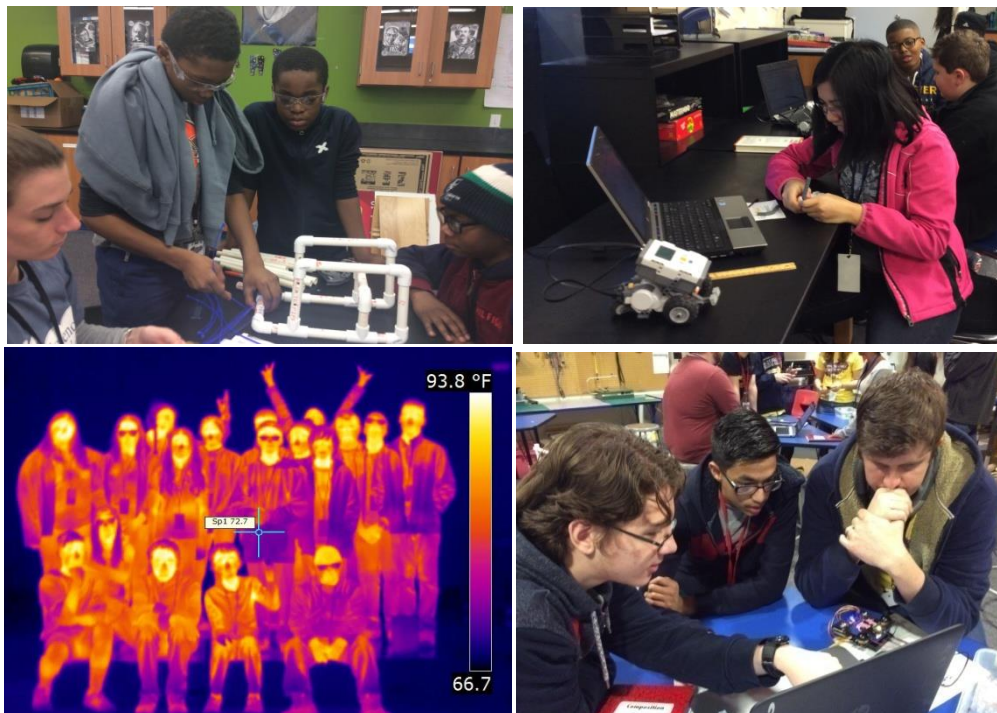




PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK 2017-2018



Grades 6-9
Great Lakes Science Center
601 Erieside Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
216-696-2109
GreatScience.com



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Welcome to GSA!

Hello parents, and welcome to Great Science Academy (GSA)! We're looking forward to ensuring that this year's Scholars not only have a great time, but also stretch their knowledge, imagination, creativity and confidence as they explore the wonderful and sometimes weird worlds of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)!



Now in its seventh year of operation, GSA is a yearlong learning experience like no other.

Exploration and making sessions meet every other Saturday from October through August - normally between 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. But we also blend in a lot of special events - including a week-long Summer Camp and a Sleepover! And, while a lot of

our work is done in the labs and classrooms at Great Lakes Science Center, we'll also be bringing in guest speakers, taking off on cool field trips, conducting Cleveland-area research and participating in community events and competitions.

This year, grades 6-9 will be joined by three very special groups of longtime GSA Scholars: our 10th grade "Apprentices," 11th grade "Journeymen," and 12th grade "Fellows." Many of these individuals started GSA in grade 6, and normally they're working with the Science Center on special events and demonstrations, but they'll also be working with our younger GSA scholars to provide mentoring and program support, as well as being great role models!

We are incredibly excited to meet you and your Scholar this year – and look forward to hosting you at both our Orientation and Family Free Days. We're ready for another year of fun, exploration and learning, and hope you are as well!

