

Green Isle Community School Student Handbook 2014-2015



GICS Mission: to foster a positive and respectful multiage environment that promotes educational excellence, service learning, community connections and responsible citizenship.

GREEN ISLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

2014-2015

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Mary Menne - Director

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DISTRICT #4144 SCHOOL BOARD

Sharon Ehrich	Chairperson / Parent
Nick Pollack	Parent Member
Dan Brown	Treasurer / Community Member
Kristen Strauss	Clerk / Teacher Member
Kacy Honl	Community Member
Lindsai Djerf	Teacher Member
Pete Czarnecki	Community Member

GICS STAFF

Mary Menne	Director
Serenity Cox	Administrative Assistant
Keven Kroehler	Business Manager
Terry Kroehler	Kindergarten Teacher
Lindsai Muench	1-3Teacher
Kristen Strauss	4-6 Teacher
Brandy Barrett	4-6 Teacher
Alyssa Cassens	Specialist
Kristine Schwartz	Special Education Teacher
Jess Erickson	Preschool Teacher
Hailey Bednar	Paraprofessional
Nichole Remus	Paraprofessional
Derek Longhenry	Paraprofessional
Jenn Larson	Paraprofessional
David Foley	Paraprofessional

To contact a staff member by email, address your message as follows:
firstname.lastname@greenislecommunityschool.org



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year at Green Isle Community School! As we enter our TENTH year as a public charter school, we are reminded of what an honor and privilege it is to serve the families of GICS. Thank you for entrusting your children to us. We look forward to working in partnership with you in the coming weeks and months. We recognize that you, as parents, are your child's first and most significant teachers. As school staff, we are pleased to have the opportunity to help your child gain new skills, both academically and socially, during the coming year. And we thank you for your on-going reinforcement of these skills at home.

GICS is a school that ensures growth and success for each learner and promotes courtesy and respect. We are proud to have created a safe and nurturing learning environment for the children of GICS, and we are committed to providing your child with opportunities for success. GICS is a place where individual differences are celebrated and appreciated and each child is valued as unique and special.

The success we have enjoyed thus far at GICS is due, in large part, to our commitment to the following behavior expectations:

- **Treat yourself, others and property with respect**
- **Work to the best of your ability**

And we look toward the 2014-2015 school year as an opportunity for continued commitment to these expectations as we reach even greater successes.

As school director, I look toward the new school year with eager anticipation for another very successful partnership with parents, students, staff, community members, and volunteers. Please know that the staff of GICS is strongly committed to continuous improvement as we teach and guide your child. Remember, if you have questions or concerns, we are only a phone call (or an email) away. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to you and we welcome your communications.

Sincerely,



Mary Menne
Director

Green Isle Community School Mission

GICS will foster a positive and respectful multi-age environment promoting educational excellence, service learning, community connections, and responsible citizenship.

The Vision

The GICS vision is comprised of the following:

- K-6 education taught by licensed MN teachers who provided by a multi-age and multi-grade classroom setting.
- A project-based, service-learning opportunity to reinforce skills in a broader community and throughout the region.
- A positive school culture which is based on respect for self and others and a commitment to high expectations regarding interpersonal interactions, social relationships, and academic achievement is evident.
- Strong community connections where we strive to create active partnerships with families and those in our community.

Purpose

This handbook provides information to you about certain terms and conditions of attending the school. GICS is a public school and is funded by the state of Minnesota on a per-pupil rate. Due to this fact, our school must adhere to several state and federal guidelines, which will ensure safety and fair treatment for all students in attendance.

While GICS will make every effort to keep your school handbook current, the information and policies described in this handbook may be changed in any way at any time at the sole discretion of the GICS Board of Directors and/or Administration. Your family is responsible to comply with current GICS policies at all times. These policies apply to all students at GICS.

Notice of Criminal Background Check Policy

In accordance with MN Statute 123B.03 Green Isle Community School is required to inform parents and guardians of our employee and volunteer background checking policy annually.

GICS Policy 404 EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND CHECKS was adopted in 2005 and last revised in 2012. The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe and healthful environment at Green Isle Community School (GICS) in order to promote the physical, social, and psychological well-being of its students. To that end, the school will seek a criminal history background check for all staff, volunteers and parent volunteers who have direct contact with students.

