

The Excel  
Center®



# Student Handbook

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. THE GOODWILL EXCEL CENTER MISSION, VISION AND VALUES</b>	<b>3</b>
A. MISSION	3
B. VISION	3
C. OUR SERVICE VALUES: RISE	3
<b>II. NON-DISCRIMINATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A STUDENT</b>	<b>4</b>
A. ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES	4
B. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY	7
C. LIFE SAFETY PROCEDURES	7
D. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	8
E. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY	9
F. BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY	17
<b>IV. YOUR RIGHTS AS A STUDENT</b>	<b>19</b>
A. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	19
B. SAFEGUARDING OF STUDENT INFORMATION (FERPA) POLICY	22
C. BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY	29
<b>V. OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>	<b>29</b>
COMPUTER, INTERNET AND EMAIL USE	29
<b>STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM</b>	<b>31</b>

## PART I: THE GOODWILL EXCEL CENTER MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

### A. MISSION

The mission of the Goodwill Excel Center is to transform adult lives through the power of achieving a high school diploma and accessing post-secondary education and careers in growing, sustainable local industries.

### B. VISION

The vision of the Goodwill Excel Center is to build a community where people are empowered to improve their life and family through the achievement of academic and career goals.

### C. OUR SERVICE VALUES: RISE

**Respect** – We treat everyone with respect, compassion and dignity, honoring their contributions and differences.

**Integrity** – We conduct our business with integrity, accountability and concern for the environment.

**Service** – We serve, empower and advocate for our clients and each other.

**Excellence** – We pursue a vision of excellence and continuous improvement to better the lives of those we serve.

## PART II: NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School (GEC) is committed to a policy prohibiting discriminatory practices in all aspects of its policies, programs, practices, and operations. All applicants and students shall be treated equally without regard to race, age, color, religion, gender or expression of gender identity, national origin, political affiliation, disability, matriculation, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, familial status, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth, genetic background, or any other legally protected characteristic.

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School (GEC) does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including pregnancy and gender identity) in the educational programs and activities which it operates, including employment, admissions, recruitment, referrals, and collective bargaining. If a student believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of Title IX, please reference GEC's

Grievance Procedures which are available in the Student Handbook and in GEC's administrative offices.

Pregnant students will be provided the same accommodations and supports as are provided to persons with short-term disabilities.

For more information about Title IX, please contact:

School Director  
Amina Brown  
[Amina.Brown@dcgoodwill.org](mailto:Amina.Brown@dcgoodwill.org)  
Phone: 202-839-3651

## PART III: YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A STUDENT

### A. ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Goodwill Excel Center offers classes in 8-week terms, which makes daily on-time attendance very important. Missing even one day of classroom instruction is like missing an entire week, making a student's path toward graduation longer. As such, the Goodwill Excel Center has strict rules around attendance, to maximize student success in its accelerated program.

**Absence:** A student is considered absent from a class if he/she is more than 30 minutes late for the class. A student is considered absent for the entire day if he/she misses one or more class periods. An absence will be "excused" if it is for one of the reasons listed below and the student follows the specified procedure for having the absence found to be excused.

**Tardy:** Any student who is more than 10 minutes late for class will be considered "tardy." A tardy will be "excused" if it is for one of the reasons listed below and the student follows the specified procedure for having the tardy found to be excused. Ten or more unexcused tardies will equal one unexcused absence. Students with disabilities that have been documented by the Goodwill Excel Center will receive one unexcused absence for twelve (rather than ten) unexcused tardies.

#### **Excused Absences and Tardies are Limited to:**

- Student illness
- Child of a student illness
- Student doctor's appointment
- Child of a student doctor's appointment
- Death in the student's immediate family or close friend
- Observance of a religious holiday

- Absences to allow students to visit their parent or legal guardian who is in the military immediately before, during or after deployment
- Jury duty or attendance at judiciary or administrative proceedings under a subpoena or as a party to the action
- Emergency or other circumstances approved by the Lead Academic Success Coach

Upon the student's return to school following an absence, the student shall submit documentation to their Academic Success Coach substantiating the excuse for the absence. Students should understand that even if the absence is excused, they will have missed work and class instructional time that they will need to make up and that may ultimately delay their progress toward graduation.

**Attendance Intervention Plans and Attendance Support Plans:**

If a student has five (5) full-day unexcused absences in the term, either consecutive or sporadic, he/she is required to speak to their coach within five (5) days of returning to devise an Attendance *Intervention* Plan. Students with disabilities are required to speak with their coach to devise an Attendance Intervention Plan after seven (7) full-day unexcused absences.

If a student has five (5) full-day absences in the term, either consecutive or sporadic, some or all of which are excused, he/she is required to speak to their coach within five (5) days of returning to devise an Attendance *Support* Plan.

**Un-Enrollment from the Goodwill Excel Center for Attendance:**

- 1) *Students 18 years and older:* If a student with an Attendance *Intervention* Plan has two (2) more additional unexcused absences, the student will be unenrolled. If a student is required to meet with their coach to devise an Attendance Intervention Plan and does not do so within five (5) days, the student will be unenrolled. If a student 18 years or older with a disability is required to meet with their coach to devise an Attendance Intervention Plan and does not do so within seven (7) days, the student will be unenrolled.
- 2) *Students 17 years and younger:* If a student has twenty (20) consecutive full-day unexcused absences, he/she will be unenrolled.

Any student who is unenrolled and wishes to re-enroll will be allowed to re-enroll at the next term if space is available once all those on the wait list have been accepted.

**Consequence of Failing to Adhere to Attendance Support Plan:**

Failure to adhere to an Attendance *Support* Plan is a disciplinary matter that is addressed in the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

**Childcare Accountability:**

- 1) *Students without a disability:* Any student who has been awarded a childcare spot in the Childcare Development Center, and who has five (5) or more unexcused absences, and who has not contacted their academic success coach within five (5) days of returning, will lose their spot, and will be placed at the end of any waitlist.
- 2) *Students with a disability:* Any student who has been awarded a childcare spot in the Childcare Development Center, and who has seven (7) or more unexcused absences,

and who has not contacted their academic success coach within five (5) days of returning, will lose their spot, and will be placed at the end of any waitlist.

