from all activities that could inappropriately reveal the existence or configuration of servers, databases, network services, or security features. Scanning to discover network resources is expressly prohibited.

Pornographic & Other Objectionable Material

All persons who use the GSSM network are prohibited from viewing, accessing, sending, or possessing pornographic material on GSSM-owned computers, via the GSSM network, while on the GSSM network, or at a GSSM-sponsored event. Attempts to circumvent, disable, or otherwise render content filter measures ineffective are a violation of GSSM rules. It is important to note that when students use networks off campus, the school is unable to regulate the content available to them. Particularly during summer research internships and while conducting assignment research at the Coker University library or any other collegiate library, GSSM students will access networks not equipped to prevent access to pornographic material. Colleges and universities are only required to enforce their own published access standards, which will vary among institutions.

Conservation of Shared Resources

Network resources may be overwhelmed when used indiscriminately. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each person who uses the GSSM network to conserve resources where possible so that they are always available for others to share:

- Internet circuit capacity - GSSM utilizes a commercial-grade connection circuit to provide internet access to the campus. Priority for using this service is given to educational and campus operation purposes. GSSM will manage this resource by prioritizing internet traffic, limiting or eliminating interfering services, and other means as necessary.
- Message and file storage - GSSM servers provide spaces to store messages and files. They are intended to support educational and campus operations. Therefore, they should not be used to store media collections or for other recreational purposes. GSSM servers may never be used to store illegal content.

Using Your Computer at GSSM

GSSM encourages students to bring computers to school for use in their rooms, classrooms (when allowed by their teacher), and around campus. Employees sometimes use the school's Wi-Fi system with their personally owned phones and tablets. Attaching any device to the GSSM network indicates acceptance of this AUP and places specific responsibilities upon the owner:

Owner Responsibilities

Computer owners are responsible for ensuring that their computers are virus-free prior to connecting to the network. Computer owners may be held responsible for damage created by computer viruses, or other activity originating from their computer. When it is determined that a computer is threatening the stability of the network or other computers, it will be removed from the network. Owners are also responsible for maintaining their own computers. GSSM does not have staff available for computer repair. Computers should be in good working condition when they arrive on campus. Owners should back up their important files often to prevent loss in the event of a computer failure.

Antivirus Software is Required

Every computer that is connected to the GSSM computer network must have effective, up-to-date antivirus software installed and active at all times. This protects the computer owner as well as others on the network. Computers found to have out-of-date or no antivirus software installed may be removed from the network.

Dynamic Network Addressing

The GSSM computer network automatically assigns IP addresses to each connected computer. This address must not be tampered with or changed.

Network Registration

Computers and other devices are registered to their owners when they log into WIFI and present a username and password, or when they attached to a network port in a student's room. Attempting to conceal the ownership of a computer is a violation of school rules.

Protected Information

It is a violation of state regulations for protected information to be copied to or stored on personally owned devices. Protected information includes education records, health information, or any other information that is considered to be GSSM Confidential or a personal and private nature to an employee or student.

Prohibited Devices

Certain network devices can interfere with network operation. Any kind of DSL/Cable router has this potential and is prohibited on the network. Wi-Fi access points, hot spots, routers, and other devices that provide Wi-Fi network services to others reduce the number of channels available to the GSSM network, reducing performance in the area where they operate. Only wireless devices acting as clients of the school's Wi-Fi network are allowed.

Wi-Fi-enabled printers are specifically prohibited unless the owner has **disabled** the Wi-Fi functions on the printer. Configured improperly, these devices impede Wi-Fi performance for all devices near them. Wi-Fi printers which are causing interference with the campus network will be removed and stored by GSSM until it can be taken home.

Prohibited Software

Any software that scans networks or computers for vulnerabilities, any software that interferes with the GSSM network or devices attached to it, or any software that facilitates circumvention of any GSSM rule is prohibited.

Wireless Network

Govinet is GSSM's wireless network for students, staff, and teachers. Once connected to Govinet, an additional username and password is required to gain access to the internet. These credentials are requested infrequently. Using another student's credentials is prohibited as is using other wireless networks not intended for student use. A guest network is available for visitor use and for devices owned by employees. Instructions for connecting to it will appear in most devices during connection.