Sincerely,

Sharon L. Fain
GSA Manager



2017 – 2018 Program Dates

6th and 8th Grade 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.		7th and 9th Grade 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	
October 7	Session 1 (Fall Retreat)	October 14	Session 1 (Fall Retreat)
October 21	Session 2	October 28	Session 2
November 4	Session 3	November 11	Session 3
November 18	Session 4	December 2	Session 4
December 9	Session 5	December 16	Session 5
WINTER BREAK		WINTER BREAK	
January 6	Session 6	January 13	Session 6
January 20	Session 7	January 27	Session 7
February 3	Session 8 (Family Free Day)	February 3	Session 8 (Family Free Day)
February 10	Session 9	February 17	Session 9
February 24	Session 10	March 3	Session 10
March 10	Session 11	March 17	Session 11
March 24	Session 12	April 7	Session 12
April 14	Session 13	April 21	Session 13
April 28	Session 14	May 5	Session 14
May 12	Session 15	May 19	Session 15
June 2	Session 16	June 9	Session 16
June 18-22	Session 17 (Summer Camp)	June 25-29	Session 17 (Summer Camp)
July 14	Session 18	July 21	Session 18
July 28	Session 19 (Year Wrap-Up)	July 28	Session 19 (Year Wrap-Up)
August 4	Session 20 Overnight (6th, 7th, 8th, 9th)	August 4	Session 20 Overnight (6th, 7th, 8th, 9th)

PLEASE NOTE: SESSIONS MEET EVERY OTHER SATURDAY, BY GRADE, EXCEPT FOR:

November 25 (Thanksgiving) December 23 (Christmas) December 30 (New Year's)
 March 31 (Easter, Spring Break) May 26 (Memorial Day) June 23 July 7 (4th of July)



**GREAT LAKES
Science Center**
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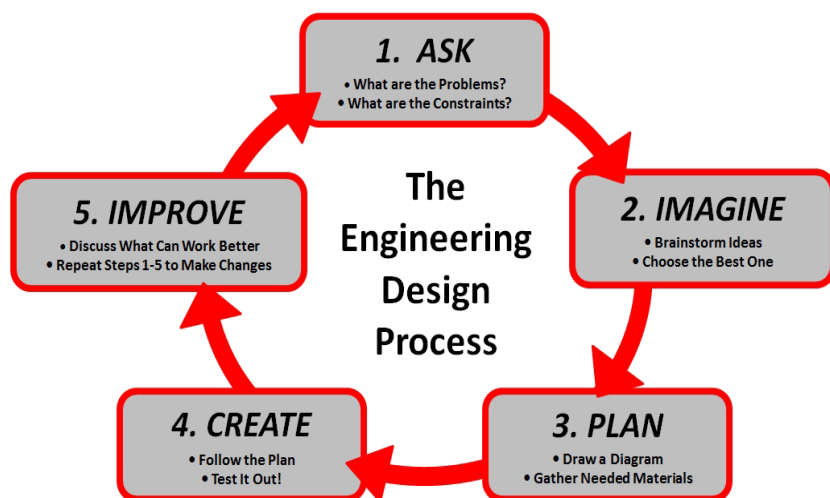
#StayCuriousCLE

About Great Science Academy

Program Philosophy

Getting Cleveland-area youth excited about the sciences, engineering, technology and math is our No. 1 priority. Along the way, we also want to help them develop their abilities in areas such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and problem-solving.

That's why we use the "Engineering Design Process" – a series of steps that engineers commonly use to solve problems, improve existing processes, or take advantage of a new opportunity – in working with and challenging our GSA Scholars.



Program Goals

We have high expectations for everyone in GSA – especially for our Scholars! Here are the five main GSA program goals – and how we'll work to achieve them with each and every participant:

Goal 1: Scholars will increase their STEM literacy and awareness through active, hands-on learning and experimentation at a grade-appropriate level.

We don't expect every GSA scholar to become an engineer or scientist, but whatever educational or career directions they choose, our Scholars' personal and professional lives will be impacted by science, engineering, technology and math. So we want them well prepared and comfortable in using, applying and benefiting from STEM throughout their lives. As a natural byproduct, we also want them learning how to approach problems with both creativity and innovation. So we'll put technology into their hands: but it will be their thinking and actions that actually solve a problem.

Goal 2: Scholars will become familiar with different STEM career pathways and viable career options in local STEM fields.

