



GRADUATION CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2025–2026

Weekly Coursework Requirement:

GCs complete 24 hours of academic coursework each week:
12 hours onsite at the Academy and up to 12 hours remote in Edmentum.



Dear Graduation Candidate and Accountability Partner (Parent/Guardian):

The South Carolina Acceleration Academies (SCAA) Board—which oversees both Lowcountry Acceleration Academy and Carolina Shores Acceleration Academy—asks all Graduation Candidates (GCs) and their accountability partners to review this GC Handbook together.

Why the Handbook matters:

We believe that a Graduation Candidate’s success is best supported through shared understanding and a strong partnership between the Academy, the GC, and their accountability partner(s). To foster that partnership, this Handbook outlines important policies, procedures, and expectations that help ensure a consistent, supportive, and safe learning environment for everyone in our school community.

As part of our model, every Graduation Candidate is required to have an accountability partner. An accountability partner is a trusted adult—such as a parent, guardian, relative, or family friend over the age of 21—who is committed to helping you cross the finish line to earn your high school diploma. Whether you are under 18 or already 18 or older, your accountability partner plays an essential role in your journey to graduation. They work with the Academy to support your academic progress, help navigate challenges, and ensure that you meet your weekly expectations—including completing 24 hours of coursework each week (12 hours onsite and 12 hours remote in your required high school courses for graduation). This trusted partner is a vital part of the wraparound support system designed to help you succeed.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide transparency around how our academies operate—academically, behaviorally, and operationally—so that everyone understands the supports available, the expectations in place, and how we work through challenges together when they arise. We are deeply honored that you’ve chosen to be part of our Academy community and are committed to supporting every GC on their journey toward graduation.

We ask that all GCs and accountability partners review this Handbook as part of our shared commitment to open communication and mutual respect. Acknowledgment of receipt will be collected during Orientation, and we may also provide an option to submit an electronic acknowledgment form.

Please feel free to contact your Academy team at any time if you have questions about the Handbook or need clarification on any policies.

Welcome to the Acceleration Academies family—and thank you for partnering with us.

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SECTION I: HANDBOOK

About the GC Handbook

This handbook provides Graduation Candidates (GCs), parents/guardians, and Accountability Partners with essential information about our academic programs and the requirements for earning a South Carolina high school diploma. Please refer to it often to support weekly coursework, monitor progress, and plan for graduation. For questions, call 872-529-5115 or visit www.accelerationacademies.org.

History of the Program

Acceleration Academies is a **tuition-free public charter school of choice**, open to eligible South Carolina residents who commit to meeting all attendance and academic progress requirements. Our academies are located in North Charleston (Lowcountry) and Myrtle Beach (Carolina Shores). The South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board provides governance and oversight, supporting a mission to re-engage GCs, help them earn their diplomas, and connect them with meaningful post-secondary opportunities. Acceleration Academies programs are accredited by Cognia.

Vision Statement

Acceleration Academies empowers Graduation Candidates to graduate from high school and achieve their life and career goals.

Mission Statement

Acceleration Academies provides Graduation Candidates with a comprehensive high school education and wraparound support services that lead to a high school diploma and transition to college, career, or military service after graduation.

Core Values

At Acceleration Academies, our core values are the guiding force behind our success. Our entire learning community embraces these values, contributing to the success of GCs who graduate and are prepared for college and the workforce. Those core values are:

Mutual Trust | Mutual Respect | Compassion | Integrity

Description of the Program

Acceleration Academies is an academic re-engagement program specifically tailored for Graduation Candidates that have not experienced individual success in a traditional high school setting. Acceleration Academies blended learning model combines individualized learning plans with social and emotional development. Graduation Candidates are enrolled in courses leading toward a high school diploma. Enrollment in the program is voluntary.

Acceleration Academies is a free public school dedicated to providing quality educational services to Graduation Candidates and families. Our unique school design is different from traditional school settings in the following ways:

Traditional School	Acceleration Academies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 35 - 40 hours per week at school ● 5-10 hours of homework each week ● Strict daily schedule ● stand and deliver instructions ● Traditional Punitive Discipline System ● Reactive Support Systems ● Assumed knowledge ● 10 intense months ● Students take 4-6 courses at once ● Grades are based on knowledge and Behavior ● 60% mastery needed to earn a credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 12 hours per week at school ● 12 hours of at home work ● Flexible schedule that meets your needs ● Blended learning instruction ● Conscious discipline that focuses on growth ● Proactive Support Systems ● In-depth orientation process ● Year-round school at your pace ● GCs take 1 course at a time ● Grades are Proficiency-Based ● 70% mastery ● Options for acceleration make graduation early possible ● Accelerated track for all GCs to excel ● Supportive staff who advocate and educate with respect and dignity ● Certified content coaches (teachers) who are available during flexible hours for instruction and tutoring as needed

From your first day on campus at LAA, you'll notice that our school is different from most traditional schools. Our team of staff is here to support you throughout your high school experience—and just like their roles, their titles are different too.