Microsoft Office

As part of its site licensing agreement with Microsoft, students and employees may download MS Office to their computers and portable devices. Each person may install the software on up to five personally owned devices which may include phones and tablets. The installation screen is accessed through the Outlook portal (<https://outlook.office.com>). GSSM provides this service as a convenience and makes no guarantees regarding compatibility, fitness, or availability for any particular task. Anyone who downloads and installs Microsoft products accept any and all license terms applicable to their use. Access to Outlook, OneDrive, and any associated installations of Microsoft Office will stop working when students or employees leave the school, although documents created with the software will still be available.

Compatibility

GSSM makes no guarantee of compatibility between personally-owned equipment and its networking equipment, services, software, etc.

Privacy

In order to protect the computer-using community and to enforce GSSM rules and policies, the school reserves the right to examine, restrict, or remove any material that is on or passes through its network. Such activities are not undertaken routinely or lightly. In addition, specific information about computer use is collected and preserved over time:

- **Internet locations visited**
- This information is logged for each Internet user and device.
- **IP addresses assigned to each computer**
- When an IP address is assigned, the hardware address of the computer, the IP address assigned, the date and time of the assignment and location of the computer requesting the address are recorded.



- **Log in/out information**
- User name, network location, date and time are recorded when logging into or out of some network resources.

There are privacy issues associated with using public GSSM web sites that are described at:

<http://www.scgssm.org/privacy-policy>.

AUP Violations

Violations of the AUP may result in temporary or permanent loss of network use privileges. Depending on the nature of the violation, additional disciplinary actions may be taken.

Note: These policies may change from time to time as circumstances warrant. The most current version will always be posted online at <http://www.scgssm.org/aup>.

Faculty Information

Academic Expectations for Faculty

The South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics employs an exemplary faculty to educate some of the finest students in the state. These faculty members are dedicated to educating students at the highest levels in science, mathematics, engineering, technology, and the humanities. Creativity, exploration, and independent thought are strongly encouraged, without sacrificing our commitment to mastery and depth. Faculty are therefore expected to follow these guidelines.

Classroom Teaching

Student learning and development is the core of GSSM's mission. Faculty should offer courses that are current, in-depth, and rigorous. Faculty should be punctual in beginning classes/laboratories on time and respectful of their colleagues by not keeping students beyond the class period.

Scheduling Major Class Assignments

Faculty members must not administer major tests or have major assignments due the Monday after long weekends. Final exams are scheduled at the end of each semester when appropriate.

Faculty must indicate in Canvas all major assessments and assignments for inclusion on MASS (found in the faculty section of our website). No student is required to take more than three major assessments in one academic day. Our MASS system keeps track of major assignment days across campus. Reviewing the MASS system results on GSSM-Web can help avoid assigning due dates when students are busy in other courses. Note that you can mark your own major assignment due dates by including "***" in assignment names on Canvas. The MASS system will automatically capture it and include it in the report on GSSM-Web.

Course Approval

Courses must be approved by the academic department chair and the curriculum committee.

Syllabi

Syllabi are approved at the department level. They should be sent to department chairs each semester. They are stored at GSSM so all faculty and staff have access to them. GSSM provides a syllabus template for all faculty to show what we expect in our syllabi. Both are located on the M: Drive under academics

Office hours

GSSM values office hours as an integral part of teacher-student contact. Office hours are respected and endorsed as one of the unique strengths our faculty bring to their work. Teaching, therefore, does not end with classroom hours; faculty are expected to maintain office hours during the academic day. A class schedule with indicated office hours must be posted on their office door and on every syllabus. Virtual faculty must similarly indicate office/conference times to their students and work with virtual administration to facilitate such meetings. Faculty should have a simple and efficient system for students to sign up for conferences during office hours. In scheduling additional student conferences, faculty are reminded of the importance of maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

Grading

Faculty at GSSM must assign final course grades on the state uniform grade scale (<https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/uniform-grading-policy/>).

