

# Classified Charter Employee Handbook

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Grizzly Challenge Charter School



July 2024

# **GRIZZLY CHALLENGE CHARTER SCHOOL**

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Grizzly Challenge Charter School (GCCS)! We are a charter school granted by the State of California. The school has been chartered by the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE). GCCS, in partnership with the National Guard, operates the Grizzly Youth Academy, a Nationwide Challenge Program. It is best described as a twenty-two week residential youth program that provides a healthy environment and an opportunity for students to create a track record of success, and to acquire skills and credentials to become productive citizens.

As an employee of GCCS, you will be providing the academic opportunities for the students, also referred to as cadets. The academic program is centered on the goal for the cadets to achieve a high school diploma or to successfully attain a high school equivalent certificate, such as the HiSET or CHSPE.

The GCCS is governed by a Board of Directors. This Board provides direction and policies regarding employment and working conditions to support that employment. The Board has contracted with SLOCOE to carry out certain payroll and Human Resources functions. These functions include recruitment for vacancies, establishing and maintaining employee personnel files, and establishing and maintaining a payroll system per the Board's direction.

The purpose and intent of this classified employee handbook is to assist you in becoming familiar with the GCCS and the many principles which guide our workday and interactions with students, the public and coworkers. It is a very brief summary of the most important policies, rules and regulations that guide your work as a GCCS classified employee. We hope this handbook provides you with a basic understanding of the policies and regulations that are in effect to assist you during your employment with the GCCS.

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**Mission**

The mission of the Grizzly Challenge Charter School is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of students who are at risk of dropping out of high school. Graduates gain the values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens.

**Vision**

Grizzly Challenge Charter School, in partnership with CA National Guard, is a structured, nurturing, safe, and professional environment that values the development of the whole student. Through positive relationships, Grizzly develops the student's social, emotional and physical well being. Possessing self-discipline, respect and integrity, students become contributing citizens who succeed both personally and professionally and move forward with resilience and a strong sense of self into a life filled with promise.

**Purpose of Classified Employee Handbook**

This classified employee handbook is designed to familiarize GCCS classified employees with the practices and guidelines of GCCS. This handbook is the property of GCCS, and is intended for personal use and reference by GCCS classified employees. It explains some of our philosophies and beliefs, and describes, in general terms, some of the employment guidelines. We hope that it will serve as a useful reference document for employees throughout their employment with GCCS. Employees should understand, however, that this handbook is not intended to be a contract (express or implied), nor is it intended to otherwise create any legally enforceable obligations on the part of GCCS or its employees not otherwise found in California laws.

GCCS reserves full discretion to add to, modify, or delete provisions of this handbook, or the practices and guidelines on which they may be based, at any time without advance notice. GCCS also reserves the right to interpret any of the provisions set forth in this handbook in any manner it deems appropriate. For this reason, employees should check with the GCCS Principal to obtain current information regarding the status of any particular policy, procedure, guideline, or practice. Similarly, to obtain information regarding specific employment policies and procedures, whether or not they are contained in this handbook, employees should contact the GCCS Principal. Suggestions or concerns regarding practices and guidelines should be brought to the attention of the GCCS Principal for consideration by the GCCS Board.

## LEGAL PROVISIONS

The GCCS is committed to complying with all applicable employment laws and regulations. This commitment applies to all persons involved in the operations of the GCCS, including supervisors and coworkers.

The basis for our employment practices, policies and regulations are contained in such documents as Federal statutes, each Charter document, Employee Agreement, Charter Procedure Manual, Employee Manual, Grizzly Board Policies, and sound Human Resources practices. It cannot be over emphasized that the references in this handbook are, of necessity, simply summaries and are not intended to represent the full text of the provisions.

Classified Salary Specifications, GCCS Board Policies, and Charter Administrative Regulations generally provide direction on how educational activities are accomplished. Each provides the GCCS with information on rules, regulations, and procedures for the daily operation of our work. The GCCS contracts with the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) for business services, human resources support, information services, legal services and other support functions.

### **Affirmative Action/ Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The GCCS is an equal employment opportunity employer and makes employment decisions on the basis of merit. The employment and procurement is on a fair and impartial basis. GCCS actively supports Equal Access for all people regardless of race, religious creed, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, medical condition, physical or mental disability, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. GCCS is committed to compliance with all applicable laws providing equal employment opportunities. This commitment applies to all persons involved in GCCS operations and prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of GCCS.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

GCCS will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result. In order to determine whether an employee or applicant is a qualified individual with a disability, the employee or applicant is required to participate in the interactive process, which includes responding to requests for information. An applicant or employee that fails to respond to requests for information or to participate in the interactive process may waive his/her right to a reasonable accommodation. A request for a reasonable accommodation should be made to the GCCS Principal.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

GCCS recognizes the importance of child abuse reporting. As a GCCS employee, you are a mandated reporter and you will receive annual training and related laws. In an effort to support existing laws and support personnel in reporting child abuse, GCCS has established the

following procedures that offer direction in the reporting process.