Acceleration Academies Titles

Graduation Candidate (GC)
Content Coach
Graduation Candidate Advocate (GCA)
Life Coach
Career Coach
Registrar
Assistant Director
Director

Traditional Schools Titles

Student
Teacher
Advisor/Mentor
Counselor
College Counselor
Registrar
Assistant Principal
Principal

Expected GC Outcomes

At Acceleration Academies, GCs are capable, goal-driven learners who thrive with clear expectations, coaching, and choice. To be prepared for college, career, and life, GCs will demonstrate being:

Responsible, Independent Achievers

- **Earn a diploma (24 credits); complete required state assessments — EOCs (Algebra I, Biology I, English 2, U.S. History), WIN Career Readiness (juniors), ACCESS (MLs), and ASVAB/ACT/SAT/PreACT/PSAT as applicable; and maintain \geq 2.0 GPA.**
- **Own their schedule:** 24 hours of coursework each week (**12 hrs onsite + up to 12 hrs remote** in Edmentum) with steady pacing toward completion.
- **Plan & reflect:** set weekly targets, track progress in **myIncite**, and use supports (CC/GCA/CrC).

Good Citizens

- Contribute positively to the Academy community; follow school policies and the law; respect the learning environment and each other.

Effective Communicators

- Use technology professionally, ask for help, collaborate with staff, and clearly express ideas in coursework, discussions, and assessments.

Measuring GC Progress

Progress is based on the **pace and quality of work** toward course goals. The Academy monitors and supports progress using:

- **Weekly targets & reviews** (GC + CC/GCA/CLC), **onsite attendance**, and **time-on-task**
- **Percent completion & activity counts** in Edmentum (tutorials + mastery tests together = 1 activity; discussion posts; unit/course activities; post/end-of-semester tests)
- **Mastery expectations: ≥70%** on mastery/post/EOS tests; **all tests are proctored**.
- **myIncite Personalized Learning Plan {PLP}** (credits remaining, anticipated graduation date) and staff observations/coaching
- **Assessments: State-mandated EOCs** (Algebra I, Biology I, English 2, U.S. History); **WIN Career Readiness** (Juniors); **ACCESS** (MLs); **ASVAB/ACT/SAT/PreACT/PSAT** as applicable
- **Grades & completion rates** posted in PowerSchool and myIncite dashboards

Weekly progress email: The **GC and the Parent/Guardian and/or Accountability Partner** receive a weekly email summarizing the GC's **academic progress in their current course**, generated from the prior week's performance.

SECTION II: ACADEMICS & GRADUATION

Planning a Course of Study

A **Career Coach (CrC)** works with each GC to select courses aligned to interests, needs, aptitudes, and career/college goals. The program of study follows **South Carolina content standards** and Academy guidelines. Because learning is individualized, pacing and supports may differ by GC. The **Content Coach (CC)** ensures each GC's plan satisfies **graduation requirements, college entrance expectations, and basic skill competencies** where applicable.

Acceptance of External Credits

Acceleration Academies accepts **transfer credits** from **accredited** schools and posts them per the **South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (UGP)** upon receipt of an official transcript.

Course Assignments

Course placement uses multiple data points to maximize progress and support: **official transcripts, recent progress reports, End-of-Course (EOC) results, assessment scores, prior completion percentages,** and Academy diagnostics. Schedules may include different course types, interventions, or time requirements. Families are welcome to ask about **tutorials, time-on-task expectations, onsite requirements,** or other program details. School leadership is available weekly to clarify needs and expectations.

Graduation Planning Guide

GCs generally take **one course at a time** with the goal of completing **~1 course every 2–3 weeks**. **Credits post immediately** upon course completion (rather than at semester end). See **Course Pacing Expectations** for the **21-day schedule, course lock** at the end date, required **ASP meeting** if a course is not finished by Day 21, and possible **reset at Day 45.ample**

Traditional 9th-Grade (Semester-Long) Schedule

Semester 1 (August - January)	Semester 2 (January - May)
English 1	World Geography
Geometry with Statistics	Biology 1
Physical Education/ Health	Art
Entrepreneurship	Computer Science

Sample Acceleration Academies Tier 1 Schedule (One Course at a Time)

Time	Course	Credits Earned
Weeks 1-3 (3 Weeks)	English 1A	0.5
Weeks 4 - 6 (3 Weeks)	English 1B	0.5
Weeks 7 - 9 (3 Weeks)	Geometry with Stats 1A	0.5
Weeks 10 - 12 (3 Weeks)	Geometry with Stats 1B	0.5
Weeks 12 - 15 (3 Weeks)	Physical Education/ Health A	0.5
Weeks 16 - 18 (3 Weeks)	Physical Education/ Health B	0.5
Weeks 19 - 21 (3 Weeks)	Entrepreneurship A	0.5
Weeks 22 - 24 (3 Weeks)	Entrepreneurship B	0.5

Attendance & Coursework Time

How attendance works: Attendance is measured by **course activity time in Edmentum**. Each week, GCs complete **24 total hours: minimum 12 hours onsite** at the Academy and **up to 12 hours remote** in Edmentum.

Pacing & calendar

- Plan to complete a **full course in ~2–3 weeks (≈33% per week minimum)**.
- The Academy week runs **Sunday through Saturday at midnight**.
- **Login 3+ times per week** (first login on **Mandatory Monday**).

Tracking: Hours are recorded in **myIncite** (AA's SIS) and entered into **PowerSchool**.

Progress expectation: Target **~33% per week** (about **10 activities**), with typical completion of **one course every 2–4 weeks** depending on scope and pace. Attendance is measured by **course activity time in Edmentum**. Each week, GCs complete **24 total hours: minimum 12 hours onsite** at the Academy and **up to 12 hours remote** in Edmentum.