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

At GSSM a grade of D denotes unsatisfactory mastery of the course material, does not earn GSSM credit and can impact a student's ability to remain at GSSM. Students earning a D will receive SCDE credit if they leave GSSM. The Academic Review Committee will determine if it is possible for a student earning a D to remain at GSSM.

When rounding grades including a fraction, $x.500$ or higher rounds to the next higher number, $x+1$, while $x.499$ or less rounds to the lower number, x .

60 is the lowest grade a faculty member can assign as a final grade for a GSSM course.

Each faculty member determines the criteria for grades in their classes. Faculty members must clearly explain their grading criteria in their course syllabus.

Submitting Grades

Incoming students vary in academic preparation, so faculty must provide frequent and regular feedback to students. Within the first six weeks of all courses, faculty will enter a grade in PowerSchool that represents at least 15% of the semester grade. This may include a single assessment or combination of assessments. This will give students an early insight into their performance.



Faculty must turn in mid-term and semester grades in PowerSchool on the dates indicated on the Faculty Edition of the Academic Calendar. Faculty should not leave for the semester until grades have been verified and signed off.

Virtual faculty use Canvas, our LMS, to enter grades regularly. Virtual faculty also use PowerSchool to record quarterly and semester grades. Virtual faculty must have all grades entered in Canvas by the dates listed on the Virtual Program Calendar, and quarter grades, semester grades, and finals grades submitted in PowerSchool by the dates required.

Academic Integrity

Because our community is built on trust, we take academic integrity seriously. Faculty should carefully review GSSM's full academic integrity policy found in the GSSM catalog.

Teachers working closely with students is the primary way we maintain integrity at GSSM. Each syllabus should include clear policies on academic integrity and guidelines for individual and group work. When teachers discover that a student has violated academic integrity, they will discuss the incident with the student and determine the consequences for the offense. In enforcing academic integrity, teachers will always work to be fair and consistent to all students and to help students learn from their mistakes.

Teachers may choose to resolve the incident without a formal incident report if they think that is the best way for the student to learn from it. For these minor incidents, teachers can give students verbal or written warnings, reduce their grades, and/or require them to revise, rework, or retake written work or an exam. Teachers will keep records of all incidents involving academic integrity even if they do not write a formal incident report for them.

If the teacher considers the incident more serious, he or she will **complete an academic integrity incident report** (found on the M: Drive under Academics) and send it to the Director of Academic Programs (and the Dean of Students for residential students). At this point, the level of the charge is at the discretion of the instructor. The incident report will describe what happened, any supporting facts for the existence of a violation, and the penalty for the incident. The report will also outline how the teacher has worked with the student to understand the consequences of his or her actions and a plan for moving forward in the class.

Level-one incidents are considered "failure to follow instructions." Level-two incidents involve "cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and other acts of academic dishonesty." Level-three incidents happen when a student has a second level-two incident or when an incident is seen as egregious. Students can appeal academic integrity decisions to the Director of Academic Programs (DAP).

Work with your department chair and the DAP to figure out the best way to deal with academic integrity issues.

Grade Appeals

Students may appeal grades through the process laid out in the GSSM Academic Policies and Course Catalog. Work with your department chair if a student appeals a grade in your class.

Communication

Faculty members should communicate, when appropriate, to parents, students, and administrators. Parent phone calls and emails should be returned in a timely fashion, preferably within 48 hours.

Academic Alerts are an important way for faculty to communicate with students and families when students are having academic difficulties. Faculty members, using their professional judgment, should complete an Academic Alert whenever they feel that it is in the best interest of the student. Faculty may also send Notes of Praise to commend students for exceptional work.

Notices of Potential Unsatisfactory Grade will be sent to students and parents four weeks prior to the end of a course. Instructors of semester courses will send out Notices of Potential Unsatisfactory Grade in both semesters and instructors of year-long courses will send them out only in the Spring semester. Notices of Potential Unsatisfactory Grade show higher urgency than an Academic Alert. The Notice of Potential Unsatisfactory Grade indicates a student may not earn a “C” or higher in the course based on the current grade, current trend of work and/or habits, and the remaining points/grades available in a course.