IF YOU HAVE A REASONABLE SUSPICION THAT A STUDENT IS A VICTIM OF ABUSE, whether physical, sexual, or neglect, you are legally obligated to report it. You should:

1. Call Child Protective Services (CPS). (Note: Reasonable suspicion means that it is objectively reasonable for a person with your training and experience to entertain such a suspicion based on the facts, i.e., knowledge or observation, available to you.)

The numbers for CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES are:

**San Luis Obispo County Child Welfare Services .....805-781-5437**  
**Emergency requiring immediate intervention .....911**

2. Complete the Suspected Child Abuse Report Form and forward it to the appropriate agency within 36 hours. If possible, pictures of the abuse area shall be taken.
3. Employees who directly work with students are considered mandated reporters and are immune from prosecution and cannot be sued for reporting a suspicion of child abuse, even in the event that it later appears not to have taken place. You can be found guilty of a misdemeanor and confined in The County Jail for failure to report suspected abuse.
4. All employees should keep any reports made to CPS confidential, discussing the matter only with other employees who “need to know.”

TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT YOU WILL BE CHARGED WITH ABUSE

1. “High Fives,” handshakes, etc. are welcome contact for most students. A hug or pat on the shoulder may be appropriate for certain situations. It is best to hug and touch in the open, preferably with others around.
2. When working individually with a child, do so in an area that is open to other areas. If it is necessary to work in a quiet and private place, keep a log of when and where you went and what activities the student was engaged in for that period.

### **Employee Medical Exam**

Any GCCS classified employee may be required to undergo a medical examination at any time to ensure the health and welfare of all GCCS employees provided that the medical evaluation is job-related and a business necessity. GCCS will either provide the required examination or request that an examination be conducted. A medical certificate stating that the employee is physically able to perform regular duties must be returned to GCCS Principal.

### **Employment Eligibility Verification Document**

Verification of the right to work in the U.S. is required by the Federal Government. Upon initial employment, the employee must show evidence of identity and employment eligibility when completing the I-9 document. By law, proper identification must be provided within three (3) business days of the date of employment. GCCS encourages employees to provide this documentation prior to starting employment.

### **Verification of Social Security Card**

GCCS requires a copy of each employee’s social security card to be on file with the SLOCOE

Payroll Department prior to any payroll warrants being processed. Federal regulations require GCCS to use the information printed on social security cards to ensure that earnings reported to state and federal agencies are accurately posted and credited to the employee. If any employee is paid under an incorrect name or social security number, GCCS may be subject to penalties.

### **Fingerprints**

Each employee will be fingerprinted in compliance with the Education Code as a condition of employment. Fingerprints are forwarded to the Department of Justice for screening to ensure that no employee has been convicted of a prohibitive offense, thereby precluding employment by GCCS. A conviction will not automatically bar an employee from employment. However, if an applicant fails to disclose the fact of a conviction, that failure will result in disqualification from the employment process. Education Code prohibits hiring individuals convicted of narcotics or sex offenses, or serious and violent crimes mandated under AB 1610 and AB 1612. Fingerprint criminal history clearance is required by law of all school employees prior to date of employment. SLOCOE will receive any subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice for the duration of employment and reserves the right to take action as appropriate. All questions related to fingerprinting should be directed to the SLOCOE HR Department. *(Reference: Education Code 45125 and 44830.1)*

### **Title IX Sexual Harassment**

Grizzly Challenge Charter School ("Charter School") does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits any acts of sex discrimination including sex-based harassment in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by California law, Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.) and the Title IX regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106), including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106 may be referred to the Charter School Title IX Coordinator, the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

All complaints and reports of conduct that may constitute sex discrimination including sex-based harassment should be submitted to our Title IX Coordinator, who can be reached at:

Lita Willis  
721 Mendocino Ave, Building 945  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
805-782-6881  
lwillis@mygya.com

A copy of Charter School's Title IX Policy, which includes the specific rules and procedures for reporting sex discrimination and sex-based harassment occurring within Charter School's education program or activities and for pursuing available remedies, is available on the GCCS website



## **Nondiscrimination in Employment**

All GCCS employees are assured of full and equal employment access and opportunities, protection from harassment and intimidation, and freedom from any fear of reprisal or retribution for asserting their employment rights in accordance with law.