**Transit Stipend Accountability:**

- 1) *Students without a disability:* Any student who has been provided a GEC issued Metro Transit Smart Trip with funds loaded onto the card and who has five (5) or more unexcused absences and who has not contacted their academic success coach within five (5) days of returning, will have the card deactivated and be unable to use the card to travel by Metro bus and/or train.
- 2) *Students with a disability:* Any student who has been provided a GEC issued Metro Transit Smart Trip with funds loaded onto the card and who has seven (7) or more unexcused absences and who has not contacted their academic success coach within five (5) days of returning, will have the card deactivated and be unable to use the card to travel by Metro bus and/or train.

**Referral to Judicial System for Truancy of Students 17 Years and Under:** If a student who is 17 or under has ten (10) unexcused absences, the Goodwill Excel Center will send the student's parent(s) information about the compulsory attendance requirements for minor students, and report the student to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. Students ages 17 or under with fifteen (15) full-day unexcused absences will be referred to Court Social Services and the Office of the Attorney General Juvenile Section.

**Attendance Intervention and Support Process:**

- 1) For any unexcused absence by a student 17 and under, the Academic Success Coach will make diligent attempts to make personal contact with the student's parent(s).
- 2) Attendance Intervention Plans and Attendance Support Plans shall be signed by the student, a parent of any student 17 and under, the student's Academic Success Coach, the Manager of Student Support, and the Manager of Operations, Admissions, and Enrollment and placed in the student's cumulative file.
- 3) For students 17 and under, the Academic Success Coach shall contact the parent/guardian to involve them in the development of the Attendance Intervention Plan or Attendance Support Plan.
- 4) The student's Academic Success Coach will make one attempt at scheduling the mandatory attendance intervention meetings.
- 5) Any student with three or more unexcused absences or five (5) or more tardies will be referred to the Student Support Team ("SST"), which shall include the Academic Success Coaches and the Manager of Student Support.
- 6) The SST shall meet within five school days of the referral and regularly thereafter. At the SST meeting, members of the SST will support the development of Attendance Intervention Plans.
- 7) Within two days after a student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence, the SST shall notify the School Director with a plan for immediate intervention.

## **B. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

In the event of inclement weather, the Goodwill Excel Center will follow the District of Columbia Public Schools closing or delayed opening decision. In addition, up-to-date information on emergency closing decisions will be on the Office Manager's voicemail at (202)-839-3675 and the Goodwill Excel Center twitter account @goodwillexcelcdc. Information will also be shared on local TV and radio stations.

## **C. LIFE SAFETY PROCEDURES**

In case of emergency, Students should exercise caution and put their safety first. If an emergency arises when Students are at the School, Students should follow these guidelines.

### **Fire Emergency**

Students should be aware of potential fire hazards and proper handling procedures. Students should become familiar with the site's designated rally location and site's fire extinguishers. Students are not required to use fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers should only be used if the Student is properly trained and can safely use it without increasing the risk of harm to him/herself or other students. In case of fire, students should calmly notify other students and other occupants of the School and evacuate in a rapid but orderly fashion. Everyone should assemble at the designated meeting area of the facility for an immediate roll call to account for all students and others who were in the School. No one shall be permitted to enter a damaged building until the School Director, or her/his designee, has given approval to re-enter.

### **Earthquake**

In the event of an earthquake and/or structural failure, there will be little (if any) warning or time to react; however, students and others in the School should protect themselves by seeking shelter under the nearest table, desk or other rigid or solid structure. When tremors have stopped, everyone should immediately evacuate the building as described in the facility's evacuation maps posted throughout the building. Everyone should assemble at the designated meeting area of the facility for an immediate roll call to account for all students and others who were in the School. No one shall be permitted to enter a damaged building until the School Director or her/his designee has given approval to re-enter.

### **Tornado**

In the event of a tornado, Students will be instructed to proceed to the nearest shelter in place location where they will sit on the ground facing a wall. The School Director or her/his designee will notify students when they can leave the shelter in place location and will provide instructions as to whether to remain in the School or to evacuate the School.

### **Power Outage**

In the event of a power outage, there may be sufficient daylight to begin/maintain some activities. The building will remain open for business until a decision to close is made by the School Director or her/his designee. Flashlights should be made available for use if needed. For power outages after the end of the school hours, the School Director or her/his designee will determine if the power outage is of significant duration and determine the best course of action for students reporting the next school day.

**Flood**

In the event of heavy rains and/or an imminent flood of the School, the School Director or her/his designee will inform students to evacuate and move to higher ground.

**Bomb Threat**

If a student receives a call threatening a bomb or other violence at the School, he or she should immediately notify the nearest school staff. The School Director, or her/his designee, will determine whether the facility's evacuation procedure should go into effect.

**Suspicious Package**

Students are not to handle suspicious packages and should immediately notify the nearest school staff of any suspicious packages.

**Lockdown Procedure**

In the event that a lockdown is ordered, students will be given instructions on how to proceed by School staff. Students must remain in the location they are instructed by School staff to be in until the lockdown has been terminated. Students should remain calm and quiet during a lockdown.

**Shelter in Place**

In the unlikely event that students are required to remain at the School for an extended period of time, a supply of essential items may be available. These items may include fountain water, light snacks, flashlights, batteries, blankets and first aid kits.

**Emergencies During Non-Business Hours**

If an emergency occurs when the School is closed, Students should follow the same procedures as described in the School's Inclement Weather Policy. Students who are subscribed to the School's automated text and e-mail notification system will be contacted with instructions. Students should call (202)-839-3675 for up-to-date information on emergency closing plans and/or alternate operating plans.

A complete Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the Office Manager's office.

**D. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The Goodwill Excel Center will not discriminate against any student based on the individual having a communicable disease. Students shall not be denied access to the School solely because they have a communicable disease, although Goodwill Excel Center reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the School where medically necessary to do so.

Goodwill Excel Center's decisions involving persons who have communicable diseases shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each person who has a communicable disease, and a careful weighing of the identified risks and the available alternative for responding to a student with a communicable disease.

Students should not return to school until 24 hours after the end of a fever or vomiting.