Faculty member should meet with students when they send out an Academic Alert or Notice of Potential Unsatisfactory Grade to make sure the student understands the situation and the faculty member’s recommendations. If a student does not earn a satisfactory grade in a course, faculty will submit an Unsatisfactory Grade Report to the Dean of Curriculum and Assessment before they turn in their final grades.

Faculty will meet regularly with any student who the faculty member thinks is underperforming in a course until the student has improved. Failure to attend one of these meetings is a level-1 offense (“Missing an appointment or required meeting”) for which the faculty member may write an incident report.

Faculty are encouraged to keep a record of their interactions with students and parents over the course of the semester, especially when students are at academic risk. Faculty are also encouraged to send Notes of Praise to recognize student achievement.

Electronic versions of these forms are found in the faculty section of our website.

Student Attendance

To comply with state and federal law, faculty must take attendance at the beginning of each class and report all student absences and tardies in PowerTeacher daily. Accumulated tardies of greater than 20 minutes are recorded as an unexcused absence.

See the GSSM catalog section on Attendance, Absences, and Makeup Policy for a detailed account of attendance policies and grade consequences.

Inappropriate Student Conduct

Faculty should report inappropriate classroom behavior using the Incident Report Form (found in the academic section of the M: Drive). Behavioral expectations are outlined in the student handbook. These expectations are in force inside and outside of class.

Faculty Work Day

Typically, classes at GSSM meet Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until about 4:00 pm. Faculty members are expected to meet their classes each day unless the faculty member is ill or attending a professional function. A standard work day for faculty is 7.5 hours with contractual night and weekend commitments. The contract period for an academic year is 202 days.

Faculty Absences

By state law, faculty must report all absences. Download the Faculty Absence Form, complete it, and e-mail it to your department chair. Please work with your students and department chair to notify them as soon as possible when you will be absent and to make alternative arrangements. Get approval from your department chair before confirming to students that you will be absent.

Types of absences and reporting responsibility:

- 1) Personal Days: Each faculty member may take two personal days per year without explanation. Faculty must notify their department chair and fill out the Faculty Absence Form in advance of using a personal day.
- 2) Professional Development: A faculty member may miss class or other GSSM events for professional development activities. The professional development activity must be approved by the department chair in consultation with the Director of Academic Programs and the faculty member must fill out the Faculty Absence Form in advance. These absences do not count against personal days or sick days.
- 3) Sick Leave: A faculty member may miss classes or other GSSM events for the causes listed in the sick leave policy in the appropriate section of this handbook. Faculty must notify their department chair and fill out the Faculty Absence Form as soon as reasonably possible. Faculty must also record sick leave in the SCEIS system.

Department Chairs should forward all Faculty Absence Forms to the Director of Human Resources.

If the department chair is not available, a faculty member may e-mail the Director of Human Resources and copy the department chair.

Faculty Absence Form is found on the Academic section of the M: Drive.

Outside Employment

Outside employment during the contract period is permitted in consultation with a faculty member's department chair, subject to approval by the Dean of Curriculum and Assessment.

Committee Work/School Functions

Committee work is an essential part of GSSM, and faculty may be invited to participate as part of their role in shared governance. The president appoints standing committees, and other committees are formed as needed. Faculty must also participate in critical school functions such as the GSSM research colloquium, convocation, awards day, parent's day, open houses, graduation, and other mandatory assemblies.



Dual-Credit Agreements

GSSM has a dual credit agreement with Coker University. Students receive Coker University credit for certain courses. GSSM also has memorandums of understanding with Clemson University and the University of South Carolina to grant college credit for university-approved GSSM courses that are closely aligned with the university's courses. Students must earn at least a B in the GSSM course and a passing grade on the challenge exam which will serve as the final exam for the course in order to receive college credit if admitted to the university. Some courses in the agreement are in the Advanced Placement (AP) program while others are beyond this level. Students may continue to take the AP exams where applicable and are encouraged to do so. For details, see the GSSM Academic Policies and Course Catalog.