# **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

## **Job Assignment**

You will be provided with a Class Specification form upon initial employment and when any subsequent and significant change occurs, i.e., modification of job or reclassification of your position. The GCCS Administration will thoroughly discuss specific duties and responsibilities. You are encouraged to ask questions about areas of uncertainty, regardless of how insignificant you may believe them to be.

## **Salary Schedule**

The GCCS Classified Salary schedule consists of a job title and a 12-step salary range for each position. The salary range for each position is assigned according to the degree of knowledge, complexity, accountability and working conditions required. Any salary increase given to all GCCS classified employees would apply to all of the positions on the salary schedule. Adjustments to the salary schedule do not affect step increases listed below.

## **Initial Placement on the Salary Schedule**

New hires are typically hired at Step 1 of the salary range. New hires with significant at-risk experience may be placed on step two or three of the salary range upon hire at the discretion of the GCCS Administration.

## **Step Increases**

GCCS Classified employees shall advance to the next step on the salary schedule on July 1 of every year after receipt of a satisfactory performance evaluation by April. Classified employees hired on or after April 1 will receive a step increase on July 1 of the following calendar year after receipt of a satisfactory evaluation by the GCCS Administration.

## **Work Hours**

Work hours, rest breaks, and lunch periods will be scheduled by the GCCS Principal and will vary by assignment. Paid rest breaks of ten (10) minutes shall be provided. An employee scheduled to work up to six hours per day shall have one 10-minute break. An employee scheduled to work six to eight hours per day shall have two 10-minute breaks.

## **Duty Day Calendars**

Duty Day calendars shall be completed by GCCS classified staff who are working less than a twelve-month, year-round assignment. The Executive Assistant will assist in this process at the beginning of each school year. The calendar must be approved by the GCCS Administration.

## **Performance Evaluations**

Performance evaluations provide formal opportunities for employees and supervisors to discuss performance regarding delivery of services provided by this office to its clients. Performance

evaluations are the result of on-going communication between the GCCS Principal and employee, and foster a learning environment that encourages personal and professional excellence. All evaluations are based on established job performance criteria for specific positions.

A regular performance evaluation will be conducted a minimum of once each year, and shall be completed 30 days prior to year end. Advancement to the next step on the established Salary Schedule will occur July 1 only after receipt of a satisfactory performance evaluation. Classified employees hired on or after April 1 will receive a step increase on July 1 of the following calendar year after receipt of a satisfactory evaluation.

### **Health, Dental and Vision Insurance**

Health, dental and vision insurance is offered to the employee and all eligible dependents. A \$50,000 life insurance policy is also provided for all classified employees who enroll in the health care coverage. All full-time employees are required to take insurance coverage. Part-time employees may decline coverage by filling out a Declination of Coverage form and returning it to SLOCOE's HR Department. (Contact a SLOCOE HR Specialist with any questions you may have.)

It is the employee's responsibility to request a change form from SLOCOE's HR Department to report changes in eligible dependents. All changes must be reported within 30 days to assure uninterrupted coverage.

GCCS employees are in an insurance pool with SLOCOE employees and pay the same rate as SLOCOE classified employees. Employees working less than full-time will have their benefits prorated based on the number of hours worked. The open enrollment period for changing insurance coverage runs during June/July each year with changes effective October 1 of each year.

### **Credit Union**

All employees are eligible for membership in the School Employees of San Luis Obispo County Credit Union (SESLOC). The credit union operates in order that employees might conveniently save money through payroll deductions. It also enables employees to borrow money, which may be repaid through payroll deductions. To join the credit union, employees must go in person to apply at their SESLOC office.

### **Retirement Coverage (PERS)**

Membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) is mandatory for classified employees working four or more hours per day on a regular basis, unless they were previous members of the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Retirement contributions are made through payroll deductions. These deductions are sheltered from taxation until an employee retires or withdraws the funds. In order to be eligible for retirement benefits, an individual must have attained age 50 and have 5 years of service credits. Upon separation, employees may request a refund of the contributions; leave the contributions on deposit until retirement age is attained; or roll over funds to a personal IRA. Unused sick leave may be added to service to extend service credit at the time of retirement.

Members of PERS are also covered by a "Survivor Benefit" program with a mandatory monthly

deduction which is not refundable. This provides an income for survivors in the event of the death of a member while in service before attaining retirement age. Employees may contact the SLOCOE's Payroll Department or CalPERS directly for more detailed information regarding retirement benefits.