## E. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Goodwill Excel Center is a place where all students can learn within a safe environment. The intent of the Code of Conduct is to ensure students remain focused on growth and learning. The Code seeks to provide fair and reasonable rules and procedures to ensure students do not engage in conduct that in any way harms others or interferes with the education of other Goodwill Excel Center students. While the discipline policy seeks to ensure order, students enrolled in the Goodwill Excel Center can expect to receive prevention and intervention support aimed at mitigating behavior-based disruptions while at school.

### **Student Behavior Expectations**

A culture of respect is critical to the success of The Goodwill Excel Center. Students must demonstrate respect through appropriate actions, words, tone, and body language. All expected behavior is focused on preparing students for success in life and careers. Unacceptable behavior includes any behavior that harms another person or infringes on another student's ability to learn. To ensure expectations are clear for all students, a list of conduct violations is listed below along with the possible consequences for each violation. This Code of Conduct applies to conduct on or adjacent to school property or that is directed to students or staff of the school. After enrolling in The Goodwill Excel Center, students are provided a copy of this policy and given an outline of ways each infraction can be prevented, along with expectations around intervention, largely led by the Academic Success Coach and Special Populations Coordinator.

### **Consequences for Each Type of Behavior**

Identified Behavior	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense Consequence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense Consequence	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense Consequence
<b>Tier 1; Infraction</b>			
Using profanity in a threatening, or disruptive manner.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Two (2) day suspension.
Using sexually suggestive language, especially in a threatening or disruptive manner.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan. BIPs can include mandatory mediation meeting.	Three (3) day suspension.
Failing to attend class and/or loitering in the hallways or outside of GEC, during class time.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Two (2) day suspension.
Loitering or littering (including cigarette butts) on the sidewalks adjacent to the building or in the common areas of the building.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Two (2) day suspension.
Arriving to class late.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement	Mandatory tutoring on

	reprimand/coaching session.	on an attendance intervention plan.	Friday; if no show then one (1) day suspension.
Disruptive cellphone use during instructional time.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Require cellphone be "checked," with Academic Success Coach each day.	One (1) day suspension.
Failing to adhere to the GEC dress code, by wearing clothing that reveals private body parts, underwear, or that does <b>NOT</b> pass the "fingertip test."	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session. Coach should determine if student needs clothing voucher.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	One (1) day suspension.
Arguing with GEC staff, demonstrating defiant behavior, or exhibiting non-compliance with GEC staff.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan. BIPs can include mandatory mediation meeting.	Three (3) day suspension.
Gambling by playing cards, shooting dice or otherwise making bets.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Required to attend Gambler's Anonymous and/or education on potential gambling illness.	Recommendation for suspension (decision made by Manager of Student Support)
Inappropriate dancing, and/or sexually suggestive movement.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan. BIPs can include mandatory mediation meeting.	Two (2) day suspension.
Failing to possess GEC issued student identification.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a student/coach contract.	One (1) day suspension.
Violation of computer use policy for which no other consequence is specified in this policy.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a student/coach contract.	One (1) day suspension.
Smoking cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco-based products inside or within 50 feet of the building.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a student/coach contract.	Three (3) day suspension.
Not returning to class after a fire drill or other safety drill.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.		One (1) day suspension.

Identified Behavior	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense Consequence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense Consequence	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense Consequence
<b>Tier 2; Infraction</b>			
Loud, boisterous behavior, including peer-to-peer arguing, and language, and tones that disrupt GEC or patrons of area retail stores and restaurants.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan and mandatory peer-to-peer mediation.		Three (3) day suspension.
Being under influence of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan which may include mandatory drug and alcohol addiction evaluation, and programming.		Three (3) day suspension.
Off campus use of marijuana or other illicit drugs or alcohol that results in student emitting odor that is distracting to peers or GEC staff.	Student disciplinary write-up; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan which may include mandatory drug and alcohol addiction evaluation, and programming.  Procedure: students attempting to enter the building with strong odor of marijuana or other illicit drugs or alcohol will be denied access until the odor dissipates; when odor has dissipated enough for student to enter the building, they must immediately see their Academic Success Coach		Three (3) day suspension.
<b>Identified Behavior</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense Consequence</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense Consequence</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense Consequence</b>
<b>Tier 3: Infraction</b>			
Committing academic dishonesty by copying from a peer, duplicating a peer's work and submitting it as one's own work, cutting and pasting Internet-based content, and submitting it as one's own and/or printing Internet content and submitting as one's own.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Failure of the class, and mandatory repeating of the class.	Expulsion
Engaging in sexual activity, including the exposure and contact of private body parts	Four (4) day suspension.	Long-term suspension: one term.	Expulsion

Stealing and/or attempting to steal from GEC as a school, GEC staff, and/or GEC peers, items valued at less than \$100.	Suspension for three (3) days <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Expulsion	
Failing a class.	Mandatory tutoring on Friday.	Academic Probation for one (1) term	Expulsion, if student is over 18.
Failure to adhere to Attendance Support Plan.	Mandatory tutoring on Friday.	Academic Probation for one (1) term.	Long term suspension (one term) or Expulsion.
<b>Identified Behavior</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense Consequence</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense Consequence</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense Consequence</b>
<b>Tier 4: Infraction</b>			
The use of technology to access sexually and/or violently explicit content, to post inappropriate or unauthorized pictures, and/or post threats, embarrassing, or hurtful images of GEC peers.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session.	Require cellphone to be "checked," with Academic Success Coach each day <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Long term suspension (at least one term).
Engaging in sexual harassment by proposing or soliciting sexual favors, sex-based responses, or reactions especially in a way that is offensive, obscene and/or hurtful.	Student disciplinary write-up; and verbal reprimand/coaching session; <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Suspension for eight (8) days.	Long term suspension (at least one term) with recommendation for expulsion.
Bullying or otherwise making threats; physically, or verbally intimidating a GEC staff member and/or peer.	Suspension for eight (8) days <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Expulsion	
Stealing and/or attempting to steal from GEC as a school, GEC staff, and/or GEC peers, items values at \$100 or greater.	Suspension for eight (8) days <b>and</b> placement on a behavior modification plan.	Expulsion	
Creating, or falsifying communications, records, or documents,	Expulsion		

including phone records, text messages, voicemails, with the intent to incriminate GEC staff in unethical conduct.	
Committing false alarms, and/or knowingly reporting false reports of fires, bomb threats, active shooters.	Expulsion
Conspiring to, encouraging others to and/or engaging in violence, destruction of property, and/or harm to GEC staff and/or students.	Expulsion
Possession, use, sale or exchange of a dangerous weapon such as a firearm, knife, pepper spray, mace or box cutter.	Expulsion
The sale, exchange or distribution of a drug, (including marijuana) in or within 500 feet of GEC.	Expulsion
Suspended for a tier 1-4 infraction two times or more.	Expulsion