Field Trips

Faculty planning a field trip must complete the *Field Trip Checklist* (found in the Academic section of the M: Drive). They should start the checklist at least two weeks before the trip to give adequate time for planning and submit it to the Academic Affairs Coordinator at least one week before the trip begins. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction can answer questions about field trips.

Interim

Residential faculty must to participate in interim as a teacher of record or assistant unless they have an interim sabbatical. Virtual faculty normally do not participate in interim because of class schedule conflicts.

Interim Sabbatical

- 1) Eligibility for Interim Sabbatical
 - a) The teacher must have taught at GSSM for at least three years.
 - b) Interested teachers should submit a proposal that contains:
 - i) an account of their previous interim participation
 - ii) a description of the proposed sabbatical activity
 - iii) a budget (if applicable)
- 2) Nomination Committee
 - a) The Faculty Senate will appoint a sabbatical nomination committee each year.
 - b) Members of the committee are not eligible to submit sabbatical proposals of their own and must recuse themselves if they apply for a sabbatical.
 - c) After evaluating the proposals, the committee will forward the names of nominated candidates to the GSSM President for approval.
 - d) Up to two teachers will be selected each year.

3) Criteria for selection:

A strong record of active interim participation (for example, having led or co-led an interim class; active, full-time "helper" status is preferable to sporadic or part-time interim help; organizing and leading academic portions of trips is preferable to chaperoning a trip)

- i) Benefit to GSSM (examples could include attending a professional conference, doing lab or field research, developing a new course, overhauling an existing course, pursuing academic or creative endeavors that positively impact teaching effectiveness and/or effectiveness as a member of the GSSM community)
- ii) Availability of budget, similar to guidelines for professional development funding
- iii) Eligibility:
 - (1) The nominating committee will keep a list of eligible faculty members.
 - (2) The list will be based on years of employment at GSSM.
 - (3) After a faculty member gets a sabbatical, that member moves to the bottom of the eligibility list (i.e. at the beginning of the spring semester following their sabbatical, they will be placed below the most recently-hired faculty member).
 - (4) If points (i.) and (ii.) above are equally compelling among several applicants, and if point (iii.) allows, then the committee will nominate the faculty members higher on the eligibility list

4) Communication of Appropriate Learning

- a) Since learning about things that benefit the school is an important selection criterion, the administration will provide an opportunity for faculty members to share what they have learned during their interim sabbatical with other members of the community in appropriate ways, e.g. a presentation, demonstration, etc.

5) Application deadline

- i) Applications are due by the date listed on the Academic Calendar.
- ii) The nomination committee will meet shortly after that date to make its decision.

Research

Research Advising

Faculty in the departments of biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computer science, and business and engineering, and staff in the Research & Inquiry department teach RES 401, usually one section each. RES 401 teachers are often called GSSM faculty research advisors.

RES 401 lasts a seminar and has one contact hour a week. Teachers help their students prepare a ten-minute oral presentation on their mentored summer research & inquiry project that they give at the Annual Research Colloquium. Teachers schedule individual meetings with students as needed.

The director of Research & Inquiry schedules RES 401 sections, and changes in RES 401 require their permission.

The director of Research & Inquiry may ask other faculty or staff to teach a section of RES 401 as appropriate.

Annual Research Colloquium

All full-time faculty who normally teach at the Hartsville campus are required to attend Annual Research Colloquium, typically scheduled for 9am-4pm. Modeled on an academic research conference, Annual Research Colloquium features research project talks by students and the presentation of the Randy M. La Cross Distinguished Research Leadership Award.

Although no residential classes are held the day of Annual Research Colloquium, it is considered an academic day for students and faculty. The director of Research & Inquiry may ask for help with Annual Research Colloquium.

Research & Inquiry Designated Courses

GSSM offers a selection of research & inquiry designated courses, semester-long, advanced elective research courses students may use to complete their GSSM research & inquiry requirement. Research & inquiry designated courses are listed as 400-level electives in their academic departments in the GSSM course catalog.