### **Additional Retirement Benefits**

The GCCS established a Restricted Retiree Health Insurance Fund that is the sole funding source for any post-employment (Retiree) health care contributions made to retirees eligible for this program. The Restricted Retiree Health Insurance Fund may be eliminated in the event that there is insufficient or a lack of funds as determined by the GCCS administration and the actuarial study. If the actuarial study determines that there are not sufficient funds to cover the eligible retirees' duration for three years, the administration shall determine remaining benefit and eligibility. The GCCS administration will determine the amount of fund balance necessary for the Restricted Retiree Health Insurance Fund based on an annual actuarial study conducted by a licensed actuarial firm. The GCCS will pay the cost of the actuarial study, which will be conducted by December 31st each year.

A non-bargaining unit employee who has reached their 62nd birthday but not their 65th birthday and with 15 years of consecutive and continuous service at GCCS who retires by going directly from active employment with the Employer to service retirement through the California State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) or the California Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) is eligible to participate in the medical, dental and/or vision benefit plan set forth below. The bargaining unit member must retire to the STRS or PERS retirement system; a unit member is not eligible if they resign and continue employment elsewhere where full time benefits are available.

In order to be eligible for retiree health benefits, the employee must be enrolled in the plan the year prior to the year of retirement.

Payment for the retiree's portion of the payment is due at the same time as if made by payroll deduction and the Employer may change the necessary administrative fee, if any. If a retiree's contribution is more than 30 days late, the Employer may discontinue eligibility and coverage by providing written notice at least 15 calendar days before eligibility and coverage will cease, advising that eligibility and coverage will cease on a specified date at least 15 calendar days after the date of the written notice unless payment has been received by that date.

Once an eligible employee's retirement has been approved by the GCCS board and as determined by an annual actuarial study, that employee shall receive, if the employee so chooses, the full Retirement Health Care benefit-in an amount equal to the district's contribution on behalf of an active regular GCCS employee-for the duration of the employee/retiree's eligibility. Upon approval, eligible retirees are guaranteed this benefit from the time they qualify and begin receiving this benefit until they are eligible for Medicare. In no event shall the benefit be provided beyond the age of 65.

For the purposes of calculating "years of consecutive and continuous service," non-disciplinary district approved leaves of absence shall not be considered as a break in service.

### **Social Security**

In addition to retirement coverage through PERS or STRS, classified employees also contribute to Social Security, and are thus eligible for retirement and/or disability benefits earned through credits. Credits are based on the amount of your earnings. You can earn up to a maximum of 4 credits each year when you work in a job and pay Social Security taxes. Additional information on Social Security benefits may be obtained by contacting SLOCOE's Payroll Department, or at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

### **Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan**

This plan allows for the use of "pre-tax" dollars to pay for the employee portion of certain benefits. Additionally, employees with dependent care or health related costs may set aside additional pre-tax dollars to pay for these expenses. Contact the SLOCOE HR Department for more information.

### **Unemployment Insurance**

State Unemployment Insurance benefits are provided to all employees as required by state law. Upon separation of employment, employees are eligible to apply for benefits through any State Employment Development Department (EDD). Eligibility for benefits is determined by circumstances related to each individual situation. Only the EDD can determine an employee eligibility status.

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance Benefits**

GCCS, in accordance with state law, provides insurance coverage for employees in case of work-related injury or illness. Any employee who is injured must notify the GCCS Principal immediately and complete the appropriate paperwork. See sections on leaves and safety for more information on what to do in cases of work-related illness and injury.

## **HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS AND LEAVES**

### **Holidays**

GCCS observes holidays as shown on the annual instructional GCCS calendar.

An employee must be in paid status on the workday immediately preceding or succeeding the holiday to be paid for the holiday. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday is deemed the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday is deemed to be the holiday.

It should be noted that some of the holidays are outside of the 2 twenty-two week sessions, and therefore some employees may not be eligible for all holidays. Holiday pay is built into the annual salary which is equalized over twelve months. SLOCOE's Payroll Department will determine the number of paid holidays based upon the annual GCCS instructional calendar.

### **Reporting Absences**

Regular and prompt reporting is an important part of employment at GCCS. It is the employee's responsibility to report any full-day absences by notifying the Executive Assistant and by entering absences into Frontline, the automated absence tracking system used by GCCS on the

internet or by calling 782-6882. Absences should be reported for any of portion of a full duty day not worked. Absences must be reported for the following:

- Vacation
- Sick
- Personal Necessity
- Bereavement
- Jury Duty (with verification attached)
- School Business
- Absence due to sub assignment

Failure to notify the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, or Executive Assistant shall be treated as unauthorized time off without pay. An absence from work for three (3) consecutive days without authorization will be considered a voluntary resignation. When it is necessary to be absent because of an emergency, notify the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, or Executive Assistant as soon as possible.

### **Vacation**

All classified GCCS employees accrue vacation. Full-time, 8 hours per day, classified employees accrue at the rate of 11.33 hours per month over twelve (12) months, or 17 days per year. Employees working less than full-time receive a prorated vacation accrual. As an example, classified instructional staff working 213 duty days accrue 9.91 hours per month over eleven (11) months.