Grades 6-9 are a critical time for career exploration and educational decision-making. And because Northeast Ohio is home to many amazing STEM career paths, colleges and organizations, we want to make sure our Scholars know about these opportunities. We'll help them explore different career options, as well as have them working with professionals who can answer questions and provide personal insight as to how they achieved their personal and occupational goals. We'll also be touring some of our region's high-tech workplaces to see STEM put into practice!

Goal 3: Scholars will develop 21st century skills, especially in the areas of critical thinking, collaboration and communication.

What we know and what we can do is multiplied whenever we work with a team of other talented, dedicated people. We can also share our work, to the benefit of others, if we are able to communicate well in both written and spoken forms. That's why teamwork and communication are foundational and recurring components of GSA. While each individual is recognized for his/her unique talents, abilities and preferences, Scholars will be challenged to work with others on a regular basis; allowing them to experience both diversity and collaboration.

Goal 4: Scholars will develop perseverance and self-efficacy (i.e., "grit and persistence") throughout their work.

We expect scholars in GSA to never give up. That's why many of our activities and projects require hard work and commitment over a period of time. We also do not give our Scholars all the answers, or do the work for them, even when they struggle a bit. We will certainly guide them through challenging parts of a project – but we think that overcoming a bit of frustration can also be a good thing.

Goal 5: Scholars will have fun, become part of a vibrant community, and create lasting memories!

GSA is a learning experience, but we try to make sure it's not just more "school." Rather, by using the unique resources of the Science Center, and actually putting some of these resources into our Scholars' hands, we'll be trying to provide opportunities that most students can't get in traditional academic settings.

We also want every GSA session to be better than the last, so we'll be working hard to make each unit, project, or event an adventure. We'll plan things ahead of time, but we'll also be flexible if the group's interests take us in additional directions. We'll also ask you and your Scholar for input about what you'd like to accomplish in the program, or ways we can improve the experience.

Grade-specific Themes

From grades 6 to 9, each year of the GSA concentrates on a specific theme or area of investigation. In grades 10, 11 and 12 Scholars move on to independent studies as well as internships in a field of their choice.

The following are the GSA yearly themes and examples of typical Scholar activities/projects:

Grade 6: Great Lakes

- Create aquatic biomes
- Build underwater robots
- Do research in North Coast Harbor
- Discover the people and places that show the importance of our connection to Lake Erie

Grade 7: Space and Aeronautics

- Design rovers to compete in a Mars NXT course
- Design and wire a solar-powered charger
- Understand hydroponics as a form of alternative agriculture
- Travel to NASA Plum Brook Research Center to see the largest vacuum chamber in the world

Grade 8: Biomedical Technology

- Design and create video game controllers that promote health and wellness
- Fabricate a real biomedical device
- Meet health professionals who design the technologies of the future and visit the places where they create

Grade 9: Design and Innovation

- Learn the processes and technologies used for designing, prototyping and making products from start to finish
- Use technologies including design software and 3-D printers to fabricate unique creations and test new designs
- Experiment and create working technology tools including virtual reality and drones
- Travel to state-of-the-art manufacturing plants and Case Western Reserve University's Think[Box]

Online Sharing and Online Learning Sessions

GSA uses Wikispaces to share information with Scholars as well as to expand the available Program contact time. Each GSA Scholar is expected to establish a Wikispaces account at the beginning of his/her enrollment, and will continue to use that account from year to year.

Online Learning Sessions are normally scheduled for a weekday evening and last approximately one hour.

Program Year Options

The full-year GSA program year begins in October and ends the following August. The full-year option includes 20 GSA sessions (Saturdays, the five-day Summer Camp and a SleepOver).

A Winter Session (January – August) may also be offered. The Winter Session includes 15 GSA sessions (Saturdays, the five-day Summer Camp, and a SleepOver). Please note: depending on total grade enrollment, a Winter Start option may NOT be available for all grades or in every program year.

Program Enrollment Procedures

The entire GSA enrollment process is done online from the Science Center's website: GreatScience.com. If enrollment is open, users may click on the "Explore" tab, then on "Events and Programs." The "Great Science Academy" icon then links to information and enrollment pages for each grade. Parents will be asked to complete and approve several forms while online, and may also download specific documents. Please note: ***enrollment must be complete prior to the first scheduled program day.***

For the full-year program, registration normally opens in April. For Winter Session, registration normally opens in October.

Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis and will continue until a grade level has reached its maximum size. Additional enrollees will be put on a wait list in the event of cancellations.

Program Scholarships

Scholarships to cover tuition for Great Science Academy are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants are evaluated without regard to race, religion, natural origin, sex, or physical disability. Scholarship applications will be processed in the order received, and scholarships will be awarded until available funds are exhausted. Awards must be accepted within one week of offer or the scholarship will be withdrawn.

Each scholarship requires a \$50 "Good Faith" deposit on award. The full amount will be refunded at the end of the program year if the Scholar maintains at least a 75% attendance level.

Additional information, financial eligibility guidelines, and applications are available at GreatScience.com.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Cancellations made more than two weeks in advance of the program start date qualify for a full refund minus a \$35 administration fee. Cancellations made less than two weeks (14 calendar days) are eligible for a 50 percent refund minus the \$35 administration fee. Once the program has begun, no refunds will be issued.

All refunds will be processed via the credit card on file. Please allow up to two weeks for the refund to be posted.

How Things Work

Session Scheduling and Meeting Times

During the year, GSA meets every other Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Science Center. Grade 6 and 8 cohorts meet on the same Saturdays, with grade 7 and 9 cohorts meeting on the following Saturdays.

Summer Camp will meet from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. from June 18-22 (Grades 6 and 8) or June 25-29 (Grades 7 and 9). Special events may meet on different days and/or different times (advance notice will be given).

Program Location and Parking

Unless otherwise noted, all GSA sessions will be held at the Science Center located in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. Contact information is as follows:

Great Lakes Science Center

601 Erieside Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114
(216)-694-2000
GreatScience.com

Family members may park in the Science Center garage to drop off and pick up Scholars.

Free parking is provided for a period of 30 minutes. GSA staff members will provide a parking pass if there is a need for parking over 30 minutes.

A GSA sign-in/sign-out table will be set up in the hallway just beyond the garage entrance. Sign-in runs from **8:45-9:15 a.m.** Sign-out begins at **1:30 p.m.**, with all Scholars to be picked up by **1:45 p.m.**

Typical Saturday Agenda

Saturday sessions are the backbone of GSA. During these sessions Scholars may work on long-term projects, do special activities, go on a field trip, or have a guest STEM speaker/demonstration. Here is a typical day's agenda:

8:45-9:15	Sign-in
9:15-9:30	Brainteaser
9:30-10:55	Projects/activities by grade
10:55-11:00	Clean-up
11:00-11:30	Lunch
11:30-12:00	Science Center exploration, guest speaker, or other activity
12:00-1:15	Projects/activities by grade
1:15-1:30	Clean-up and reflection
1:30	Sign-out

Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

To ensure the safety of each child and in compliance with American Camp Association regulations, **only parents/guardians or authorized others may sign a child in and out of each GSA session.** Parents/guardians will be asked at the beginning of the GSA program year to provide the names of persons authorized for sign-in/sign-out.

For anyone other than those listed to pick up a child, GSA must have a written notice from the parent/guardian before the child can be released. In an emergency, the child may be released to an adult for whom the child's parent or guardian has given verbal authorization. In both situations a photo ID will be required.

Please know that any person attempting to pick up a child may be asked to produce a photo ID. Finally, advance notice is requested if a child is to be picked up early from a GSA session.

Late Arrival

Once again, sign-in is from 8:45-9:15 a.m. If a start time varies due to a special event or field trip, parents/guardians will be notified in advance. If a Scholar is running late, please notify the GSA manager at 216-696-2109 or fains@glsc.org.

Normally, if the GSA is meeting at the Science Center, a late arrival is not a major issue. However, if a child arrives late and there is a special off-site event or field trip, ***parents will have to make arrangements for their child to meet the group at the event site.*** Once the group has left the Science Center building, GSA cannot provide individual transportation or guarantee the participation of late Scholars.