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Course Pacing Expectations

To stay on track, GCs follow a **21-day pacing cycle** for each course:

- **Week 1 (Days 1–7): ~33% complete**
Guideposts: Days 1–3 ≈ **14%**, Days 4–5 ≈ **24%**, Days 6–7 ≈ **33%**
- **Week 2 (Days 8–14): ~66% complete**
Guideposts: Days 8–10 ≈ **48%**, Days 11–12 ≈ **57%**, Days 13–14 ≈ **66%**
- **Week 3 (Days 15–21): ~100% complete**
Guideposts: Days 15–17 ≈ **81%**, Days 18–19 ≈ **90%**, Days 20–21 ≈ **100%**

Course scheduling & deadlines

- Courses are **scheduled for 21 days (3 weeks; holiday calendars** are considered in scheduling).
- Courses are **set to lock on the end date** of the course.
- **If a course is not completed by Day 21, the GC must meet with Academy staff (CC/GCA/CLC) and their accountability partner within 48 hours to develop and/or update the Academic Success Plan (ASP) with catch-up milestones** (e.g., added onsite time, tutoring, small-group sessions).
- **Day 45:** If the course is still not completed, **the course may be reset** per Academy policy.

Tips to stay on track

- Check **Edmentum** and **myIncite** dashboards **daily**.
- Respond to messages from your **GCA** and **Content Coach** within **24 hours**.
- Use a **calendar/checklist** to break down daily goals.
- Attend **weekly meetings**, tutoring, or small-group sessions.
- Ask questions early—**don't wait** if you're stuck.

(Reminder: Academy weeks run **Sunday–Saturday**; plan for **~33% progress per week**, with **3+ logins** and **12 hrs onsite + up to 12 hrs remote** in Edmentum.)

Attendance Support & Engagement Process

Week 1 – Missed attendance or low progress

Academy staff contacts the GC and accountability partner/parent to review hours/progress, identify barriers, and provide coaching/support (calls, check-ins, wellness/home visits as needed).

Week 2 – Continued gaps

An **Academic Success Plan (ASP)** meeting is held with the GC and accountability partner/parent. The **ASP** sets clear weekly goals for onsite hours, remote hours, and course progress.

Week 3 – Still off-track

The Academy complies with **South Carolina compulsory attendance (truancy) law** and files required documentation. Staff continue to support re-engagement and revise the ASP.

Note: A GC may be coded **TRUANT in PowerSchool after 3 consecutive absences**.

Grading

South Carolina Acceleration Academies follows the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) for reporting grades, calculating GPA, and posting transcripts. Credit for SCAA coursework is earned with $\geq 70\%$ mastery of required assessments and activities; transfer credits from accredited schools are posted from the sending school's official transcript under UGP. Final course grades and GPA— including UGP weighting for Honors (+0.5) and Dual Credit/AP/IB (+1.0)—are recorded in PowerSchool.

Grading Scale (SC UGP)

A: 90–100

B: 80–89

C: 70–79

D: 60–69

F: 0–59

GPA Weights: College Prep (standard), **Honors +0.5**, **Dual Credit/AP/IB +1.0**.

Expectations: Aim for C or higher; maintain consistent attendance and progress.

2025-2026 Graduation Requirements

South Carolina High School Graduation Requirements

Subject Area	Credits & Required Courses	EOC Exam Required?
English	4 Credits – English I, English II, English III, English IV	Yes (English II)
Mathematics	4 Credits – Geometry with Statistics, Algebra I, Algebra II with Probability, Pre-Calculus/Statistics/Calculus	Yes (Algebra I)
Science	3 Credits – Biology I, Biology II or other lab science	Yes (Biology I)
U.S. History & Constitution	1 Credit	Yes
U.S. Government	0.5 Credit	No
Economics	0.5 Credit	No
Other Social Studies	1 Credit	No
Physical Education or JROTC	1 Credit	No
Computer Science	1 Credit – including keyboarding	No
Personal Finance & Health	0.5 Credit Personal Finance; 0.5 Credit Health (if not integrated)	No
World Language or CTE	1 Credit – Spanish I/Other World Language or CTE Course	No
Electives	6.5 Credits – various electives	No

Dual Enrollment / College

Dual Enrollment Opportunities

SCAA partners with approved South Carolina postsecondary institutions to offer eligible Graduation Candidates (GCs) the opportunity to earn **both high school and college credit simultaneously**. Courses follow the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (UGP) for weighted GPA.

Eligibility: GCs must be in good academic standing, maintain consistent attendance, be on track toward graduation, and meet the partner institution’s admission and placement requirements. Academy approval is required to ensure each course aligns with the GC’s graduation plan.

Costs: Tuition is generally covered through Academy partnerships; however, GCs and families may be responsible for certain costs such as textbooks, course materials, or fees, depending on the partner institution’s policies.

Tier & Grade Level Classification (Aligned to SCDE)

All Graduation Candidates are expected to attend high school until all courses are completed and credits earned. Graduation Candidates are not tracked by traditional grade level, rather they are placed in Tiers based on the number of credits earned. If Graduation Candidates work at an accelerated pace and complete the necessary course credit requirements, they may graduate early.

Graduation Candidates are classified as follows:

Tier & Grade Level Classification (Aligned to SCDE)

Traditional HS Grade	AA Tier	Credits Earned	Minimum Course Completion (per SCDE)
Freshman	Tier 1	0–5	English 1 & Algebra 1/Geometry in progress or completed
Sophomore	Tier 2	5–11	English 1 & Algebra 1 completed
Junior	Tier 3	11–17	English 2 completed, ≥ 1 Science and ≥ 1 Social Studies credit
Senior	Tier 4	17–24	English 3 completed and on track to meet all SCDE graduation requirements

Source: *South Carolina Department of Education — High School Grade Classification Guidelines*

Note: Classification will be reviewed by the Career Coach upon each course completion by the GC.