Due to the nature of the GCCS program, and in order to provide continuity of instruction to the students, instructional-year classified employees shall be paid for earned and unused vacation at the end of each school year. All vacations must be pre-approved by the GCCS Principal.

### **Sick Leave**

For full-time classified employees, sick leave is accrued at one (1) day per month over twelve (12) months. Part-time classified staff receive a prorated accrual. As an example, classified instructional staff working 213 duty days accrue one (1) day per month over eleven (11) months. If illness causes an unplanned absence, it is the employee's responsibility to notify the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, or Executive Assistant on the first day of absence. If a physician indicates a specific period of absence will be required, and the GCCS Principal is advised of the anticipated absence, it will not be necessary to report daily during the specified period. Failure to notify the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, or Executive Assistant shall be treated as unauthorized time off without pay. Certification from a medical doctor may be required should an employee be absent for five or more days. In addition, GCCS may request such certification at any time if there is a question regarding the absence.

Sick leave shall be cumulative from year to year, and may be used for an employee's own illness or injury, or that of an immediate family member. There is no limitation as to sick leave accrual. Upon resignation or retirement, accumulated sick leave will be reported to the applicable retirement system, but will not be reimbursed to an employee upon separation. (*Reference: Labor Code 233*).

### **Personal Necessity Leave**

Personal Necessity is defined as: Circumstances of an emergency or serious nature which the employee cannot reasonably be expected to disregard, and requires the attention of the employee during assigned hours of work. Personal Necessity leave may include:

- Death of an immediate family member when additional leave is required beyond that provided by the Bereavement Leave Policy.
- An accident involving your personal property, a member of your immediate family, or an immediate family member's property
- Appearance in court as a litigant or a witness under subpoena.
- Religious holiday.
- To attend to an illness of your child, parent, spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Other occasions you cannot reasonably be expected to disregard during working hours.

Personal Necessity leave must be approved by the GCCS Principal, and requested at least three working days in advance, except in cases of death, serious illness of immediate family members, or accident involving personal property. Personal Necessity leave may not be used for any form of vacation, or to extend a school holiday or vacation period or for personal gain. Personal necessity days are deducted from an employee's sick leave balance.

### **Bereavement Leave Policy**

An employee will receive Bereavement Leave in the amount of three days without loss of pay, due to the death of an immediate family member. Bereavement Leave in the amount of five days shall be granted if travel of 100 miles or more is required. The classified employee may use Personal Necessity leave if additional time off is required and approved by the GCCS Principal. (*Reference: Education Code 44985 and 45194*)

For the purposes of Bereavement Leave, a member of the employee's immediate family shall be defined as: mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, or grandchild of the employee or the spouse of the employee, or the significant other who resides in the home of the employee, and the spouse, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, stepson, stepdaughter, sister, sister-in-law, stepbrother, or stepsister of the employee or any relative of the employee living in the immediate household of the employee.

### **Jury Duty Leave**

If a summons for jury duty is received, it must be presented to the employee's supervisor immediately, in order for duties to be reassigned in advance of the absence. No deduction will be made from regular salary; however, any money received (other than for mileage) should be forwarded to SLOCOE's Human Resources Department.

### **Military Leave**

Military Leave shall be granted and compensated in accordance with the Education Code and the Military and Veterans' Code. An official document or order stating the date the employee must report for duty shall be submitted prior to granting leave under this rule. Employees will receive full pay for the first 30 days of military leave. (*Reference: Education Code 45059; Military and Veterans' Code Section 389 and 395*)

### **Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL)**

PDL covers the temporary disability resulting from pregnancy. Any female employee who anticipates the need for PDL should contact SLOCOE's Human Resources Department as early as possible.

If the need for PDL is foreseeable, employees must provide notification at least 30 days before the PDL is to begin. If 30 days advance notice is not possible, notice must be given as soon as practical. Upon request of an employee, and the recommendation of the employee's physician, the employee's work assignment may be changed if necessary to protect the health and safety of the employee and her child.

Employees must provide SLOCOE's HR department with a certification from a health care provider. While the duration of the leave will be determined by the employee's physician, employees disabled due to pregnancy may take up to four months. The four months of PDL includes any period of time for actual disability caused by the employee's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition. This includes leave for severe morning sickness and for prenatal care. The certification indicating disability should include:

- The date on which the employee became disabled due to pregnancy;
- The probably duration of the period or periods of disability; and
- A statement that, due to the disability, the employee is unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the position without undue risk to herself, the successful completion of her pregnancy, or to other persons.