Emergencies

Emergency situations can be frightening – and can become the source of panic and/or confusion that spreads throughout a group. For this reason **parents are asked NOT to relay emergency information directly to a child by cell phone.**

Instead, if there is a family emergency or the need for immediate pick up, ***please call the main number of the Science Center at 216-696-2000 and ask for the GSA manager.*** The manager or designee will be contacted by radio and will take or return the call immediately. GSA staff will also work to communicate information or arrange pick-up as quickly as possible. A staff member will also stay with the child until the issue is addressed or he/she is picked up.

SmartNotice© Communication System

In the event of weather closings or other emergencies, GLSC uses the "SmartNotice" © system to broadcast information quickly to program families. SmartNotice © may also be used to communicate late returns or other situations with field trips. Communication may be received by call, text message, email, or all 3 formats (based on individual preference), and multiple people may be registered to receive notices.

Parents may sign up for Smart Notice© at their child's first GSA session. Following sign-up, the system will send an email providing directions for setting up notification styles and preferences. Please note: parents may also opt out of using this system.

Field Trips

The term "field trip" is used to describe any GSA session held away from the Science Center. All Scholars must have a signed release agreement on file (completed at the time of program enrollment) in order to participate in a field trip.

Whenever Scholars are not at the Science Center location, the Science Center manager on duty (MOD) has all information including the route taken, location of the group, time they left and when they expect to return.

The Science Center generally uses school buses to transport Scholars for field trips. For special events or very small groups, maxi-vans or taxis may also be used. For near-by field trip locations, Scholars may also walk as a group.

Parents/guardians are asked to understand that field trips can sometimes last longer than expected and a scheduled return time may be delayed. If a delay is anticipated, Scholars will be asked to relay that information to their parents/guardians. Parents may also call the Science Center (216-694-2000) for status updates and expected time of arrival.

GSA Scholar Expectations

Attendance

It is normal for a Scholar to miss a GSA session during the year due to illness or other issues. However, because GSA is a highly experiential program - with nearly all events and projects done on a team basis - an absence means missing an important part of the development or building process. He/she may also end up unprepared for a presentation or competition. Lastly, the Scholar's team loses the additional input and help. For these reasons, ***regular attendance at every GSA session is extremely important.***

Failure to maintain appropriate attendance may result in dismissal of the Scholar from the program, particularly if he/she has missed too much work to continue a meaningful experience or catch up with other participants. Poor attendance may also impact refund of the Good Faith Deposit for those on scholarship.

Absences are classified as follows:

Excused Absence: If a student needs to miss a session, the parent/guardian is asked to call or email the GSA manager (216-696-2109; fains@glsc.org) in advance so that instructors can be informed. ***Absences with prior notification will be considered "excused" absences.***

Unexcused Absence: If a student is absent and GSA staff members are not aware of the reason, a GSA staff member will call the parent/guardian following the missed session. The reason for the call will be to make sure 1) the Scholar is OK, and 2) he/she will be able to return for the next scheduled session.

Behavior

Through the GSA, Scholars have access to many experiences, privileges, and opportunities that other students may never have. Therefore, all Scholars are expected to behave in ways that reflect positively on both Great Science Academy and the Science Center.

Basic behavior expectations are as follows:

- All GSA Scholars will show respect to other Scholars, instructors and staff by -
 - giving their full, undivided attention to instructors, volunteers, speakers, and peers while they are teaching or directing an activity;
 - following directions and waiting patiently while an instructor or volunteer is assisting another Scholar;
 - trying to find their own solution to a problem before asking for help, and not getting angry if the proposal is not immediately accepted;
 - solving problems or differences in a polite and professional manner (i.e., not “talking back” to an instructor, volunteer or other facilitator)
- All GSA Scholars will support the positive and encouraging environment of the GSA by
 - showing kindness, respect and courtesy to all persons they meet through GSA;
 - avoiding inappropriate or vulgar language at all times;
 - respecting the physical person and space of other Scholars by keeping hands, feet and other body parts at a distance;
 - avoiding behaviors that could be seen as invasive, intimidating, or threatening to others (i.e., bullying);
 - respecting the facilities, equipment, supplies and furniture of the Great Lakes Science Center.
- All GSA Scholars will avoid annoying and disruptive behavior with cell phones by understanding that –
 - cell phones may be used ONLY during designated times unless authorized for research or other project activities;
 - only ONE warning will be given for a cell phone violation;
 - after one warning, the cell phone will be taken and not returned until the end of the GSA session; and
 - repeated cell phone violations may result in dismissal of the Scholar from the program.
- All GSA Scholars will demonstrate personal responsibility and self-sufficiency in their GSA learning by –
 - thinking of and offering solutions to problems before asking instructors;