**Discipline Process**

The student is written up by the teacher (if the incident occurred in class) or an Academic Success Coach, or non-instructional staff member (if the incident did not occur in class) and the write-up goes to the Manager, Student Support.

After class (if it is a Tier 1 incident that occurred in class) or after the incident (in all other cases), the Manager, Student Support meets with the student, and, if available, the student's Academic Success Coach.

The student is to complete a "First Person Narrative."

The student follows the remainder of their daily schedule unless a suspension is issued before the end of the school day.

The teacher (or other staff) is to complete a “First Person Narrative” no later than the beginning of the next business day.

The Manager, Student Support reviews both First Person Narratives and determines the appropriate discipline intervention based on the disciplinary protocol and past offenses.

Following is a description of each discipline intervention.

**Disciplinary Write Up and Verbal Reprimand/Coaching**

Counseling by an Academic Success Coach is the initial step to mentor or modify conduct. The Coach will discuss the behavioral concern or conduct violation, affirm expectations regarding conduct, and communicate what the consequences will be if there is no improvement. Coaching will be documented in the student’s file. Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected and coaches will follow-up with the student to ensure consistent success.

**Behavior Modification Plan**

The conduct violation and expectations will be communicated in writing to the student and the student will be provided with a written behavior modification plan. A student may be expected to attend a course such as anger management, conflict resolution, peer mediation, drug and alcohol counseling or stress reduction; participate in group or individual counseling, or attend other programs intended to redirect the student’s perceptions and behavior. Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected.

**Short Suspension (1-10 days)**

The Manager, Student Support will investigate the conduct violation and adhere to the student discipline code of conduct. The Manager, Student Support will meet with the student to give the student notice of the charge and the information the school has to believe the student engaged in the conduct. The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story and/or an explanation for his/her behavior verbally and through completing a “first person narrative.” If, after receiving the student’s statement, the Manager, Student Support determines that a suspension is warranted, the student will be told the timeframe for the suspension. A letter including the length and reason for the suspension will be given to the student (and parents of students under the age of 18). All students (and parents of students under the age of 18) receiving suspension will be afforded the opportunity to appeal (see process in next section). Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected upon a student’s return. While suspended, students will be provided with work and access to teachers and coaches to assist them.

**Long Term Suspension or Expulsion**

Expulsion may be necessary when any of the above interventions are not successful in improving conduct or if a student commits a level 4 conduct violation. The Manager, Student Support should investigate the matter promptly (ordinarily within 3 days) and review the performance history and record of progressive discipline with the School Director. If the decision is made to move forward

with expulsion, a hearing shall be scheduled promptly (and ordinarily to occur within 5 days of the decision to move forward with the hearing). Written notice must be provided to the student (or parents of students under the age of 18) at least 1-2 days before the expulsion hearing of the specific grounds for the expulsion, and the nature of the evidence supporting the expulsion. The decision maker at the hearing shall be impartial and shall only consider evidence presented at the hearing. The student shall be permitted to present evidence at the hearing. The decision shall be provided in writing to the student (or parents of students under the age of 18) promptly after the hearing (ordinarily within 2 days after the hearing). All students (and parents of students under the age of 18) receiving expulsion will be afforded the opportunity to appeal (see process in next section).

When a staff member makes a recommendation for expulsion of a student, the School Director or Manager, Student Support may suspend the students until the conclusion of the investigation following the procedure for short suspensions outlined above. This may occur if the School Director or designee believes that the students must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of:

- Interference with an educational function or school purposes; or
- A physical injury to themselves, other students, school employees, or visitors to the school.

### **Discipline Appeal Process**

Students (or parents if a student is under age 18) shall have 2 business days after being notified of a suspension or expulsion to contact the School Director to request a meeting to appeal a suspension or expulsion. The staff hearing the appeal shall be above, in the supervisory chain of the school, the person who made the suspension or expulsion decision. During the meeting, the student (or parents if a student is under age 18) shall have the right to review the summary of the conduct violations and present their case.

### **Discipline Process for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that demonstrate level 1, 2, and 3 conduct violations will immediately be referred to the Special Populations Coordinator, where intervention plans will be developed and implemented. Students with conduct violations that could be the direct results of their disabilities will be required to attend a mandatory intervention meeting with their instructors and their Academic Success Coach and the Special Populations Coordinator. In instances where students are over the age of 22, The Goodwill Excel Center will not need to continue to implement IEP (which does not serve students over age 22) goals for students who are expelled and will not need to contract services for students who are expelled.

For students under age 22 who have IEPs, the following procedures will be used:

1. If it is determined by the Special Populations Coordinator, and the student's Academic Success Coach that a student with a documented disability has violated the code of conduct, that student may be removed from his or her current placement to an

appropriate interim alternative educational setting (IAES), inside the school, or suspended, for not more than 5 consecutive school days to the extent those alternatives are applied to students without disabilities.

2. A student with a documented disability who violates the code of conduct may be removed from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational placement within the school or suspended for not more than 10 school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct as long as those removals do not constitute a CHANGE OF PLACEMENT outside of the school.