Sick leave accrual may be used during the period of actual disability as certified by a healthcare provider. If all accrued sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use accrued vacation leave. If additional time off is desired beyond the period of disability, the employee may request a General Leave.

### **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

In accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the California Family Rights Act (CFRA), GCCS provides up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid family/medical leave within a twelve-month period. Leave may be taken for one or more of the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child, or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his or her job.

Any leave taken for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child must be concluded within one year of the birth or placement of the child with the employee.

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must have more than 12 months (52 weeks) of service with the employer, and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12-month period before the date the leave begins.

The twelve-month period is measured forward from the date an employee's first leave began. All

leave usage that qualifies under the terms of the FMLA leave shall be counted towards the available twelve (12) workweeks within a twelve-month period, including intermittent and reduced workload leaves. No carryover of unused leave from one twelve-month period to the next twelve-month period is permitted.

The GCCS Principal and SLOCOE's Human Resources Department should be notified at least 30 days before a leave is to begin, or as soon as is practical. Additional paperwork may be required before the leave is granted.

Under most circumstances, leave under FMLA and CFRA will run concurrently, and employees will be entitled to up to twelve (12) workweeks of family and medical leave in the designated period. However, leave due to an employee's disability for pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition is not counted in the twelve workweeks under CFRA. Please refer to the section on Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL) for additional information. Once an employee is no longer disabled under PDL, she may then apply for FMLA.

All available paid accrued leave must be used prior to unpaid leave. GCCS will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance for the duration of the leave (up to twelve weeks under FMLA). If an employee fails to return from leave after expiration for eligibility for FMLA leave, the employee shall reimburse the full cost of coverage for health, dental, and vision benefits during the entire period of unpaid FMLA leave. Any amounts due under this section may be deducted from any sums due the employee (e.g. unpaid wages).

Under most circumstances, upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be reinstated to his or her original job, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms and conditions. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement than if he or she had been continuously employed rather than on leave.

### **General Leave**

Under limited circumstances, GCCS may grant a general unpaid leave of absence to classified employees. All other appropriate leave options must be exhausted before a general leave will be considered. Approval will depend upon GCCS's ability to provide continuity of service to students.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

It is the goal and responsibility of GCCS to provide a safe and healthy environment for our employees, students, and the general public. It is the responsibility of each employee to assure his/her own personal safety and to develop a concern for safety of others.

### **Tobacco Free Environment**

Tobacco use is prohibited in all facilities owned and/or operated by GCCS, including indoors, outdoors and in all GCCS vehicles, whether located on or off the premises. Included in the prohibition is tobacco use in privately owned vehicles located on property owned and/or operated by GCCS. This policy applies to employees, students, and the general public.



## **Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace**

GCCS is fully committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol free environment for its students and employees. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispersing, possession or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited in all GCCS work places.

While GCCS has no intention of intruding into the private lives of its employees, involvement with drugs off the job can affect job performance and safety. Employees who think they may have a drug/alcohol problem are urged to voluntarily seek assistance and get help immediately. While GCCS will be supportive of those who seek help voluntarily, it will be equally firm in identifying and disciplining those who continue to be substance abusers and do not seek help. To this end, GCCS will act to eliminate any substance abuse (illegal drugs, prescription drugs or any other substance which could impair an employee's safety and ability to effectively perform the functions of the assigned job) which increases the potential for accidents, absenteeism, substandard performance, poor employee morale or damage to the reputation of GCCS. All employees should be aware that GCCS reserves the right to search any property belonging to the GCCS office. Violations of the drug free workplace guidelines will result in discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Employees adhering to the guidelines of a drug free workplace will not:

- Report to work or be subject to duty while impaired by or under the influence of illegal drugs or prescription drugs, with or without a prescription.
- Perform job duties while impaired as a result of the use of illegal drugs or prescription drugs
  - not prescribed by a doctor.
- Possess illegal drugs or prescription drugs obtained without a prescription during working hours or while subject to being called to duty, on breaks, during meal periods or at anytime while on GCCS property.
- Directly or through a third party sell or provide drugs to any person, including any employee, while on duty or subject to being called to duty.

Employees will:

- Notify the GCCS Principal before beginning work, when taking any medications or drugs, prescription or non-prescription, which may interfere with the safe and effective performance of duties or operation of equipment.
- Provide within 24 hours of request bona fide verification of a current valid prescription for any potentially impairing drug or medication identified when a drug test is positive. The prescription must be in the employee's name.
- Notify the GCCS Principal of any criminal drug statute conviction within five (5) days after such conviction.

As a condition of being employed to work under any federal grant received by GCCS, employees are required to abide by the terms of this statement.