Research & inquiry designated courses follow the same course approval process as other advanced electives and also have the following additional requirements:

- Approval by the director of Research & Inquiry
- Student engagement in a mentored research project as a primary focus
- Completion of a research & inquiry portfolio.
- Completion of documentation required for a South Carolina honors course listing.

Faculty from all departments are encouraged but not required to propose research & inquiry designated courses within their fields of expertise. Contact the director of Research & Inquiry for help developing a research & inquiry designated course proposal. Proposed courses may include external collaborators or adjunct faculty working with a full-time GSSM faculty facilitator.

Faculty Guidelines for Independent Study

Independent study courses are approved at the department level and the Curriculum Committee. Independent study courses are student-initiated and are considered to be a contract between the student and professor to complete a course of study. Interested students must submit an Independent Study Course Proposal Form (found in the Academic section of the M: Drive) by the required date in order to be approved by the Curriculum Committee.



Students wishing to enroll in an Independent Study course must meet at least one of the following criteria:

A student wishes to extend their knowledge of a discipline where all of the relevant courses have been completed with a grade of 90 or above, or with the permission of the instructor in consultation with the department chair.

A student needs to complete a requirement for graduation, and there is no comparable course available. The independent study cannot be used to replace a failed GSSM course.

Please note:

Faculty members are under no obligation to teach an independent study.

Independent studies will typically be considered for 0.5 Carnegie units (with a time commitment equivalent to a regular semester-long course).

Independent studies are overload courses and cannot count towards the 5 course/semester minimum without approval from the Senior Vice President for Residential.

No student may take more than two independent studies courses per academic semester.

No faculty member may teach more than two independent studies courses per academic semester.

If a student is going to drop a class, the independent study class should, in most cases, be the course dropped.

Procedure to follow for approval of an independent study:

The instructor and chair will evaluate the request and will give pre-approval, deny the request, or seek additional information in order to decide.

Final approval of an independent study comes from the Curriculum Committee.

Auditing Courses

Students may audit courses with the faculty member's written approval. Students may convert an audited course to a for-credit course during the drop/add period, but no later. The registrar will inform staff and parents of the audit.



Academic Advising

GSSM is an academic community based in excellence and challenge, and dedicated to helping every student get the most out of their GSSM experience. Each student has a faculty academic advisor who works with them individually. Advisors reach out to newly accepted students to introduce themselves and start the process of guiding them on their academic journey, and then work with students until they graduate. GSSM students, working with their academic advisors, choose courses that prepare them to excel in college, and that help them figure out and pursue what academic areas they are passionate about. The Advising Team meets monthly. Faculty members who choose to be academic advisors are paid a yearly stipend for their work.

Faculty Senate

From the preamble of the Faculty Senate Constitution: In order to promote Faculty participation in the shared governance of the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, foster communication among the Faculty, the administration, and the Board of Trustees, and further relations among academic units, the Faculty of the Governor's School do institute and ordain this constitution. The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the Governor's School and delegates authority to the President, and through the President to Academic Officers appointed by him or her and thence to the Faculty and Staff in accord with its bylaws and policies. An act passed by the Faculty is subject to approval by the President, and by the Board of Trustees when necessary.

The Faculty Senate Constitution can be found in the Academic section of the M: Drive.

Professional Growth

Mentoring

Each new faculty member at GSSM will be assigned a faculty mentor to assist in the transition to successful teaching at GSSM. The mentor should establish a close and informal relationship with the mentee, so that issues and opportunities can surface and be discussed in an atmosphere of mutual respect and collegial support. The mentor will provide support and encouragement throughout the first academic year. Specific duties are described in "Faculty Mentor and Mentee Responsibilities," a job description document located in the Academic section of the M: Drive. The mentor will meet monthly with the department chair of the mentee to discuss how the mentee is transitioning to GSSM. Preferably, the mentor and the new faculty member should not be in the same department.

Professional Growth Process

The professional growth process for all full-time faculty at GSSM is completed in three stages. The first stage is completed in September; the second stage is completed during the fall and early spring semesters; and the third stage is completed in April, May and June.