Starting in 2014 GICS has been using The McDowell Agency, Inc for its background checks. In the past we have used the Minnesota Department of Public Safety; Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

GICS is committed to providing a safe environment that student and staff feel comfortable in. We also have an extensive safety plan that covers such events as fire, tornado, evacuation, intruder and medical emergencies. The GICS Staff routinely update these plans to confirm that they are the most effective and informative plan. Regular drills are also performed with students and staff to ensure prompt and calm reactions.

Attendance

If your child will not be attending school on a given day or will be tardy, please call the office between 7:30 and 8:45 a.m. If we do not hear from you by 9 a.m., we will contact you or your emergency contact at home or at work to verify your child's absence. If your child becomes ill or injured during the day, the school will contact you at one of the numbers you have provided on the **emergency card**. We do require that families provide an additional emergency contact person in the event that the parent cannot be reached. Students arriving between 8:35 and 9:30 a.m. will be counted as tardy.

Attendance Policy and Procedure

Excused Absences are:

- Illness of the student, which causes him/her to remain home or go to the doctor
- Medical/Dental Appointments
- Death of a family member or near relative
- Religious holiday (please inform the office ahead of time)
- Family vacations on a limited basis
- Out of school suspension

Some examples of absences that are NOT EXCUSED:

- Parents who do not call the office to report their child's absence
- Overslept
- Missed the Bus
- Car Trouble
- Baby-sitting
- Needed at home

Unexcused Absence:

1 day—Contact by phone informing parent of policy

3 days—first letter to parent and a copy is given to the classroom teacher

5 days—Letter to parent requesting a doctor's note for any further absence

6 days—conference request with parent, co-director and classroom teacher

7 days—Educational Neglect / Truancy Report filed with Sibley County and a letter to parent informing them about report filed

Excused Absences:

*8 days of excused absences per trimester—a letter will be sent to the parent, on a case by case basis. A copy of the letter will be given to the classroom teacher.

*24 days or more per school year may warrant an Educational Neglect / Truancy Report to Sibley County. This will be determined on a case by case basis.

- Excessive Tardies:
- 5 tardies—phone call to parent about concerns
- 8 tardies—letter to parent
- This will be determined on a case by case basis

Daily Schedule—Late Arrival / Early Pickup

School Day: 8:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Students are allowed in school at 8:15 a.m. Students arriving before 8:15 a.m. will be sent to Extended Day and will be billed accordingly. Any Student arriving after 8:35 a.m. must report to the front office **accompanied by a parent** to check in and sign up for lunch. We must ask that students arriving late **not** be dropped off outside the building. Any student needing to leave before the end of the school day is asked to bring a note to their classroom teacher at the start of the day. Parents arriving to pick up students really are required to enter the building to sign the checkout at the office before departure. We thank you for your cooperation in carrying out our building security plan.

After—School Plans

If a student wished to go home with another student, plans **must** be made in **advance** and **both** students must **bring notes from home**. **We do not allow students to make phone calls during the day to arrange after school plans.** We ask that these arrangements be made in advance with parents to avoid any mid-day confusion and miscommunication. In the event that your child will be picked up by an adult other than a parent, please send a note with specific information. Our building security plan is focused on the safety of the children in out care and requires extra time for planning and communication. Thank you for your support.

Contacting Teachers

Should you need to contact your student's teacher you are encouraged to call the school before 8:15 a.m. or within 30 minutes after school is dismissed. Parents are urged to make use of this opportunity if consultation with the teacher is necessary. Please check with your student's teacher to find the best method of communication. Please contact the office if you need to get a message to your student's teacher during school hours. Parents may also communicate with teachers via email as follows:

Firstname.lastname@greenislecommunityschool.org

If communicating via email, please keep in mind that emails are not routinely read throughout the course of the school day, So if a more immediate response is warranted, it would be best to call the school office and leave a message in the office. Teachers will check their voice mail at their convenience with may be after school.