## **Freedom From Tuberculosis**

Verification of freedom from tuberculosis is required upon employment and every four years thereafter. Employment candidates that have current TB test results provided for employment in

another district will be accepted to meet this requirement. TB x-rays or intradermal skin tests no more than 60 days old, and verified in writing by the doctor or agency who administered the test, will be accepted. A current TB verification must be on file prior to commencing employment.

### **Industrial Injuries/Illnesses**

All employees are responsible for their own safety, as well as that of others in the workplace. To help us maintain a safer workplace, all employees must be safety-conscious at all times. Report work-related injuries or illnesses immediately to the GCCS Principal.

GCCS, in accordance with state law, provides insurance coverage for employees in cases of work-related illness or injury. It is the responsibility of the manager to follow up when an employee reports an industrial (work-related) illness or injury. It is imperative that the following guidelines be followed when an industrial injury or illness occurs.

1. Injuries on the job, regardless of how minor, should be reported to the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, and Executive Assistant immediately and cared for by first aid or, if necessary, by a doctor. It is the employee's responsibility to immediately report any accident/illness. Failure to report an injury/illness at the time it occurs may be grounds for disciplinary action.
2. If an injury or illness requires medical attention, the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, and Executive Assistant must be notified, and the employee will be instructed to seek treatment at one of the designated medical facilities. Whenever possible, the GCCS Principal or designee will accompany the employee to the designated medical facility. Unless an employee has received approval – *prior* to sustaining an industrial injury/illness – to seek medical treatment from a designated medical doctor, GCCS has the right to designate the treating physician in all industrial injury and illness cases for the first 30 days of treatment. Employees should not seek medical treatment without authorization from the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, and Executive Assistant. Proper procedure must be followed in order for GCCS to accept responsibility for an injury and related medical bills. Treatment at a hospital emergency room is only authorized when an actual emergency exists.
3. Following medical treatment, employees should submit the Physician's Return to Work Evaluation form to the GCCS Principal. If modified work or time off is recommended, the restrictions should be discussed with the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, and Executive Assistant.
4. Questions regarding injury, status during time off, medical bills, etc., should be directed to the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, and Executive Assistant.

### **Infectious Diseases/Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan**

The following summary is derived from the state OSHA plan.

#### Exposure Determination

Occupational exposure means *reasonably anticipated* skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood, saliva, semen, vaginal secretions or other potentially infectious body fluids that may result from the performance of employment related duties.

The tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure for teachers, paraeducators, support staff, nurses and specialists, custodial/maintenance staff, include:

specialized healthcare procedures; interaction which results in a student spitting at, biting or bleeding on an employee; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit; toileting or diaper-changing students; handling, repair or maintenance of equipment or tools that may be contaminated with blood, saliva or vomit; inspection of students for possession of weapons or drugs; rendering first aid.

Although GCCS staff do not routinely perform tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure, they may occasionally perform any of the tasks/procedures listed above. Therefore, they are included in all aspects of the Exposure Control Plan.

### Implementation Methodology

GCCS employees who are involved in activities that present potential occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, shall be provided with the following:

- A spill clean-up procedure for cleaning equipment;
- Hand-washing facilities;
- First Aid kits; and
- Personal protection information and gear.

All surfaces contaminated by blood, saliva, semen or vomit must be decontaminated as soon as possible. A solution of one part bleach to ten parts water shall be used.

### **Hepatitis B Vaccine**

All employees involved in activities that present potential occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, are eligible for the Hepatitis B vaccine. SLOCOE's Human Resources Department, in cooperation with the GCCS Principal, administers the Hepatitis B vaccine program. The vaccine shall be provided at no cost to the employees. The vaccine is a series of three injections administered over a six-month period. Contact SLOCOE's Human Resources Department for locations and dates when the vaccine will be administered.

Employees have the right to decline the vaccination. Those who do shall sign a declination form upon hire. Employees who initially decline the Hepatitis B vaccine and later wish to have it may then have the vaccine provided at no cost. Employees are encouraged to discuss any questions/concerns about the Hepatitis B vaccine with their personal physician.

### **Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up**

All exposure incidents shall be reported to the GCCS Principal immediately. Some examples of exposure incidents include: an employee bitten by a student; blood, saliva or vomit entering the eyes, nose, mouth or an open wound; clean up of blood, saliva, semen, or vomit without personal protective equipment; a search resulting in a needle stick or cut by a contaminated sharp object. Employees who experience an exposure incident will be offered post-exposure evaluation and follow-up in accordance with OSHA Standard.

### **Training**

Training will be provided to all employees involved in activities which present potential occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Employees will receive training upon hire, and then on an annual basis thereafter.