- supporting their team members by regular attendance, completing tasks as promised, and communicating in a respectful and timely way;
- understanding the difference between “playtime” and “worktime”;
- keeping track of materials and projects; and
- observing deadlines and completing assignments/tasks within the designated time.

If the preceding behaviors are observed, there should be no need for disciplinary measures with any GSA Scholar. To that end, GSA staff will attempt to -

- help scholars avoid or eliminate behavior issues through clear direction and expectations;
- encourage appropriate behavior rather than comparing or criticizing behaviors;
- ensure that competition between/among individuals or teams is healthy, not destructive; and
- redirect Scholar(s) behavior to more acceptable and productive path(s).

Discipline

If a Scholar fails to meet behavior expectations, he/she could be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the Program. Examples of “minor” behavior issues include (but are not limited to) -

- Failing to clean up after directed by an instructor
- Talking back to an instructor
- Misbehaving during an activity
- Failing to give attention during presentation
- Neglecting to follow instructor directions
- Roughhousing
- Inappropriate cell phone/electronic device use

Normally, minor behavior issues will be handled directly by the instructor, and a parent/guardian will not be contacted unless the behavior persists and/or escalates into a more serious issue.

“Major” behavior issues include (but are not limited to) -

- Bullying
- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Direct defiance of GSA staff
- Causing injury to a GSA scholar or staff member
- Deliberately creating a dangerous situation for others
- Deliberately causing damage or destruction to GSA equipment or property

In these cases, the GSA manager will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the situation as well as communicate any formal disciplinary actions to be taken. A formal letter may also be sent home and/or a personal conference requested.

GSA staff and instructors will make every effort to accommodate individual Scholar's learning styles, preferences and behaviors. **However, teamwork and collaboration are expected and critical behaviors within the GSA program.** Therefore, any student who consistently shows the inability to work with others may be asked to participate on a modified level or to leave the program entirely.

Cleanup and Upkeep of Work Spaces

All GSA scholars are expected to clean up after themselves and their team as needed. They are also expected to assist GSA staff in cleaning the entire work area and returning all tools/equipment/ supplies to designated storage areas. Cleaning will be done at the end of every project as well as at the end of the session day.

Just for Parents and Guardians

Reporting Changes

So that all Scholars have the ultimate GSA experience, parents/guardians are asked to complete the "Getting to Know You" form at the time of online program registration. The form will need to be completed at orientation if not done online.

During the program year, parents/guardians are asked to keep all contact information up-to-date, as well as notify the GSA manager if there is some type of major change in their Scholar's life (i.e., school problems, illness of the Scholar or a family member, divorce/separation; military service by a parent; etc.). The knowledge will be kept strictly confidential, and will be used to modify the Scholar's GSA experience appropriately.

Prohibited Items

For everyone's safety and security, Scholars are NOT to bring the following items with them to GSA session:

- electronic games or toys
- radios, tape players, CD players, I-pods
- personal computers/tablets/I-pads
- money or other valuables
- food or drink items (except for packed lunch to accommodate a special diet)
- animals of any type (i.e., pets, insects, etc.)

If brought to a session, GSA staff will take these items and return them at the end of the day. Scholars bringing an animal will be immediately dismissed for the day and the parent called for pickup.

Students bringing any of the following items to a GSA session will be immediately dismissed from the program:

- knives and other weapons (including pocket knives and box cutters)
- guns of any type (including toy guns that appear to be real)
- sexually explicit material in any form
- alcohol, tobacco, or drugs

Lost and Found

GSA staff will make every effort to help Scholars keep track of their belongings. However, GSA and the Science Center are NOT responsible for items lost and/or stolen during sessions. **This includes cellular phones, I-pods, I-pads, and other electronic items, including chargers, keyboards, mice, etc.**

Items found at the end of a GSA session will be turned in to the Science Center box office. This office keeps all lost and found property for one (1) month and then donates it to charitable organizations.