Emergency School Closing

Since GICS students are transported by Sibley East (ISD 2310) buses, our school will not be open if Sibley East Schools are closed. Listen to or watch KARE 11, WCCO 4 or WCCO 830 radio for Green Isle Community School for late opening, early closing, or cancellation of school due to emergency conditions. **Our school will always follow the announcements for Sibley East Schools since we participate in their transportation program, but we will be listed separately as well** Each family is required to submit to the office at the beginning of the year a "Student Snow Emergency Information" form, giving school personnel instructions regarding the family's emergency plan. These forms are **absolutely necessary** as we do not, under these emergency circumstances, have time to phone each parent. If we do not have such a form, students will return home as they normally would. You may sign up for text / e-mail alerts as well.

Dress Code

Students are expected to be clean, neat and dressed appropriately for the school day. Clothes are expected to cover the student's body and undergarments (i.e. no bare midriffs, no exposes underwear, no spaghetti straps, no short skirts or shorts, pants must be worn at the appropriate waist level, no wheeled shoes, no caps or shocking hats, etc.). Articles of clothing or word / symbols on personal property that are inappropriate or cause disruption will not be allowed. Baseball caps and stocking hats are no permitted to be worn inside the school building unless and exception has been made.

- Tennis shoes are required for both Phy. Ed. And recess. Those who do not have tennis shoes will be asked to sit out.
- In support of GICS's commitment to tobacco free and drug free schools, words or symbols that advertise products which are illegal or harmful for students will **not be permitted**.
- Outerwear coats and hats are not to be worn during the school day because of health and safety reasons. Sweaters and sweatshirts are recommended for use during the school day by students who may feel chilled.
- Parents, please cooperate in checking the clothing that your child wears to school. Labeling the clothing such as jackets and snow pants is also very helpful.

Recess

All children should be dressed properly for the weather conditions of the day. If a student is to be excused from recess, he or she will need a note from the doctor stating specific days the student needs to stay in. Children stay inside on rainy days and those days that the temperature or wind chill is 0 or below. Children must have tennis shoes for recess.

Outdoor Recess Attire: Boots, scarves, jackets, mittens, snow pants, and other appropriate seasonal clothing is required. Please mark your child's outerwear with their name for identification purposes. All children are expected to go outside unless a doctor's note as stated above is provided.

School Visitors

GISC welcomes visitors at any time during the school day! When arriving at the school, **we request that you check in at the office before entering the rest of the building**. This will allow our office personnel to be aware of your visit. You will be asked to sign in and wear a "visitor's badge." This is for the safety and protection of everyone in the school.

Signing in at the office is certainly not meant to discourage parents or community members from volunteering and/or visiting the school, but only to assist personnel in knowing who is in the building. We are very happy to have parents, grandparents, guardians, and community members visit the school. You can observe for yourself the educational process in which children are participating.

Staffing Structure

The staff structure at GICS allows for teachers and paraprofessionals to work together to meet the needs of students. Support services staff, both certified and non-certified, also work with students in a variety of ways.

Kindergarten Program

The Kindergarten program is an all-day every day program. Kindergarten students will follow the regular school calendar and participate in K-6 multi-age homerooms three days a week.

Multi-Age Grouping

GICS groups students as follows:

Kindergarten.....	Monaghan
Grades 1-3.....	Limerick
Grades 4-6.....	Donegal
Grades 4-6.....	County Cork

These names are counties of Ireland and have been chosen because of the Irish connection to the Green Isle Community.

Limerick, Galway and Donegal students are assigned to multi-age core group classrooms. All GICS students are assigned to multi-age K-6 homerooms which meet three times a week.

Homeroom

Multi-aged homeroom classes (K-6) work with teachers in such areas as community building, self-esteem, conflict management, current events, careers and the study of world cultures. Homeroom meets three days a week. This is a regular part of our curriculum and an important aspect of our family atmosphere at GICS. Siblings are assigned to the same homeroom unless other arrangements are discussed with the parent.

Special Education/Inclusion

GICS practices “Inclusion” with all of its learners. Special needs students on official IEP’s (Individual Learning Plans) are served primarily within the regular classroom. Teachers work collaboratively to devise teaching and learning strategies that meet the needs of these and all students within the regular classrooms.