If removals do constitute a Change of Placement, a Manifestation Determination shall be made by the IEP team within 10 school days of the removal. A removal of a student with a disability from his or her educational placement is a Change of Placement if:

1. The removal is for more than ten (10) school days in a row; or
2. The student with a disability has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
  - a. The series of removals total more than ten (10) school days in a school year;
  - b. The student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and
  - c. A pattern is shown by additional factors, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

Whether a pattern of removals constitutes a Change of Placement is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Goodwill Excel Center and, if challenged, is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

School personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to students with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures that would be applied to students without disabilities, if:

- In the MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION review, the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the code of conduct is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability;
- SERVICES DURING PERIODS OF REMOVAL are provided to the student; and
- Notification of a CHANGE OF PLACEMENT is given to the student.

School personnel must provide the student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program with written notice of the school's obligation to provide the student with an opportunity to complete coursework required for graduation that: (a) Includes information regarding all methods available for completing the coursework; and (b) states that the methods available for completing the coursework are available at no cost to the student.

School personnel may remove the student to an IAES without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if there are SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES and the removal is for not more than 45 school days.

## **F. BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

The Goodwill Excel Center (“GEC”) is a place where all students can learn within a safe environment. A key responsibility of GEC is to provide services in a respectful and positive environment. Acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation are an attack on core GEC values. Thus, to facilitate our mission, GEC has established this comprehensive bullying prevention policy. This policy protects the dignity and safety of the GEC community. GEC staff will promptly report and investigate all incidents of bullying and apply appropriate consequences to those who engage in bullying.

### **Code of Conduct**

As is discussed more fully in GEC’s Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, a culture of respect is critical to the success of GEC. Students must demonstrate respect through appropriate actions, words, tone, and body language. All expected behavior is focused on preparing students for success in life and careers. Unacceptable behavior includes any behavior that harms another person or infringes on another student’s right to learn.

### **Definition of Bullying**

**Bullying** means any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intra-family offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a student’s association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
2. Can reasonably be predicted to:
  - a. Place the student in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
  - b. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the student’s physical or mental health;
  - c. Substantially interfere with the student’s academic performance or attendance; or
  - d. Substantially interfere with the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by GEC.

### **Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation**

Acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, whether by a student, volunteers or staff, are prohibited:

1. On GEC grounds and immediately adjacent property,
2. At GEC sponsored or related events on and off GEC grounds,
3. On transportation provided or sponsored by GEC,
4. Using any electronic devices owned by GEC, or
5. Using any electronic devices not owned by GEC if the acts of bullying or cyberbullying create a hostile environment at GEC for the victim or witnesses, infringe on their rights at GEC, or materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of GEC.

Retaliation against a student, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

## **Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation**

GEC expects all staff members and volunteers to report incidents of bullying or retaliation they witness or of which they are made aware. Staff members should immediately report all such incidents to the Manager, Student Support.

Student, parents, guardians, and community members are encouraged by GEC to report any incidents of bullying or retaliation that they witness or of which they are made aware. Bullying or retaliation should be reported to:

Lawrence Hopkins  
Manager, Student Support  
1776 G Street, NW  
Washington DC, 20006

[Lawrence.Hopkins@goodwillexcelcenter.org](mailto:Lawrence.Hopkins@goodwillexcelcenter.org)  
(202) 839-3666

Reports of bullying or retaliation made by student, parents, guardians and community members may be anonymous, but disciplinary action cannot be taken by GEC solely on the basis of an anonymous report, though such a report may trigger an investigation that will provide actionable information.

A student, volunteer or employee who promptly and in good faith reports an incident of, or information about, bullying in compliance with this policy shall be immune, in accordance with District of Columbia law, from a cause of action for damages arising from the making of such report.

## **Investigating Incidents of Bullying**

The Manager, Student Support is responsible for investigating reports of bullying. An investigation of an incident will be initiated promptly after the Lead Academic Success Coach receives a report of bullying and will ordinarily conclude no later than 30 days after the receipt of such a report. As part of the investigation the Lead Academic Success Coach may interview involved or relevant parties including alleged victims, bullies, witnesses, staff, parents or guardians.

The Manager of Student Support will provide confidentiality as far as possible to relevant parties as part of the investigation, and inform all relevant parties that retaliation for reporting acts of bullying is prohibited.

The Lead Academic Success Coach is charged with making determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the circumstances surrounding the incident.

## **Sanctions**

GEC recognizes that for sanctions to be an effective component of a bullying prevention plan, they must be applied consistently, fairly, and equitably. To this end, GEC shall ensure that staff follow these guidelines as closely as possible, while allowing for flexibility to adapt sanctions to individual contexts. Furthermore, to ensure equitability in applying sanctions, measures will be applied on a graduated basis determined by the nature of the offense, the disciplinary history of the student involved, and the age and developmental status of the student involved. Responses to incidents of bullying or retaliation will be consistent with GEC's Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and may include:

- Verbal Reprimand
- Behavior Modification Plan
- Short Suspension
- Expulsion

### **Appeals**

Parties dissatisfied by the outcome of a bullying investigation may appeal the determination of the Lead Academic Success Coach. This appeal should be submitted no later than 30 days after the initial determination. Upon receipt of an appeal, the School Director must conduct a secondary investigation within 30 days of the receipt of an appeal. This 30 days may be extended by up to an additional 15 days if the School Director sets forth in writing the reasons why more time is needed to investigate. Additionally, upon the receipt of an appeal, the School Director must inform the party making the submission of their ability to seek additional redress under the DC Human Rights Act.

### **Plan for Publicizing this Policy**

This Policy will be a part of the GEC Student Handbook that is provided to all students each year and is posted on GEC's website. GEC will establish a culture of respect and safety. As part of this commitment, GEC will incorporate bullying prevention messages and efforts in various aspects of its operations that serve students.

### **Staff Training**

Information on this policy shall be incorporated into the training of all new staff. Refresher training on this policy shall be provided to staff as determined by the School Director.

## **PART IV: YOUR RIGHTS AS A STUDENT**

### **A. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

It is the policy of the Goodwill Excel Center that all employees, students, parents, and visitors have the right to voice their complaints or grievances about matters pertaining to its programs and activities. Accordingly, the following grievance procedure should be employed to ensure that complaints receive full consideration.

#### **1. What May Be Grieved**

The Goodwill Excel Center grievance process should be used to deal with complaints and concerns related to the following: (1) the educational environment or interpersonal conflicts; (2) issues related to identification and placement of English Language Learners; and (3) discrimination and harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, or otherwise.