GC Retention & Promotion Policy

Purpose. Acceleration Academies advances GCs by **credits earned** rather than traditional grade retention. GC classification is reviewed after each course completion and follows the Academy's **Tier & Grade Level Classification (Aligned to SCDE)**.

Promotion (Classification). GCs progress by earning high-school credits and meeting the minimum course completions listed in the **Tier & Grade Level Classification** table

(Freshman/Tier 1 through Senior/Tier 4). Classification is determined by credits earned and verified course completions.

When Progress Slows. Because we use a tiered, competency-based model, “retention” is uncommon. If a GC is not making adequate progress, the Academy implements supports (MTSS), updates the **Academic Success Plan (ASP)**, and adjusts schedule/services as needed to re-engage the GC before considering any change in placement.

MLL/EL Considerations. Retention decisions **must not be based solely on English proficiency**. Grades and retention for MLLs follow district policy and federal/state law; decisions consider language development data and access to appropriate supports.

IEP/504 Considerations. For GCs with disabilities, decisions follow **FAPE/LRE** requirements under federal and South Carolina law, with services and access ensured through the GC's IEP or 504 Plan.

SECTION III: GC SUPPORTS, HEALTH & GENERAL INFORMATION

Transfers/Withdrawals

Transfers into Acceleration Academies are accepted year-round. A Graduation Candidate (GC) cannot be enrolled at Acceleration Academies until they have been officially withdrawn from their previous school.

Transfers out of Acceleration Academies are also addressed year-round. Unless a family provides proof of relocation, school administration conducts an informal exit interview to understand the reason for transfer and explore supports that could help keep the GC enrolled. Before a transfer is approved, the Academy will make a courtesy call to the new school to confirm enrollment; a GC cannot be granted a transfer without confirmation of acceptance/enrollment at the new school.

In cases where a GC leaves without clear communication, the Academy will apply its withdrawal procedures. GCs must provide proof that they are attending or enrolled in another school—unless the matter must be addressed through truancy. If a GC is under the age of 17 and not attending school, the Academy will follow South Carolina’s compulsory attendance and truancy laws.

In situations involving unique challenges—such as personal, behavioral, or health-related concerns—the Academy will, as appropriate, work with the GC and their family to identify potential next steps or resources to support continued access to education.

Age of Enrollment

Acceleration Academies enrolls GCs **eligible for grades 9–12** who are **under 21 years of age**.

Withdrawal Credits (Courtesy)

When a GC enrolls mid-semester, the Academy may consider **courtesy withdrawal credit** for in-progress coursework based on **official records** (e.g., withdrawal date and grade). The Content Coach verifies documentation and submits the request to the School Director for review. To be considered, the GC must:

- Have been earning **≥ 70%** in the course at the time of withdrawal; and
- Be enrolling in the **same or equivalent course** offered by the Academy.

Courtesy withdrawal credits are **case-by-case** and may be denied when documentation is incomplete, course equivalency is unclear, or mastery evidence is insufficient. Approved credits allow the GC to **resume at the same point** in the course with us.

Communicable Diseases & Immunizations (SC DPH/DHEC & SCDE)

Communicable Diseases

No GC will be denied an education solely because of a communicable disease. A GC's educational program will be limited **only as needed** to reduce the risk of transmission and to protect the health of the GC and others. Parents/guardians should inform the Academy if a GC has a communicable disease so that **appropriate precautions** can be taken. When a condition is on the **South Carolina School & Childcare Exclusion List**, the GC may be **temporarily excluded** from the regular setting and assigned to an alternative setting until they meet **return criteria** (e.g., completion of the required exclusion period or written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider or public health authority). The Academy follows the **DHEC School & Childcare Exclusion List** each year for disease-specific exclusion and readmission guidance. [SCDPH+1](#)

Required Immunizations for School Attendance

South Carolina law and DPH/DHEC regulations require that every GC **have one of the following on file to attend school**:

- A **valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization (DPH/DHEC Form 4024)**; or
- A **medical exemption** signed by a licensed physician on the DPH/DHEC certificate; or
- A **religious exemption certificate** issued by DHEC; or
- A **Special Exemption (30-day provisional)** issued **once per enrollment** while records are obtained or immunizations are completed (expires after 30 calendar days).

[SCDPH+2](#)
[SCDPH+2](#)

What Families Need to Know

- The **DPH/DHEC Form 4024** is the **only** immunization record accepted for school attendance in South Carolina (printed from the DPH portal; no handwritten edits). Schools must **maintain immunization records** as part of enrollment compliance. [SCDPH](#)
[South Carolina Legislature Online](#)
- If a GC **lacks a valid certificate or exemption**, the Academy will provide guidance to obtain the correct documentation. A 30-day **Special Exemption** may be used **once** while records are transferred or vaccines are completed; if documentation is not received by the end of the 30 days, state law requires **exclusion** until compliance. [SCDPH](#)
- During certain disease **outbreaks**, unimmunized GCs (including those with exemptions) may be **temporarily excluded** per public health direction to protect student health. [SCDPH](#)

When Illness Is Suspected

If the Academy has reason to believe a GC has a communicable disease that may endanger health in the regular setting, the Academy may: (1) assign the GC to an alternative setting to protect the GC and others; and/or (2) **exclude** the GC until written certification from a licensed physician or local public health authority indicates the condition is **no longer communicable** and the GC meets **DHEC readmission criteria**. Periodic re-examination may be requested after readmission if recommended by a healthcare provider or required by public health guidance.