Extended Day Program

We are pleased to once again be able to offer the Extended Day Program for families needing before and after-school childcare. The program will run from 6:00 a.m.—8:15 a.m. and from dismissal time until 6:00 p.m. Families will have the opportunity to sign up for different payment plans. In addition, on Staff Development Early Dismissal days, families may sign up to have their children remain at school to participate in the program. Information is available to families wanting to learn more about this opportunity.

Student Progress: Goals, Conferences, Progress Reports

Parents, the student, and teacher work together to develop each student's goals. Students are involved not only in the development of the plan, but also in the evaluation of progress made toward the goals identified. At fall and spring conferences, goals are established and/or reviewed. Student Progress Reports for all areas of the curriculum are issued three times per year.

Behavior Expectations

GICS' behavior plan provides an environment that ensures growth and success for each learner and promotes courtesy and respect. GICS expects everyone to work to the best of their ability and to treat all people and property with respect. At GICS, we celebrate and appreciate our individual differences and expect the following behaviors:

- **Treat yourself, others and property with respect**
- **Work to the best of your ability**

Building Behavior Plan

Students who choose inappropriate behavior are given a warning. If inappropriate behavior continues, or if a behavior is severe, students complete a Problem Solving Plan (PSP). There is a section of the plan to be **completed at home with parents** which asks the student to identify a prevention plan. These completed forms **must be returned to school the following school day or a phone call will be made to the parents**. The PSP provides parents, staff, and the students involved, the opportunity to work in partnership in bringing about positive behavior changes. Appendix A—Monaghan & Limerick PSP. Appendix B—Galway & Donegal PSP.

We believe in building respect and a sense of community at GICS. The Building Behavior Plan will be a strong contributing factor to the positive climate established at GICS. The reduction of negative behaviors is important to academic success.

Bullying Policy

Green Isle Community School Policy 514 GICS 514, based on Independent Charter School District #4144 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514. Adopted: 5/24/2005 Orig. 2003. Revised: 3/16/2012, 2/21/2006 Rev. 2006

514 BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

[Note: School districts are required by statute to have a policy addressing bullying.]

I. PURPOSE

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students,

particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, it is the school district's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees. The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.

B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

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E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with school district's policies and procedures. The school district may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in

disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

G. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

[Note: As the purpose of the policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of students, school districts should review those individuals in their district who may have responsibility for its students, whether formal or informal, to ensure that this purpose is met. Accordingly, school districts may wish to exclude or add certain individuals as being subject to its policy. For example, if a school district is providing visitors with extensive contact with students, the school district may wish to include visitors as individuals subject to the policy to ensure the access the school district has permitted is not being abused. Alternatively, a school district may wish to remove contractors from the policy if the individuals with whom it contracts have little or no contact with students to avoid unnecessary application of the policy.]

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

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A. "Bullying" means any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to one or more students and which substantially interferes with another student's or students' educational benefits, opportunities, or performance. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, conduct by a student against another student that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:

1. harming a student;
2. damaging a student's property;
3. placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property; or
4. creating a hostile educational environment for a student.

B. "Immediately" means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.

C. "On school district property or at school-related functions" means all school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. School district property also may mean a student's walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district's ability to take action against an alleged perpetrator based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

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C. The building principal or the principal's designee or the building supervisor is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the building level. Any person may report bullying directly to a school district human rights officer or the superintendent.

D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall inform the building principal immediately.

E. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.

G. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.

B. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.

C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; school district policies; and regulations.

D. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of

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students involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, to the extent permitted by law, based on a confirmed report.

VI. REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person

who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying.

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A. The school district annually will provide information and any applicable training to school district staff regarding this policy.

B. The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.

C. The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to victims of bullying.

D. The school district may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent and reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.

VIII. NOTICE

The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook. Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.0695 (School Board Policy; Prohibiting Intimidation and Bullying)

Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 414 (Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 415 (Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 507 (Corporal Punishment)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 529 (Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 711 (Videotaping on School Buses)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

Dismissal Procedure

Students being transported by bus will board at the west of the school. If you are picking up your child at the end of the day, please proceed to the St. Brendan's Catholic Church parking lot across the street from the school. Staff members will cross the students to that location.