## **2. Who May Grieve**

The procedures set forth below may be used by grievants who are students or parents.

## **3. Other Remedies**

The existence of this procedure does not bar grievants from also filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

## **4. Informal Grievance**

Because many difficulties can be resolved by communicating a concern to someone, grievants are encouraged to discuss their concern or harassment complaint promptly and candidly with their Academic Success Coach. If the Academic Success Coach cannot remedy the grievance, the student should complete a grievance form, and the Academic Success Coach should schedule a mediation with the student and the alleged harasser or perpetrator unless the Academic Success Coach determines that a mediation is likely to subject a victim of harassment to further harm. If the mediation is not successful, the student should come with their Academic Success Coach to the School Director for a grievance conference. If the grievance is with the student's Academic Success Coach, the student should discuss their grievance with the Manager, Student Support. If the grievance is with the School Director, the student should consult with the Manager, Student Support and his/her Academic Success Coach, complete a grievance form, and participate in a conference with the School Director.

The grievant is not required to discuss his or her complaint with the alleged harasser or perpetrator in any manner or for any reason prior to initiating a formal grievance.

## **6. Formal Grievance**

To file a formal grievance, within ninety (90) days of the harassment, discrimination, or complaint that is the subject of the grievance, a grievant shall file a written notice with the Manager, Student Support. The written notice shall identify the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of occurrence, and the desired result, and shall be signed and dated by the person filing the grievance. Contact information for the Manager, Student Support is:

Lawrence Hopkins  
Manager, Student Support  
1776 G Street, NW  
Washington DC, 20006

[Lawrence.Hopkins@goodwillexcelcenter.org](mailto:Lawrence.Hopkins@goodwillexcelcenter.org)  
(202) 839-3666

The Manager, Student Support will promptly initiate an adequate and impartial investigation of the grievance. Each formal complaint will be investigated, and will be decided after receiving information from the appropriate individuals. Investigations may include interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents, and allowing parties to present evidence.

All documentation related to the investigation and discussions held in this process are considered EXTREMELY CONFIDENTIAL and should not be revealed to or discussed by any participant with persons not directly involved with the complaint, with its investigation, or with the decision making process. This provision does not include discussions with governmental authorities.

Within thirty (30) days of receiving the written notice, the Manager, Student Support shall respond in writing to the grievant (the "Response"). The Response shall summarize the investigation, state whether the grievance has been found to have merit and, if so, state the appropriate resolution.

If, as a result of the investigation, harassment, or a valid grievance is established, appropriate corrective and remedial action shall be taken.

If the grievance is with the Manager, Student Support the grievant should direct their concerns to the School Director. If the grievance is with the School Director, the grievant should address their concerns with the Manager, Student Support, and if after his/her investigation and action, the grievant is still unsatisfied then the grievant should direct their concerns to the Vice President, Mission Services who can be reached at:

Colleen Paletta  
Vice President, Mission Services  
2200 South Dakota Ave, NE  
Washington, D.C. 20018

[Colleen.Paletta@dcgoodwill.org](mailto:Colleen.Paletta@dcgoodwill.org)  
(202) 715-2609

## **7. Appeals**

If the grievant is not satisfied with the Response, the grievant may appeal in writing to the School Director within ten (10) business days of the date of the Response. The written appeal must contain all written documentation from the initial grievance and the grievant's reasons for not accepting the Response.

Within thirty (30) days after receiving the written appeal, the School Director will respond in writing to the appellant stating whether the appeal has been found to have merit and, if so, state the appropriate action to be taken.

The School Director can be reached at:

School Director  
Amina Brown  
[Amina.Brown@dcgoodwill.org](mailto:Amina.Brown@dcgoodwill.org)  
Phone: 202-839-3651

If the grievant is not satisfied with the School Director's resolution of the appeal, the grievant may appeal that decision in writing to the GEC Board Chair within ten (10) business days of the date of receiving the response to the appeal. The written appeal to the GEC Board Chair must

contain the grievant's reasons for not accepting the response to the appeal. The GEC Board chair can be reached at:

Attn: GEC Board Chair  
2200 South Dakota Ave NE  
Washington, D.C. 20018

[board@goodwillexcelcenter.org](mailto:board@goodwillexcelcenter.org)

## **8. Prohibition Against Retaliation**

The Goodwill Excel Center prohibits retaliation against any person who files a complaint in accordance with this policy, or any person who participates in proceedings related to this policy.

In addition, the Goodwill Excel Center prohibits any form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report or complaint about perceived acts of harassment, discrimination, or concern, or who cooperates in an investigation of harassment, discrimination, or a concern. Any person who is found to be engaging in any kind of retaliation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **9. Modification**

The Goodwill Excel Center may approve modification of the foregoing procedures in a particular case if the modification (a) is for good cause, and (b) does not violate due process rights or policies of the DC Public Charter School Board.

Grievants also have the right to file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights by: (1) mailing the complaint to Director, District of Columbia Office, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-1475; (2) faxing it to (202) 453-6021; or (3) filing it electronically at: [www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintprocess.html). For more information, you can contact OCR at (202) 453-6020 (voice), (877) 521-2172 (TDD), or [ocr.dc@ed.gov](mailto:ocr.dc@ed.gov).

## **B. SAFEGUARDING OF STUDENT INFORMATION (FERPA) POLICY**

**Purpose:** To clarify the restrictions on disclosure of students' education records under the Family and Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") for the Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School ("School") and its employees.

**Policy:** The School may not release personally identifiable information contained within student education records to a third party unless such release is expressly permitted under FERPA. A student's education records under FERPA include all records directly related to the student and which are maintained by a School. Records covered by FERPA therefore include, but are not limited to: grades, report cards, transcripts, attendance information, academic appeals, and records of any disciplinary proceedings. This list is not exhaustive and is provided only as an example of the wide range of information considered to be an "education record" under FERPA.

**Definitions:**

Eligible Student: A student 18 years of age or over. (Eligible Students have FERPA consent rights.)

Parent: A parent or legal guardian of a student at the School who is under the age of 18, or a legal guardian of a student at the School who is 18 years of age or over.