[SCDPH](#) Questions or help with immunization documentation? Contact the Academy and your healthcare provider or local DPH/DHEC health department. Schools follow SCDE and DPH/DHEC requirements for student immunization compliance and reporting.

Special Populations — Access & Supports

Acceleration Academies provides **supports and services** so every GC can access and participate in Academy programs in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** and receive a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** consistent with federal and South Carolina law. Depending on individual need, assistance may include **Section 504 accommodations**; **Special Education (IDEA) services** delivered through an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** (available through the end of the school year in which the GC turns 21); **Multilingual Learner (ML/MLL) services** through our **Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP)** aligned to SCDE/WIDA; and **McKinney-Vento** supports for GCs experiencing homelessness (e.g., immediate enrollment, school of origin, transportation as eligible). **Records are confidential**, plans are reviewed regularly, and **families are partners** in all decisions. For assistance, contact the Academy Director or the appropriate coordinator (Special Education, 504, ML/MLL, or McKinney-Vento Liaison).

Section 504 — Access & Accommodations

Acceleration Academies ensures that every GC who qualifies under **Section 504** receives **FAPE in the LRE**—meaning supports are provided so the GC can learn alongside peers as much as possible. When a disability substantially limits a major life activity (such as learning, concentrating, or reading), a **multidisciplinary team** reviews information and, if eligible, creates a **Section 504 Plan** listing the classroom accommodations and services needed to access learning.

- **What families can expect:** We provide accommodations in all relevant classes and activities, keep records confidential (maintained in our secure student systems **EdPlan** and **PowerSchool**), and review the 504 Plan **every year** (with a more complete **reevaluation at least every three years**, or sooner if needed).

- **If your GC transfers in with a 504 Plan:** We begin **comparable accommodations right away** while we request and review records, then confirm or update the plan with you.
 - **Questions or updates:** Contact the Academy Director or 504 Coordinator if your GC's needs change, if you have concerns, or if you need information in your home language.
-

Special Education (IDEA) — Services & Supports

Acceleration Academies provides **special education and related services** so that GCs with disabilities receive **FAPE in the LRE**. If a GC is suspected of having a disability, the Academy conducts an evaluation with a **multidisciplinary team**. When a GC is eligible under IDEA, we work with families to develop an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** that includes **specially designed instruction**, accommodations, and related services based on the GC's unique needs.

- **What families can expect:** IEP meetings include parents/guardians, are held at least **annually**, and progress is shared regularly. Records are confidential and maintained in **EdPlan** and **PowerSchool**.
 - **If your GC transfers in with an IEP:** We start **comparable services immediately** so there is no gap in support. Within a short time, we review the IEP with you and the team to **adopt, amend, or develop** a plan that fits our Academy's setting and your GC's goals (typically within **30 calendar days**).
 - **Discipline & safeguards:** If discipline is being considered, the Academy follows IDEA procedures and involves the IEP team, ensuring your GC's rights and supports are considered.
 - **Questions or updates:** Contact the Academy Director or Special Education Coordinator for help, to request a meeting, or to receive documents in your home language.
-

Multilingual Learners (MLs/MLLs)

GCs whose current English proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, or writing limits full access to the curriculum receive supports through our **Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP)**. The Academy identifies MLs using the SCDE Home Language Survey and, when indicated, a **WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) screener** within required timelines; parents/guardians are notified in a language they understand. Each eligible GC has an **Individualized Language Acquisition Plan (ILAP)** with classroom accommodations and services to build English proficiency and content achievement. ML records are confidential (FERPA), MLs have **equal access** to all programs, are coded

accurately in PowerSchool, and are monitored for progress and reclassification per state and federal guidance (including annual **WIDA ACCESS for ELLs**, as applicable).

Homelessness (McKinney-Vento)

The McKinney-Vento program ensures that **GCs experiencing homelessness** have **equal access** to the same free, appropriate public education as other GCs—without barriers to **enrollment, attendance, or success**. A GC is considered homeless if they **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence** (including “doubled-up,” motels/hotels, shelters, public places not meant for sleeping, cars/parks/transport hubs, substandard housing, or similar settings), and includes **migratory** and **unaccompanied** youth in these situations.

- **Educational rights & services: Immediate enrollment** (even without typical records), the right to **remain in the school of origin** when in the GC’s best interest, **transportation** upon request, access to **comparable services** (e.g., Title I, special education/504, ML/MLL, nutrition), removal of barriers to academic/extracurricular opportunities, **dispute resolution** with the GC attending the requested school during the dispute, and support from a **McKinney-Vento Local Liaison** who connects families to community resources.
- **How to get help:** Contact the Academy Director or the McKinney-Vento Liaison for assistance with enrollment, transportation, and services. Support is **immediate** and **at no cost** to families.

Seizure Safe Schools Act Policy

(Adoption in Process by the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board — August 2025; Effective July 1, 2025)

Purpose & Scope

South Carolina Acceleration Academies (SCAA) implements the **Seizure Safe Schools Act** to ensure safe, timely, and appropriate responses to seizures and to support GCs with epilepsy or seizure disorders. This policy applies to all Academy sites, Academy-sponsored activities, and transportation. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Staff Training

Each Academy will maintain a **seizure training program** that teaches staff to:

- Understand epilepsy and its impact on learning;
- Recognize common seizure signs and symptoms;
- Respond safely and appropriately to a seizure; and
- Administer seizure medications when authorized.