## **Violence-Free Workplace**

GCCS has zero tolerance for workplace violence because it recognizes that workplace violence is a growing nationwide problem, which needs to be addressed by all employers. Consistent with this philosophy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect GCCS employees or which occur on GCCS property will not be tolerated.

Acts or threats of violence include conduct which is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to alter the employment conditions or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or several GCCS employees. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All threats or acts of violence occurring on GCCS premises, regardless of the relationship between the GCCS and the parties involved in the incident.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off GCCS premises, involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of GCCS.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off GCCS property involving a GCCS employee if the threats or acts affect the legitimate interest of GCCS.
- Any acts or threats resulting in the conviction of an employee or of an individual performing services for GCCS on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affect the legitimate interests and goals of GCCS.

Specific examples of conduct, which may be considered threats or acts of violence, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hitting or shoving an individual.
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with harm.
- The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of GCCS property.
- Harassing or threatening phone calls or emails.
- Harassing surveillance or stalking.
- The suggestion or intimation that violence is appropriate.
- Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms or weapons.

GCCS's prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in GCCS's operation, including but not limited to GCCS personnel, contract, and temporary employees and anyone else on GCCS property, or acting as a representative off of GCCS property. Violations of this policy will lead to disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal) and/or legal action as appropriate.

Every employee and every person on GCCS property is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence which he/she is aware. Reports should be made to the GCCS Principal, Assistant Principal, or the Executive Assistant if the GCCS Principal is not available. Nothing in this policy alters any other reporting obligations established in policies or in state, federal or other applicable law.

## **Standards of Conduct**

Groups of people who are working together require certain guidelines pertaining to their conduct

and relationships. GCCS employees are responsible for treating others collaboratively and with respect. GCCS management will treat infractions with discipline and corrective action if an employee's actions interfere with operations of GCCS or with the ability of staff to work effectively.

### **Acceptable Use of Technology**

GCCS authorizes employees to use technology owned or otherwise provided by GCCS as necessary to fulfill the requirements of their position. The use of GCCS technology is a privilege permitted at GCCS's discretion and is subject to the conditions and restrictions set forth in applicable Board policies, administrative regulations, and the Acceptable Use Agreement. GCCS reserves the right to suspend access at any time, without notice, for any reason.

Employees shall not use GCCS technology to access, post, submit, publish, or display harmful or inappropriate matter that is threatening, obscene, disruptive, sexually explicit, or unethical or that promotes any activity prohibited by law, Board policy, or administrative regulations.

Records maintained on any personal device or messages sent or received on a personal device that is being used to conduct GCCS business may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to a subpoena or other lawful request.

### **Appearance and Dress**

Common sense in personal appearance should be considered in neatness, cleanliness, and clothing should be followed by all employees. Inappropriate attire is identified as any item of clothing that causes a distraction to other employees, causes a break in the normal flow of office routine, or creates an unsafe situation for the performance of job duties. Extremes in fashion and leisure activity clothing should be reserved for wear during non-work time.

### **Code of Ethics**

The maintenance of high ethical and moral standards in public business is the basis of effective government. Since public confidence is endangered when ethical standards falter, all officers and employees must act with unwavering integrity, absolute impartiality and devotion to the public interest.

GCCS employees should observe the following principles:

1. There shall be no discrimination in any GCCS activity due to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, physical handicap or political affiliation.
2. No employee shall accept any fee, compensation, gift, payment of expenses, or any other thing of monetary value in circumstances in which acceptance may result in, or create appearance in:
  - Use of position for private gain;
  - Preferential treatment of any person;
  - Impeding governmental efficiency or economy; OR
  - Any loss of complete independence or impartiality or any adverse affect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of GCCS.

3. Persons in the public service shall not disclose confidential information acquired by or available to them in the course of their employment with GCCS or use such information for speculation or gain.

**Conviction of Narcotics or Sex Offense**

Conviction of an offence related to sex, controlled substance or other serious or violent felony as defined in California Education Code will result in immediate dismissal. (*Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44010 and 44011*)

**Uniform Complaint Procedures**

Any persons alleging a violation of federal or states laws are to contact the Chief Human Resources Officer at the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education.

The following is responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and ensuring our compliance:

Chief Human Resources Officer  
Human Resources Department  
3350 Education Drive, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
805-782-7233



**GRIZZLY CHALLENGE CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Receipt of Classified Employee Handbook**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name (Please Print)

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the GCCS Classified Employee Handbook and understand that it outlines my privileges, obligations and responsibilities as an employee of GCCS. I will retain it as long as I am an employee. Updates will be provided as necessary.

I further understand that I am accountable for the contents of the GCCS Classified Employee Handbook and that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with all information in the handbook.

My signature on this form certifies that I have received and understand the information in this handbook and agree to comply with all responsibilities of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date