**Procedures:**

Annual Notification

The School will provide annual notification to Parents and Eligible Students of their rights under FERPA.

Disclosure

The School will protect the privacy of all student education records and will not disclose personally identifiable information within student education records to anyone other than the Parent or Eligible Student unless (1) the Parent or Eligible Student has provided prior written consent of such disclosure using a “Consent to Disclose Student Education Records” form available from the School Registrar; (2) the information to be disclosed has been classified as “directory information” in the School’s annual FERPA notification (described further below); or (3) the disclosure is permitted under one or more FERPA exceptions, some of which are presented below, but must be specifically determined to apply in a particular circumstance by the School’s administration before the disclosure occurs.

Consent to Disclose Student Education Records Form (“Consent Form”)

Unless the requested records are not covered by FERPA, have been classified “directory information” in the annual FERPA notification, or another exception applies, a Parent, or Eligible Student must provide advance written permission to release the student’s education records to an outside third-party. The Parent’s or Eligible Student’s permission must be given through completion of the Consent Form available from the School Registrar. No information may be released beyond the scope of the permission as indicated in the form.

Once completed, the signed Consent Form will be kept in the School’s records. Parents or Eligible Students may revise their consent at any time during the year by completing a new form.

No form shall be effective for more than one academic year.

Directory Information

*Allowable Information*

The School may disclose student information that has been classified as “Directory Information” in its annual FERPA notification. Directory information refers to information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to, the following student information:

1. Student name
2. Address and telephone number

3. E-mail address
4. Photograph
5. Date and place of birth
6. Grade level
7. Dates of attendance
8. Participation in officially recognized activities
9. Degrees, honors, and awards received

Directory information cannot include a student's Social Security number. A student's ID number or user ID can be considered directory information, but only if that identifier cannot be used to gain access to the student's education records without utilizing a password or personal identification number.

#### *Annual FERPA Disclosure Regarding Directory Information and Opt Out Option*

In order for the School to disclose directory information, it must first provide public notice in an annual FERPA notification to Parents and Eligible Students of the following:

1. The types of personally identifiable information that is designated as directory information;
2. A Parent's or Eligible Student's right to refuse the designation of any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information; and
3. The period of time within which a Parent or Eligible Student has to notify the School in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information.

The required annual FERPA notification can be provided within other informational documents sent by the School or as separate School correspondence.

#### Exceptions

##### *Allowable Disclosures*

There are several exceptions that permit the release of student education records under FERPA. The following are some common examples of parties who can receive disclosures without the student's written consent in a manner that does not violate FERPA:

1. A contractor, consultant or volunteer to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions, if the party is under the direct control of the School and has met the Third-Party Requirements described below.
2. Other schools, school districts or institutions of postsecondary education in which the student is seeking to enroll or to transfer credits.
3. Authorized representatives of the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB), the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education ("OSSE"), U.S. Department of Education ("DOE"), the U.S. Attorney General ("AG"), or the U.S. Comptroller General ("USCG") for audit, evaluation, or compliance activity with respect to Federal or state education programs.

4. Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, PCSB, the School, or another governmental entity provided such organization has met the Third-Party Requirements described below.
5. Schools' accrediting agencies.
6. To appropriate parties, if necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other individuals.
7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

Responses to requests for student records can be made to the third-parties identified above.

#### *Recordkeeping Requirements*

Unless the disclosure is to a school official as defined in 34 CFR 99.31(a)(1), a record of any disclosure must be made in the students' education records, which describes: (1) the party or parties who received the students' records; and (2) the legitimate interests of the party or parties had in requesting and obtaining the information. In the event that the disclosure is to an authorized representative of the PCSB, School, OSSE, the DOE, AG, or USCG, the record of the disclosure may be made by class, school, or other appropriate grouping. (For example, if OSSE requested all student records from the School, a record could be made indicating that the entire School's student records were provided, rather than placing a record in each student's file.)

#### *Notification Requirements*

If the School receives a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, there may be certain notification requirements it must make before disclosing the students' records. The Parent or Eligible Student may need to be notified of the order or subpoena in order to be given an opportunity to seek protective action. Upon receipt of any judicial order or subpoena (whether it requests student education records or not), immediately notify the School's General Counsel ((202) 719-1235).

#### *Third-Party Requirements*

If the School discloses student records that contain personally identifiable information to a contractor or consultant who is a school official as defined in 34 CFR 99.31(a)(1), the School and the contractor or consultant must enter into a written agreement that specifies that the contractor or consultant will not disclose the information to any other party without the prior consent of the Parent or Eligible Student.

If the School discloses student records that contain personally identifiable information to a research organization, a written agreement must be entered into. The agreement must specify the following:

1. The type of student records to be disclosed to the authorized representative;
2. The purpose for which the student records are being disclosed;
3. A requirement that the authorized representative must destroy any personally identifiable information when it is no longer needed for the purpose specified, and a time period in which the information will be destroyed; and

4. Policies and procedures to protect personally identifiable information within the students' records from re-disclosure and unauthorized use by the authorized representative.

#### *Health and Safety Emergencies*

The School may disclose student education records that contain personally identifiable information to appropriate parties, including parents of a student, in connection with an emergency, if necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other individuals as determined by the School's President & CEO, VP of Mission Services or General Counsel. In disclosing student records, a determination must be made that there is a clear and significant threat to individuals' health or safety. If a disclosure is made due to a health or safety emergency, the School must record a description of the significant threat to students or other individuals that formed the basis for the disclosure, and the parties who received the information.

#### **Other FERPA Requirements:**

##### Right to Request Inspection of Student Records

Every Parent or Eligible Student shall be allowed to personally inspect copies of his or her records upon request. The School shall either provide copies of student records to Parents and Eligible Students upon request, or make arrangements to allow for inspection of requested records within 45 days of when the request was received.

A reasonable fee for copies of student records may be charged, but not if imposition of a fee will prevent the Parent or Eligible Student from receiving copies of the records. No fee may be charged solely in order to search for or retrieve a student's education records.