Training will **follow guidelines from a qualified nonprofit** that supports individuals with epilepsy; completion is documented by the Academy. Training may be delivered virtually, by school/district staff, or by a qualified trainer. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Student Health Plans

For GCs with seizure disorders, the Academy will use the following plans, as applicable:

- **Individual Health Care Plan (IHP):** outlines day-to-day health needs and routine care at school.
- **Emergency Action Plan (EAP):** directions for responding to seizure-related emergencies.
- **Seizure Action Plan (SAP):** a written, **healthcare-provider–signed** plan that supplements the IHP with individualized emergency steps and medications. Plans are shared with staff who have a legitimate need to know and are reviewed at least annually or when the GC’s needs change. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Medication, Monitoring Devices, and Self-Carry

- Prescription seizure medications and monitoring devices must be supplied in **properly labeled containers** per the prescriber/pharmacy.
- With the required parent/guardian authorization and provider verification of competency, a GC may **self-monitor and/or self-administer** medication during the school day, at school-sponsored activities, and in transit, unless doing so would jeopardize safety.
- Permission for self-carry/self-administration is **effective for one school year** and must be renewed annually; it may be revoked if safety is compromised.
- Parents/guardians sign the required acknowledgments regarding liability and indemnification as set out in state law. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Provide the Academy with: (1) written authorization for medication administration (including whether school personnel may administer), and (2) a **provider statement** confirming the diagnosis and required medication(s); if self-carry is requested, the provider must verify the GC’s competency.
- Supply current medications/devices and updated IHP/EAP/SAP information as changes occur. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

School Responsibilities

- Identify and train appropriate staff; maintain **documentation of training**; and ensure ready access to the GC's IHP/EAP/SAP for staff with a legitimate educational interest.
- Ensure medications/devices are stored and accessible according to plan(s) and law; support self-carry when authorized; and follow the **school exclusion/return** guidance if directed by health authorities during illness or emergencies. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Records & Confidentiality

All seizure-related records (IHP/EAP/SAP, authorizations, training logs) are maintained in secure student systems and shared only with staff who need the information to keep the GC safe and supported, consistent with FERPA and state law. [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)

Legal References

- **S.C. Code §59-10-215 — Seizure training program; effective July 1, 2025.** [Justia Law](#)
 - **S.C. Code §59-63-80 — Individual health care plans; emergency/seizure action plans; medication provisions; self-carry.** [South Carolina Legislature Online](#)
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Parent & Community Grievance Procedures

If a parent, guardian, or community member has a concern about Acceleration Academies, please use the steps below to seek a timely, satisfactory resolution:

1. **Contact the Academy Director.**
2. **Contact the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board** via the Acceleration Academies, LLC Network Office: **872-529-5115** or **info@accelerationacademy.org**.
3. **Contact the South Carolina Public Charter School District (SCPCSD).** If you believe the school has violated law, SCPCSD policy, the charter contract, or safety responsibilities **and** attempts to resolve the concern with the Academy Director and the AA Network Office have not been successful, you may appeal to the SCPCSD for assistance.

The Academy encourages good-faith communication and will work with families to resolve concerns as quickly as possible.

Disclosure of Information

Acceleration Academies does **not** release GC information to the public unless legally required. **Military Recruiters:** Schools must provide names, addresses, and telephone numbers of GCs to military recruiters upon request **unless** a parent/guardian or an 18-year-old GC **opts out**. To opt out, request and submit the **Selective Service Disclosure Opt-Out Form** from your Content Coach.

GC Surveys

The Academy may administer annual school-wide surveys to GCs and families to gather feedback on programs and services. For any survey conducted by an outside agency or for research purposes, parents/guardians may **inspect related instructional materials** used as part of a federal program before the survey is administered.

Calendar & Holidays

Acceleration Academies operates on a **year-round** calendar and observes **major federal holidays**. The current academic calendar is published on the school website at the start of each academic year.

Emergency or Weather Shutdown

If severe weather or another emergency requires closure, the Academy will notify families via local media and the **Acceleration Academies Communications Center** (automated calls/messages). Acceleration Academies follows the **local school district's inclement weather schedule** when applicable. Check the Academy website and official messages for the most current information.

SECTION IV: GC BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS, SAFETY & TECHNOLOGY

Internet & Technology Use (Acceptable Use Policy)

Purpose & Ethics

Acceleration Academies provides network and device access to support research, communication, and collaboration that advance learning. GCs and staff must use technology lawfully, safely, and ethically in line with Academy objectives and policies.

Acceptable Use

- Internet and network access must support education, research, and school operations.
- Transmission or access to content that violates law or regulation (e.g., threatening, obscene, copyrighted without permission, trade secrets) is prohibited.
- Commercial activity, advertising, or political lobbying is not permitted on the Academy network.
- Materials on the Acceleration Academies network may be copyrighted and are protected by law. Copying, scraping/automated browsing, downloading, redistributing, publishing, or commercial exploitation of network content is prohibited without prior written permission from Acceleration Academies unless permitted by law.

Controversial Material

The network uses filtering to restrict inappropriate content while providing access to legitimate resources. Despite safeguards, GCs may encounter controversial or offensive material. GCs must not initiate access to such content. Acceleration Academies is not liable for intentional or inadvertent exposure; the Academy reserves the right to regulate content available through its network.

Monitoring & Privacy

The Academy may review GC devices used on campus and monitor network/file-server usage to determine appropriate use while respecting GC privacy consistent with law and policy.

Network Etiquette

- Be polite; use appropriate language.
- Protect privacy—do not share personal contact information for yourself, other GCs, or staff.