Medication Guidelines

Medications (**prescription and non-prescription**) must be sent to school in the original container labeled with the student's name, prescription number, directions for administering, and the doctor's name. They must be accompanied by a **Medication Permission** form as well. To protect them, students are not allowed to bring aspirin or any other kind of medication to administer themselves.

Special Occasion Treats Brought To School

Parents are certainly **not** required to bring treats to school for birthdays and other special events. In the event that treats are brought to school, however, they must be store or bakery-bought, not homemade. This is a state guideline and we thank you for honoring it.

Lunch

GICS contracts with the Sibley East Schools for the food services. Hot lunches are available every day. For payment for lunch/milk, please make checks payable to GICS. Please write lunch on the check so it can be credited properly. Financial assistance (Free & Reduced lunch) for food services is available. Contact the school office at 507-326-7144 to receive the necessary forms.

Student Lunch Cost.....	\$2.55 (includes white milk)
Adult/Guest Meal Cost.....	\$3.60 (includes white milk)
Milk only	\$.40

Transportation

Transportation of charter school students in Minnesota is provided by the district in which the school is located. The Sibley East District will transport all GICS students living within the district boundaries. There are also 2 bus stops in Henderson. They also have the authority to set all schedules and bus routes. Families residing in districts other than GICS are required to provide their own transportation. If you have questions or concerns about bus routes, pick-up times, etc., please call the transportation company at 507-237-3330.

CVN (Community Volunteer Network)

The purpose of the Community Volunteer Network (CVN) is to provide a network of "Parents, Staff, and Community Members working together to create a sense of community that supports the students in their academic and social growth." The goals of the CVN are: to support educational needs, recruit volunteers for class-

room and opportunities for participation by local residents and promote the development of a school community. By developing the CVN, parents, staff, and community members will become more involved with GICS and enrich the education of our students.

Board of Directors

As a charter school, we are governed by a seven-member board of directors comprised of parents, teachers, and community members. The board meets monthly in the cafeteria. The meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates and times are posted in the front hallway of the school. A roster of Board members can be found on page 2 of this handbook.

Internet Policy

This is a summary of how we use the Internet with students in our classrooms. If you still have specific concerns, please contact the school.

We believe that the Internet can be a valuable tool in research, especially in the modern age. In fact, inclusion of technology education is a key component of the Minnesota State Standards. However, we know that students need to be guided and taught appropriate uses of this technology. Before using the Internet for research, we will have a discussion about basic Internet safety. **Student do not “surf” the Internet.** Web sites are pre-selected and they are bookmarked through the student server. Any “searching” on the Internet will be under staff supervision, using a “kid-friendly” search engine like Yahoo!igans.

Donegal & County Cork (grades 4-6) Homework Policy

Assigning homework serves various educational needs. It serves as an intellectual discipline, establishes study habits, and supplements and reinforces work done in school. In addition, it fosters student initiative, independence, and responsibility and brings the home and school closer together.



Homework is defined as out-of-class tasks assigned to students as an extension or elaboration of classroom work.

- Practice assignments reinforce newly acquired skills. For example, students who have just learned a new method of solving a mathematical problem should be given sample problems to complete on their own.
- Preparation assignments help students get ready for activities that will occur in the classroom. Students may, for example, be required to do background research on a topic to be discussed later in class.
- Extension assignments are frequently long-term continuing projects that parallel class work. Students must apply previous learning to complete these assignments, which include science fair projects and term papers.

Our homework expectations:

Donegal students may have daily homework along with weekly spelling lists. Most often that work will come from math, book clubs and Independent Reading Projects. Donegal students are also given regular class time to start and work on assignments. Effective use of that class time will reduce the homework load. A Student may also choose to do homework during all school quiet time.

- We expect homework to be completed and returned in a timely matter.
- Since we expect students to complete the work, the teachers will correct and return the work in a timely manner.
- We know that parents and guardians are crucial to helping students be successful with their homework, in some cases another individual may be necessary to help a student with an assignment. If another person is required to help and one is not available at home, please e-mail the teacher and they can make time during the day to help the student complete the assignment.
- If an assignment is not understood, please write a note to the teacher on the assignment, or send an email.

