

Grand Mesa Choice Academy

Parent/Student Handbook
2018-2019 School Year

“We Rise Above”

*Located at 1765 Hwy 50, Delta
970-874-6505*

(A shared campus with The Technical College of the Rockies)

Welcome to Grand Mesa Choice Academy!

Jay Ritter - Principal
Amelia Baldwin – Dean of Students
Kelli Scheid - Counselor
Lora Crick – Registrar/Secretary
Cody Kanz- Teacher
Cole Baldwin - Teacher
Jennifer Milburn – Teacher
Alex Shockley – Teacher

Mission

The Grand Mesa Choice Academy mission is to provide diverse educational experiences that focus on every single student’s academic, social, and career needs so that they may become confident members of our society.

Vision

Through diverse educational experiences Grand Mesa Choice Academy will develop a community of students who cultivate enthusiasm for lifelong learning, grow confidence in their abilities, nurture great emotional courage, and acquire aspirations to pursue post-high school opportunities.

Message From the Staff...

This success guidebook is to help students and parents understand what is expected of students who attend GMCA. Relationships between staff, students, and parents are truly the foundation for all that we do in our school. When you become a student at GMCA, you become one of the GMCA family. Remember, your past is not your future. Your future starts today and you get to decide the direction your future will take. Welcome to our family.

Becoming a GMCA Student

- Student must apply for attendance at GMCA. (Application packet and Entrance Guidelines Appendix A)
- Parents/Guardians must attend orientation.
- Students and parents/guardian must attend an application intake interview.
*This includes expelled students.
- Students must pass the Discovery program in order to become a GMCA student.
*This does not included expelled students.
- Complete the AEC growth assessment (after Discovery Graduation).

A waiting list will be maintained. Students will be admitted according to the following criteria and the number of slots available:

1. Referral from the School Superintendent
2. Referral from a traditional high school in Delta County
3. A significant life circumstance, which illustrates the need for alternative education
4. Age
5. Graduation Progress (Students who are closest to graduation will be given priority.)
6. Currently employed or in a volunteer setting 10 or more hours a week.

Course Explanation

Discovery—a curriculum based social-emotional program designed to help students develop a strong sense of community and a support system.

Project Assessment Courses (PAC)-- a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge.

Core Curriculum--the set of common courses required of all high school students and considered the necessary general education for students.

Class of 2018 Graduation Date

Graduation is scheduled for May 16, 2018 at 5:30pm.

Code of Conduct and Expectations For Behavior

*“Keep your thoughts positive, because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive, because your words become your behavior.
Keep your behavior positive, because your behavior becomes who you are.”*

Classroom Attendance Policy

The goal of GMCA is to help you gain a high school diploma as well as to prepare you for the world of work. Your future work successes will depend upon skills, knowledge, work ethic, and attitude toward the business in which you work.

Due to the nature of our courses being designed so that students may recover credits at a quicker pace, attendance is extremely important. Missing valuable class time puts a student behind in instruction and knowledge.

General Attendance

A maximum of 3 absences (excused or unexcused) are allowed in one class period per block. On the second absence, the student will be put on an attendance contract. Upon the third absence, the student will be dropped from the regular block schedule and enrolled in what is called “0 Hour”, which is attendance in our SOAR (Student Outreach and Recovery) classroom. The SOAR classroom is a space designed for students to independently work on their academics. They will be in the same classroom with one learning advisor for their entire school day.

In SOAR a student is allowed only one absence. If this one absence occurs, then the student will be enrolled in “11th Hour”. (If a student enrolls in SOAR at the beginning of the block, a maximum of 3 absences are allowed.)

“11th Hour” is a work-from-home curriculum program that the student will complete for the remainder of the Block. Students will need to attend a minimum weekly 45-minute session.