- Be considerate (e.g., manage device volume, use headphones when appropriate).
- Assume all communications and information accessible via the network are private property unless clearly indicated otherwise.

Security

- Never share passwords; protect your credentials.
- Report suspected security issues to a system administrator immediately.
- Attempts to access accounts or systems as an administrator, or to circumvent controls, may result in revoked privileges and discipline.
- GCs identified as security risks may be denied onsite internet access.

System Misuse

- Vandalism (malicious damage/alteration of data, devices, network, or connected systems; creating/uploading malware) and harassment (persistent annoyance, interference, or unwanted communications) are prohibited.
- Examples include removing/changing another GC's account or password, using an unauthorized account, damaging files, altering system settings, or using systems to make money illegally.
- Violations may result in discipline, loss of access, and, where applicable, law enforcement referral and civil/criminal penalties.

Privilege & Penalties

Network access is a privilege, not a right, and may be denied, revoked, suspended, or closed for violations of this policy. Improper use can result in loss of network privileges and other school discipline. Unauthorized access/attempted access or use of computing/network systems may violate South Carolina and federal law.

Technology Rules Contract / GC-Parent Technology Agreement

Laptop/Chromebook Responsibilities

- GCs are responsible for the care of devices assigned to them (no drops, liquid damage, broken hinges/keys, etc.).
- Clean with a soft, dry cloth only.
- Insert/remove cords/cables carefully.
- Provide headphones when using devices at school.

Technology Guidelines

- Rules apply before, during, and after school hours. “Technology/equipment” includes devices, batteries, power cords/chargers, headphones, and cases.
 - Do not deface devices or accessories (marking, stickers, marring cases). Damage is treated as vandalism/property damage.
 - Families are responsible for repair/replacement costs for damage/loss due to misuse/neglect, as determined by administration (quotes provided).
 - All electronic communication must follow Academy ethical policies. If you damage another GC’s technology, you may be responsible for costs. Failure to pay may result in loss of privileges as determined by the Director.
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Acceleration Academies Code of Conduct

Acceleration Academies expects GCs to act responsibly and uphold a safe, orderly, and inclusive environment. The Code applies during school hours, before/after school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and when off-campus conduct impacts school safety or operations. All staff share responsibility for ensuring understanding and enforcing expectations. Authority to suspend is prescribed by South Carolina law.

Our Compassionate Schools Framework & Restorative Practices

We lead with relationships, restorative dialogue, and skill-building. Approaches include Community Circles, Restorative Conferences, and proactive language to repair harm and rebuild trust—especially for Level I and some Level II behaviors.

Infraction Levels & Intervention Response

Level I (classroom/operations disruptions; minor or frequent low-level issues)

Examples: academic dishonesty (see Academic Honesty), disruptions, unauthorized departure, abusive language among GCs, failure to comply with staff directives, lying, disruptive device use.

Responses:

- 1:1 conversation with staff (GCA/CC/CLC/Director)
- Restorative Conference (include affected parties where applicable)
Recommitment Conference with parent/guardian; updated GC Commitment Form
- Daily check-in plan with staff; MTSS referral and supports
- Document in Atlas; tag appropriate staff

Level II (conduct against persons/property; health/safety concerns; repeated Level I)

Examples: repeated Level I with plan in place, intoxicants, profanity directed at staff/authorized volunteers, fighting, minor vandalism, theft, threats, repeated refusal to comply, sexual harassment, illegal/unauthorized substances (incl. alcohol, controlled substances), unlawful assembly/disruption, inappropriate tech use.

Responses (may combine with restorative practices):

- MTSS referral; verbal/written reprimand; privilege withdrawal
- Daily check-in plan; out-of-school suspension as appropriate
- Staff/GC/parent conference; restitution where applicable
- Law enforcement referral where required
- Repeated Level II may result in recommendation for expulsion
- Document in Atlas (and GC Information System for more severe events)

Level III (serious/violent conduct; immediate safety threats)

Examples: aggravated assault/battery, extortion, bomb/destructive device threats, dangerous weapons possession/use/transfer, furnishing/selling/possessing unauthorized substances as defined by law, sexual offenses, theft/possession/sale of stolen property, vandalism ≥ \$50, threats to life or bodily harm, arson, other acts designated by Academy authorities.

Responses:

- MTSS referral (as appropriate); out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion recommendation where warranted
- Restitution; law enforcement referral
- Document in Atlas and GC Information System

Coding Disciplinary Infractions

Level I uses restorative practices and Atlas documentation. For Levels II–III, restorative approaches are attempted as appropriate and incidents are also recorded in the GC Information System. If the GC is under 18, parent/guardian notification is required.

Academic Honesty

The Academy expects integrity in all academic work. Prohibited: copying or allowing copying; unauthorized materials/technology; plagiarism (including internet sources); counterfeit work; theft/alteration of grades, records, or teaching materials.

Consequences may include:

- Removal from the course(s) involved (may result in course failure),
- Academic Conference (CC/Director/GC/parent or guardian),
- Repeated violations may result in suspension.

Suspension Policy & Appeal

Suspension temporarily excludes a GC from school property/activities for up to 10 school days per offense. GCs should continue schoolwork from home and may make up work per state law and school policy. Upon return, a behavior contract may be required.

Process: investigation/documentation; GC conference; verbal and written notice to GC and parent/guardian (offense, length, and conference option within 3 days).

Appeal: Parents/guardians (or adult GCs) may appeal to an authorized agent of the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board following the school-level conference.