##### Right to Request Amendments to Records and Hearings

If a Parent or Eligible Student believes that the education records maintained by the School relating to the student contains information that is inaccurate or misleading, he or she may ask the School Registrar, in writing, to have the records be amended. If, based on that written statement, the School decides not to amend the records as requested it must inform the Parent or Eligible Student of its decision and the right to a hearing. The hearing may be conducted by any School staff who was not involved in the initial decision not to accept the Parent's or Eligible Student's request to amend the relevant records.

In the event of a hearing, if the School staff who conducted the hearing decides that the information in question is inaccurate or misleading, it must direct relevant staff to amend the records accordingly and inform the Parent or Eligible Student of the amendment in writing. If, on the other hand, School staff decides that the information is not inaccurate or misleading, it must provide its decision in writing and inform the Parent or Eligible Student of the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information. School staff's decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

##### Reasonable Protection of Student Information

The School will permit School employees to obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests. The School will use physical and technological access controls for controlling access to education records.

### **Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Goodwill Excel Center, Public Charter School ("School") receives a request for access.

Parents or Eligible Students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the School Registrar a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or Eligible Student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or Eligible Student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or Eligible Students who wish to ask the School to amend their child's or their education record should write the School Registrar, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or Eligible Student, the School will notify the parent or Eligible Student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or Eligible Student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official typically includes a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the School, performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as a business that provides a cloud hosting services for School data, an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

The School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with School procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include information from the student's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or Eligible Student's prior written consent. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with names, addresses and telephone listings of students unless Eligible Students or parents have advised the LEA that they do not want the student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want School to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from the student's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify School in writing within the later of: (a) 14 days after the student's first day of class at the School; or (b) 14 days after the first day of the School year. The School has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student name
2. Address and telephone number
3. E-mail address
4. Photograph
5. Date and place of birth
6. Grade level
7. Dates of attendance
8. Participation in officially recognized activities
9. Degrees, honors, and awards received

Directory information cannot include a student's Social Security number. A student's ID number or user ID can be considered directory information, but only if that identifier cannot be used to gain access to the student's education records without utilizing a password or personal identification number.

### **C. BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY**

The following plan outlines how the Goodwill Excel Center will ensure the school is accessible to all guests and students:

The Goodwill Excel Center is located at 1776 G Street, NW, Washington DC. The school has two floors and the entrance to the school is on the ground level. All guests that enter the Goodwill Excel Center will enter through the main entrance on 18<sup>th</sup> street and will be greeted by a Security Guard. The Security Guard can open the door and assist any individual needing help entering. All students or guests, without disabilities or a physical limitation, that need to go to the classroom level of the school will walk down a flight of stairs.

For all enrolled students who have a physical disability or a physical limitation the following procedures will take place to enter the classroom level:

The Office Manager will provide the Security Guard at the G Street entrance a list of names of individuals who need to access the school via the elevator. Students with disabilities or a physical limitation will enter the building each day via this entrance after showing their student identification card to the Security Guard. Students will take the elevator to the school floor and will enter the school via doors outside of the elevator. The door can be opened with a code that all students will be told on orientation. An Academic Success Coach or Teacher will be available to assist individuals at the doors ensuring entrance during the opening of school hours. A staff member can assist any student needing assistance through these doors and up the elevator if needed.

For all guests who have a physical disability or limitation the following procedures will take place to enter the bottom floor:

The Office Manager (or other assigned staff member) will escort the guest to the Security Guard at the G Street entrance to access the school via the elevator. The Goodwill Excel Center staff member will escort the guest on the elevator to the school floor and will enter the school via doors accessible with a school code. A Goodwill Excel Center staff member will assist the guest in exiting the school via this same door and elevator.

## **PART V: OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Goodwill Excel Center - Computer, Internet, and Acceptable Use Policy for Students**

#### **Computer, Network Access and Internet Usage**

GEC provides computers, internet access, software account access, and other resources to students to be used for educational and related purposes.

Desktop and laptop computers and any related equipment (i.e. headsets, mice, etc.) are to be used solely within classrooms and other designated learning spaces of GEC and should NEVER be removed from the premises, for any reason.

Students may never use GEC IT resources to engage in any activity that is against GEC policy; violates local, state, or federal laws; is unethical; or violates any of GEC's RISE values, including but not limited to:

- Viewing or listening to any material that could be considered pornographic or that explicitly inspires, or encourages violence or other illegal behavior
- Engaging in any form of business activity, including on-line shopping
- Engaging in any form of illegal activity, including but not limited to, online gambling, file sharing, or hacking
- Using the computer to engage in any form of harassment
- Installing or downloading any software or files of any kind, unless specifically instructed to do so by your Instructor
- Changing any settings on the computer, unless specifically instructed by your Instructor
- Eating and drinking while using the computer equipment

Personal use of GEC's IT resources is strictly prohibited. Computers may be used for school work, searching for jobs or submitting job applications, researching colleges and submitting college applications, and/or creating resumes, letters and other employment-related documents. Any documents created should be saved to a USB/flash drive and/or cloud based sites such as Google Docs or Microsoft Office 365.

GEC Students should have no expectation of privacy with regard to any of their activity on GEC computer equipment or information systems or any information stored on that equipment or those systems. All activity is subject to monitoring and review by GEC staff members and IT Department.

Changing computer settings or connecting network devices such as wireless access points, network hubs or personal computers in the GEC network environment is strictly prohibited without prior authorization from the IT Department and GEC Instructor.

Students must always use extreme caution when opening e-mail attachments or clicking on links in emails received from unknown senders as they may contain viruses or other types of malicious software.

### **Surveillance**

GEC has the right to videotape students anywhere on GEC property, other than in bathrooms, and to use the video to investigate any incident.

### **Computer Security Incident Reporting**

Students must immediately report any potential security incidents to the Manager of Student Support Services.

### **Violations**

Violation of any aspect of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, in accordance with the GEC discipline policy.



## Student Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Goodwill Excel Center Student Handbook, which outlines policies, procedures, and guidelines related to enrollment of all students. I am aware that it is the responsibility of every student to read and be familiar with the contents of this Handbook. Further, I agree to comply with and abide by the policies, procedures and guidelines stated herein, as well as with any revisions made hereafter. I understand that I have an obligation to consult with my Academic Success Coach if any aspect of this Handbook is unclear.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_