If a student does not successfully complete 2 consecutive Blocks, then the student will be placed on Falcon Watch. When on Falcon Watch, the student will be receiving more personal check-ins and devotion from teaching staff, our counselor and administrators. This is due to the concern of the lack of Block completion and in effort to assist the student in finding academic and attendance success. The student’s family will receive notification that the student has been placed on Falcon Watch. A student meeting with either Mr. Ritter or Mrs. Baldwin is required to occur before or within the first week of the termed “3rd” Block. The student will also get to attend a Student Success Meeting with our counselor, Mrs. Scheid.

Tardy

Students may only enter class late with a pass from the front desk. Entry into class at any time after 4 minutes will be marked as an absence. The only exception to being more than 4 minutes late is a staff excused absence, which can only be approved by Mr. Ritter, Mrs. Baldwin or Mrs. Scheid. Three tardies equals one absence.

Dress Code

---Raise your hands, touch your toes...if anything shows, go change your clothes.---

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school. Extremes in dress and personal appearance that cause distraction or pose health problems will not be allowed at school. Any clothing designed to call undue attention to the wearer is not appropriate at school.

Students dressed inappropriately will be provided with a shirt, belt, etc. for that day. Final discretion of appropriate dress is up to the school administration.

Internet, Cell Phones and Music

Internet, cell phones and music are all positive technological resources when used appropriately and respectfully. The classroom teacher will set general rules and expectations. Technology breaks will be offered at the discretion of the teacher. We have a firm "One & Done" policy set in place. A teacher may ask the student one time to put away a cell phone, turn off/down the music, leave a webpage; if the student does not comply after one request, the cell phone, etc. will be turned over to administration for the rest of the day.

Visitors

Students are not allowed to bring visitors to the school. To respect parents/guardians time, we advise scheduling an appointment before arriving on campus.

Breakfast and Lunch

Lunch will be served at Grand Mesa Choice Academy. Occasionally breakfast will be donated from outside vendors; students will be notified when breakfast will be available at school. Lunch orders will be taken every morning at 8:00am. No lunch orders will be able to be made after 8:15am. Parents/Guardians may fill out the free/reduced lunch form, which is available in the application packet.

Young Parent Program (YPP)

GMCA offers a Young Parent Program to teens who are expecting or with children. The student and the school counselor will design their individual program. may bring their children on campus. We have a crib, play area and toys available for the children while the young parents are working on their school work.

Grades and Credits

“Exams and grades are temporary, but education is permanent.”

All GMCA students are expected to earn a minimum of 3.0 credits each semester. Students who do not meet this expectation will be placed on an academic intervention plan created to get them back on track.

Each student is responsible for documenting all outside school credit such as Work Study, Community Leadership, online learning and other activities for credit through the use of a calendar and appropriate school forms. It is the student’s responsibility to keep accurate records and copies of all forms in their school notebook. Students will update these records with their 1st Hour Discovery teacher.

Work Study

90 hours = 0.5 credit

Students must have a signed work study contract. This can be picked up from Mrs. Scheid. In order to receive credit, students will have to have a monthly work evaluation filled out by their employer. Rating must be at an 80% or better to earn credit for that month. Upon completion of a work study evaluation, summer work hours may be documented for credit.

If a student loses a job for whatever reason, the student must make an appointment with the counselor, and the student will be allowed two additional weeks to find another job or volunteer work. If a student continues without work or volunteer work for more than two weeks, the student will need to add additional coursework to their schedule in order to remain a student at GMCA and attend the after-school program. Students may not use court ordered community service hours for work-study credits.

Community Leadership

50 hours = 0.5 credit

It is our strong belief that giving to others is vital in our world, and it is critical that students have the opportunity to give back to the community where they live. The benefits to the student are many. Credit in community leadership is required to participate in the GMCA graduation ceremony. Opportunities will be offered during school hours for students to complete this requirement.

Grading and Test-Outs

Grades will be awarded based on the following scale:

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

0-59 = F

Test-out has to be approved and assigned by Mrs. Baldwin **and** Mrs. Scheid. Students may only have a test out option if they have had the class in the past and not earned credit.

Student of the Month

Students who make exceptional efforts are recognized with a picture on the bulletin board and a treat. All teachers will be nominating students for this honor.