In the first stage, the planning stage, the faculty member completes a plan for the year and discusses the plan with their supervisor. The planning document includes sections on teaching, service, and professional development.



In the second stage, the classroom observation stage, the faculty member's supervisor and a peer of the faculty member will visit the classroom and complete observations summaries. The observation summary forms are specific to each department.

In the third stage, the summary stage, the faculty member completes a summary of the year, referring to the initial plan, and then discusses the plan with their supervisor. The supervisor provides written feedback on the summary document.

Part-time faculty do not compete the planning and summary stages. However, their supervisor will observe their teaching and provide an observation summary.

GSSM Glossary

Accelerate

Accelerate is GSSM's dual-enrollment virtual engineering program. In this application-based program, students enter as rising 10 graders and take a series of honors and dual-enrollment classes. All core courses are taught via interactive video conferencing, and there are two online engineering elective courses. Students in this program receive up to 37 hours of college credit.

APUSH

Advanced Placement US History.

The Board of Trustees

GSSM is governed by an independent Board of Trustees. Eleven members are appointed by the governor. Six serve *ex officio*, including the provosts of Clemson, USC, and MUSC, the State Superintendent of Education, the Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education, and the President of the Foundation Board of Directors.

Breakfast of Champions

Traditionally held the night before exams begin, the Breakfast of Champions is a tradition among students. Teachers and staff enjoy coming together to cook and serve late-night eggs, biscuits, waffles, omelets to order, and other treats. Students line up with their books and laptops hours in advance and enjoy seeing their teachers in a fun, celebratory environment before exams start. A call for volunteers goes out a few days in advance.

Canvas

GSSM's course management system. <https://scgssm.instructure.com>.

Colloquium

GSSM seniors present their summer research projects in a formal education seminar format.

Community Engagement

GSSM students must provide service to their community and school during their time here. This service is called community engagement. They provide help in lab setups, tutoring, cleaning common areas, and other necessary activities. They help at Hartsville's Chamber of Commerce and other worthwhile community services. Student supervisors must provide written records of the student's time spent at the end of each nine weeks.

Crunch Week

Any week when many teachers choose to have major tests or assignments due. Students encounter serious time problems, which they may make worse by missing sleep. Bear in mind that no student is required to take more than three tests/assignments in a single day, and faculty should make every attempt to limit the maximum to two.

The Foundation

GSSM is supported by a very active foundation. The Executive Director of the Foundation also serves as a member of the President's Executive Leadership Team. Marketing, publicity, alumni relations, and fundraising are overseen by the foundation. They are governed by a volunteer board of directors, composed primarily of prominent businessmen and women. Each year, the school sets fundraising priorities that guide the foundation's efforts through the following year.

Goldenrod

The one-page yellow form used at GSSM to initiate purchases or requests for travel funds. Since the Goldenrod allows both for formal approval of the purchase and for proper accounting of the expenditure, it is imperative to fill one out before initiating a purchase or starting travel. South Carolina state purchasing mechanisms value prudence and prevention of fraud, error, or theft far more than they value speed and flexibility. At the same time, our Business Office recognizes that GSSM has only one mission, and that is education, so they are dedicated to meeting your purchasing needs without delaying your class or field trip. Therefore, the more advance notice you can provide the Business Office that you will need something urgently, the more likely they are to meet your needs.

If you need something in your class, office or around campus, send a work order request (repair or improvement request) email to Rose Levy. Specify what you want done, where, and when: i.e., B133; AC is out; please fix to cool; in 3 bus days).

Govie

A recently admitted or currently enrolled GSSM student or alumni.

Govinet

A Wi-Fi network used by staff and students. It requires an active network account.

GSSM-Visitor

A Wi-Fi network used by guests, faculty, and staff for personally owned laptops, tablets, and phones. The password for this network changes from time to time and is always posted in the main lobby near the RA office.

Happy Half

The half hour between the end of Quest at 10:00 pm and room check at 10:30 when students often visit each other before returning to their residence hall.