Please note that a happy home is most important, if homework is ever overwhelming or is not challenging your child enough, please discuss this with their teacher.

Monaghan (Kindergarten) & Limerick (1-3) Homework Policy

*Your first priority should be a sane and happy family life.

Homework is defined as out-of-school tasks to reinforce skills learned in class. It also provides a home / school connection.

Homework expectations:

- Kindergarten students in Monaghan will have at least one brief homework assignment each week.
- Limerick students will have short homework assignments at least 3 times a week, along with weekly spelling lists.

- We know that parents and guardians are crucial to helping students be successful with their homework.
- Students will have the option to get a head start on homework during all school quiet time.
- Since we expect students to complete the work in an appropriate time frame , the teachers will correct and return the work in a timely manner.
- If an assignment is not understood, please do not hesitate to discuss the assignment with the teacher.

How parents can help students be successful:

- Check your child's backpack **daily**. Students should have their planner checked daily as well.
- Provide a suitable study area and the necessary tools (for example, paper and books) to complete the homework assignments.
- Allow time after school for both homework and family activities.
- Monitor television viewing and establish a specific homework time.
- Plan a homework schedule with your child. Allow for free time when assignments are completed.
- Praise your child's efforts. If questions arise about the assignments, and your child asks for help, ask him or her questions or work through an example rather than simply providing the answer.
- Allow your child to complete the homework. Please do not do the work for them. Younger children need more parental assistance with homework than older children. Go over homework assignments with your child. Do several problems or questions together, then observe your child doing the next one or two.
- Check completed assignments. Make sure that all parts of the assignment have been done.
- Ask to look at homework once it has been marked and returned to your child.
- Ask your child's teachers about their homework policy and specific assignments. Share any concerns you may have regarding the amount or type homework assigned with your child's teacher or the school director.

Counties Monaghan and Limerick (K-3) Problem Solving Plan (PSP)

Treat yourselves, others and property with respect and work to the best of your ability

Name: _____ Date of incident: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____ Staff Witness: _____

1. Please tell what happened. What exactly did you do? Don't use names but tell as many details as you can.

2. How did you hurt other people? _____

3. What rule did you break? _____

4. What can you do to "fix" what happened? _____

5. Draw a picture or write what you will do next time?

Staff Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Families: Please talk about this PSP and decide on a "plan" to help avoid this situation in the future. Also include ways to "fix" any problems created by this situation. A phone call will be made to the parent if this form is not returned back into school the next school day. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please fill out the bottom and return the entire form to school.

Our plan: _____

We agree that this plan was decided on to help avoid future problems. We discussed the incident together to come up with this plan.

Student Signature: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

*Staff will follow up with the student in approximately one week to see if their plan is working.

Follow up date: _____ Staff Initials: _____

Counties of County Cork and Donegal (3-6): Problem Solving Plan (PSP)

Treat yourselves, others and property with respect and work to the best of your ability

Name: _____ Date of incident: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____ Staff Witness: _____

1. Please tell what happened. What exactly did you do? Don't use names but tell as many details as you can.

2. How did you hurt other people? _____

3. What would have been a better choice? _____

4. How can you "fix" what happened? _____

Staff Signature: _____ Student Signature: _____

Families: Please talk about this PSP and decide on a "plan" to help avoid this situation in the future. Also include ways to "fix" any problems created by this situation. A phone call will be made to the parent if this form is not completed, signed and turned back into school. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please fill out the bottom and return the entire form to school.

Our plan: _____

We agree that this plan was decided on to help avoid future problems. We discussed the incident together to come up with this plan.

Student Signature: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

*Staff will follow up with the student in approximately one week to see if their plan is working.

Follow up date: _____ Staff Initials: _____

Student Handbook Signature Page

We ask both students and parents to acknowledge the GICS Student Handbook. Please read and discuss it together, then sign and return this page.

As a student at GICS, I have read the GICS Student Handbook. I agree to follow it to the best of my ability.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a parent or guardian, I have read the GICS Student Handbook. We agree to follow the handbook to the best of our ability.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a parent or guardian, I agree to always sign in at the office upon arrival on a normal school day.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I would like to receive the school newsletter via email.

Email address (print clearly) _____