Graduation Requirements

In order to become a Grand Mesa Choice Academy graduate, a student must complete 13 core curriculum academic credit hours, 1 ICAP credit hour and 11 elective credit hours. 50 hours of community leadership is required and is applied towards the elective credit hours. Opportunities will be offered during school hours for students to complete these requirements.

Participation

*“There are no secrets to success—
Success is the result of participation, hard work and learning from failure.”*

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parent/Guardian participation is essential to a student’s successful education. Grand Mesa Choice Academy will hold two formal parent/guardian conferences per school year. In addition, we will be offering different parent/guardian activities, workshops & volunteer opportunities during the year. Students will have the ability to earn credit for their parents/guardian attending these activities. Please note: Parents/Guardians are welcome to call GMCA and schedule a conference any time during the school year.

Testing

Students at GMCA must attend school to take all of the state exams in order to remain active in their block. The school attendance policy applies to testing days as well as in the classroom.

Please note the following exams that will be required for the 2018-2019 school year:

August: AEC Growth Assessment (all grades)

March: CMAS (TBD)

April: PSAT & SAT (10th & 11th)

May: AEC Growth Assessment (all grades)

Please know that we understand that it can be difficult to take these exams; however, they are absolutely essential to our school funding and our alternative education campus certification. Without participation, we have the potential to lose funding and many of the great opportunities and options that we have available at our school.

Resources

“It’s not about your resources, it’s about your resourcefulness.”

Counseling Services

GMCA has a licensed school counselor who will support the academic, social, emotional, and college/career guidance needs of every student. She also will provide any needed resources to any student and family that are in need of services above and beyond what the school can provide.

Staff Emails

All staff emails are designed in the same way: firstname.lastname@deltaschools.com
Parents, Guardians and students may feel free to email a staff member at any time. If you are in need of a quick response back, please call the school.

Have a Great Year!

Appendix A

Entrance Guidelines For GMCA Students

The student must be under 21 and meet one or more of the risk categories identified by the state of Colorado.

- ____ Student is identified for special education services and has an IEP
- ____ Committed to Department of Health and Human Services following adjudication as a juvenile delinquent or in detention
- ____ Dropped out of School or has discontinued school for six or more weeks
(must be documented in Powerschool)
- ____ Habitually truant according to state law
(10 unexcused absences in a year or 4 unexcused absences in a month)
- ____ Expelled or has documented behavior that justifies expulsion
- ____ Student or parents have a documented history of drug or alcohol use
- ____ Students or parents have gang involvement
- ____ History of child abuse or neglect
- ____ Parent or guardian in prison, on parole, or probation
- ____ Family history of domestic violence in immediate family
- ____ Documented history of repeated school suspensions
- ____ Student is pregnant or parenting
- ____ Student is identified as a migrant student
- ____ Student is homeless - lacks a fixed, regular, nighttime residence; including children who are sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- ____ History of a documented serious psychiatric or behavioral disorder
(i.e. ADHD, depression, anxiety disorders, bi-polar, PTSD, or others)
- ____ Student is behind one or more years of credit
 - Freshman - not applicable
 - Sophomore -1st sem. 0 credits or 0 core credits;
-2nd sem. 3 credits or less, or 3.5 core credits or less
 - Junior -1st sem. 6 credits or less, or 3.5 core credits or less
-2nd sem. 9 credits or less, 5.25 core credits or less
 - Senior -1st sem. 12 credits or less, or 7 core credits or less
- 2nd sem. 15 credits or less, or 8.75 core credits or less
 - 5th, 6th, 7th Year seniors -18 credits or less, or 10.5 core credits or less

Grand Mesa Choice Academy

Parent/Student Handbook Signature Page
2018-2019 School Year

After reading the information contained in the handbook, complete the section below.

My child and I have read and reviewed the **Grand Mesa Choice Academy Parent/Student Handbook**. We understand the contents of this document and agree to abide by them.

Student's Name/Signature

_____ / _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name(s)/Signature(s)

_____ / _____

_____ / _____