Incident Report

When students fail to exert self-discipline in following GSSM policies and rules, the action may be documented in a write-up, another name for an incident report. The infraction may be noted by any faculty or staff member. Consequences of the infraction are specified and enforced by the student development staff. Serious infractions may require broader involvement (See Judicial Council).



Judicial Council

Chaired by the dean of students and composed of 3 faculty and/or staff members, Judicial Council hears the most serious cases of student misbehavior and violations of academic integrity.

Long Weekend (aka LWE)

Approximately once a month, GSSM closes on Thursday afternoon, and students go home, returning the following Sunday evening. Faculty and staff may use this time for developmental activities, special or routine work. We are paid for these days. There are restrictions on the amount and nature of assignments given to students over long weekend. See above and in the Student Handbook.

MASS

Major Assessment Scheduling System. A GSSM-built application that combines information from the Canvas course management system, PowerSchool, and student information databases to help teachers schedule major assessments.

Painting Up

Students often paint their upper bodies to recognize players at volleyball, soccer, and basketball games.

PDA

Public Display of Affection. GSSM does not permit students to engage in kissing, prolonged hugging, sitting in laps, etc. in public. Incidents of PDA should be written up in an incident report. Students should be corrected gently but firmly when PDA is observed. Responsibility for enforcing this rule applies to all teachers and administrators.

PowerSchool / PowerTeacher

An online gradebook that teachers use to manage absences, tardies, and grades. All residential grades are submitted to the registrar via PowerTeacher.

QUEST / Pre-QUEST

Quiet, Uninterrupted, Extended Study Time, which normally takes place between 8-10pm on school nights. During QUEST, students must remain in an approved location, and the campus is kept quiet to support study and homework.

Pre-QUEST begins after the first set of major assessments and provides an extra hour of proctored study time for students seeking additional study time or who are having academic difficulty. Any teacher can require that a student be placed on Pre-QUEST.

RA

Resident Assistant. Usually a college student, two RA's live on each resident hall to assist the RLC.

Registrar

GSSM's Registrar schedules classes, validates grades, and performs duties similar to college/university Registrars.



RESP

Research Exchange Scholars Program. Each summer, GSSM conducts research exchanges with students in Germany. Other locations in development are China and South Korea. For GSSM students who are accepted into RESP, the program fulfills their SPRI research requirement.

Residence Hall

GSSM does not have dorms, dormitories, or dorm rooms. We have residence halls and rooms in the residence halls. You have been warned.

Review/Reading Day

The day before exams start, in both fall and spring. No assignments are due. The day follows a Friday class schedule and is meant for review only. It is up to the individual instructor whether or not to require students to attend a review session.

RLC

Residence Life Coordinator. An adult who lives in the residence hall to provide supervision and programming to students who live on their hall. Usually one RLC lives on each of the six residence halls.

SCEIS

South Carolina Enterprise Information System. This system allows employees to monitor accumulated leave and other benefits of state employment. It is also used by the Business Office for financial management.

Scoir

Scoir is cloud-based software that students, teachers, college counselors, and families use to manage college applications and materials. Teachers use Scoir to submit letters of reference for their students.

SPRI

Summer Program for Research Interns. Each summer, juniors conduct 6-8 week summer research appointments at one of several research universities around the state, nation, and in several international labs. Research is a graduation requirement.

Stuco

Student Council. Compared to many other schools, the GSSM Student Council is more involved in planning and representing student perspectives to the Administration.

SYR

Setup Your Roommate. This is a longstanding ice-breaker tradition. Every student is asked out on a friendly date, usually as part of a large group of students.



TEAM UP

Teaching, Engaging, and Advancing Minds for Undergraduate Preparedness. TEAM UP is a virtually taught, application-based high school engineering program for 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-grade students in the state of South Carolina. Through a series of gateway courses, students learn fundamental problem-solving skills, gain exposure to various engineering fields, develop an understanding of the engineering design process, and learn STEM content.

Uptown Campus

A facility at 145 West Carolina Ave that can be used for programming, meetings, and events. The facility contains office space, some of which is rented to community partners. Speak to Susan Coker for information about using the Uptown Campus.