Expulsion Policy, Hearing, and Appeal

Expulsion removes a GC for the remainder of the school year or specified period until readmission by the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board. Grounds include crimes, gross immorality/misbehavior, persistent disobedience, or violations of rules that make presence detrimental to the school's best interest.

Process: investigation; written recommendation (conduct, identifiers, mitigating factors); parent/guardian notification; hearing within 15 school days if possible (probationary off-site services may be offered if a hearing cannot be scheduled within 15 days). The GC may be represented by lay or legal counsel (notify the Academy 3 days in advance); the Academy does not cover GC legal costs.

Hearing: Formal proceeding before an impartial Board-designated Hearing Officer; witnesses sworn; burden on administrator/designee; GC may present evidence and question witnesses. Decision within 10 school days. At the next Board meeting, the Hearing Officer's decision is presented for Board action (ratify/overturn).

Appeal: Parents/guardians (or adult GC) may appeal to the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board within 10 days of the decision; the Board renders a final decision within 10 school days after the appeal presentation. Parties aggrieved by the Board's order may seek relief in Circuit Court.

Disciplinary Procedures for GCs with IEPs/504 Plans

GCs with IEPs or 504 Plans are subject to the same discipline as nondisabled peers unless behavior is a manifestation of disability. A manifestation determination is required if the GC is subject to more than 10 consecutive school days of out-of-school suspension or a pattern constituting a change of placement.

Cell Phone & Personal Electronic Device Policy

(Mandated by the South Carolina Department of Education; Approved by the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board – December 19, 2024)

South Carolina law requires us to prohibit device use inside the Academy unless a school leader authorizes it for a standards-aligned educational purpose.

What counts as a device/accessory

- Devices: phones, smart watches, tablets, gaming devices.
- Accessories: headphones/earbuds, chargers, wearable tech.
Access: holding/viewing/wearing/using a device for calls, texts, photos/videos, internet, games, etc.
- Authorized Use: written approval from the Academy Director/designee; may be revoked if disruptive or misaligned.

Rule inside the Academy

- Turn in devices at the front desk upon arrival or leave at home.
- Devices remain powered off and stored by staff unless authorized in writing for educational or medical purposes.
- Earbuds/headphones removed indoors.

Exceptions

- Authorized educational use;
- Required by a GC's IEP/504/Medical Plan;
- Volunteer firefighting/emergency org member with written permission.

If the rule is broken

- 1st Offense: Held until end of scheduled onsite session.
- 2nd Offense: Held until Academy closes that day.
- 3rd Offense:
 - Under 18: Parent/guardian meeting required.
 - 18 or older: Device possession contract required.

⚠ Refusing to surrender a device is a Code of Conduct violation and may result in exclusion from graduation ceremonies or other sanctions allowed by law.

Emergency contact:

Lowcountry Acceleration Academy: 843-804-6778

Carolina Shores Acceleration Academy: 843-867-3575

Note: The Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices whether held by GCs or staff due to a violation.

Vaping & Tobacco-Free Policy

(In Compliance with South Carolina State Law and Academy Code of Conduct)

Vaping, smoking, or using any tobacco products—including e-cigarettes, vape pens, JUULs, hookahs, or similar devices—is prohibited on Academy property, during school events, or while participating in school activities.

Why this matters

- Nicotine is highly addictive and harmful to teen brain development.
- E-cigs can contain heavy metals, carcinogens, and lung irritants.
- Risks include breathing problems, chronic cough, reduced performance, and long-term lung damage.
- Vaping can be a gateway to cigarette smoking and other substance use.

Consequences

- First Offense: Confiscation; parent/guardian notification; educational meeting; quit resources provided.
- Second Offense: Confiscation; parent/guardian meeting; one-day ISS or alternative discipline.
- Third Offense: Confiscation; out-of-school suspension; behavioral contract prior to return.
△ Refusing to surrender a vape device is a Code of Conduct violation and may lead to additional discipline, including exclusion from activities.

Support to quit

- This is Quitting (Truth Initiative): Text DITCHVAPE to 88709
 - SC Tobacco Quitline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
 - teen.smokefree.gov, truthinitiative.org, cdc.gov/tobacco
 - Onsite: Talk with your Academy Counselor or Director for confidential support.
-

Gun-Free Schools Act Policy

(In Compliance with Federal and State Law)

Possession, use, or transfer of any firearm on Academy grounds or at Academy-sponsored events is strictly prohibited.

Firearm definition includes

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or can readily be converted to expel a projectile by explosive action;
- Any explosive/incendiary/poison gas device (e.g., bomb, grenade).

Consequences

- Recommendation for one-calendar-year expulsion for any GC found to have possessed, used, or transferred a firearm on Academy property or at Academy-sponsored activities.
- The South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board, upon the Academy Director's recommendation, may modify the one-year recommendation on a case-by-case basis.

Commitment to safety

The Academy works with local law enforcement to maintain a safe environment. Report concerns immediately to the Academy Director or a trusted staff member.

Gavin's Law – Threats of Mass Violence Policy

(In Compliance with South Carolina State Law)

The Academy prohibits any written, verbal, or electronic threat to commit an act of mass violence on Academy property or at Academy-sponsored events. "Mass violence" means an act intended to cause serious bodily harm to three or more people. All threats—even jokes—are taken seriously.

Consequences

- Immediate removal pending investigation;
- Referral to law enforcement (felony offenses under state law);
- School discipline determined by the South Carolina Acceleration Academies Board on the Academy Director's recommendation (may include suspension, expulsion, or other lawful sanctions). **Report concerns** to the Academy Director, a trusted staff member, or law enforcement immediately.