Special Dietary Requirements

GSA provides meal items from outside organizations. Breakfast items are standard (bagels, fruits, juices, granola bars, milk). The week's lunch menu will normally be communicated in a reminder email and will vary each session.

Parents/guardians will need to notify GSA staff of any food allergies or special dietary needs prior to program start by entering them on the medical form.

GSA staff will then do their best to accommodate each child's needs. However, individual tastes/preferences cannot be accommodated. If a child has food issues or does not like a particular bagged lunch, parents/guardians are asked to send lunch from home.

Please note: refrigeration is not available for home lunches. Also, no products containing peanuts are served.

Scholar Health and Wellness

The GSA staff is dedicated to keeping its scholars safe and healthy. To that end, all Scholars are required to have a completed medical form on file prior to beginning GSA. This form is available through the Science Center's online registration system.

GSA staff will certainly handle the everyday "bumps and bruises" that can occur with children. Staff will also immediately notify parents/guardians if anything more significant occurs. The following sections describe how health-related situations will be handled.

Emergencies

In the event of serious or life-threatening illness/injury, GSA staff will call emergency personnel to transport a Scholar to the nearest hospital. An incident/accident report will be completed and a copy will be given to the parents.

In the event of emergency transport and treatment, parents/guardians will be responsible for any charges and fees for the ambulance.

Injury

For accidents that are not life threatening but require medical attention, Science Center staff will immediately notify a parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian(s) cannot be reached, designated persons on the injured child's emergency

notification card will be notified. If the staff cannot reach any of the emergency sources, the injured child's physician will be contacted and appropriate actions taken.

Illness

Parents/guardians are asked NOT to send a child to GSA if he/she is exhibiting obvious symptoms of illness such as a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, headache/ear ache, etc. There should also be **a period of at least 24 hours** between the last symptom of illness and the start of a GSA session.

Any child with such symptoms will be sent home, with GSA staff calling the parent/guardian. If the child is not picked up within one hour of notification, GSA staff will begin to notify additional persons on the child's contact list.

Medications

Scholars should receive all required medications prior to or after GSA time. However, and if necessary, the following accommodations can be made:

- If the child requires a medication to be *administered* during GSA time, the parent/guardian must first provide a signed medication administration permission form. This form is available in the online registration system under "Forms." The parent/guardian will then need to contact the GSA manager to ensure that all proper information is shared/ procedures are followed.
- If a child needs to *carry emergency medications* during GSA time (i.e., such as an inhaler or Epi-Pen), a "Health Care Plan for Treatment of Respiratory Issues or Severe Allergy/Anaphylaxis" form must be submitted. This form can also be found on the registration site under "Forms." Once again, the parent/guardian will need to contact the GSA manager to ensure that proper information is shared/procedures followed.

Both forms should be faxed to the GSA office at 216-696-2142 at the time of online enrollment. The GSA manager will then call the parent/guardian to discuss specific details. If it is decided that a Scholar will bring medications with him/her during GSA sessions, the following are medication procedures:

Medications must be kept in the original labeled bottle or container.

Prescription medications must contain the original pharmacy label that lists:

- ☐ Child's name
- ☐ Prescribing practitioner's name
- ☐ Pharmacy name and telephone number
- ☐ Date prescription was filled
- ☐ Expiration date of the medication
- ☐ Name of the medication
- ☐ Dosage
- ☐ How often to give the medication
- ☐ Length of time the medication is to be given

- Over-the-counter medication must be kept in the originally labeled container and be labeled with the child's first and last name.
- In the case of personal emergency medications such as inhalers or EpiPens, the Scholar will carry the medication on his/her person unless other arrangements are made in advance.

GREAT SCIENCE ACADEMY FAQs

What “type” of student enrolls in GSA?

GSA Scholars are a diverse group of students from all over Cleveland and Northeast Ohio (and even beyond). They join GSA for reasons because of their special interest in science and technology, or because they're looking for a challenging and creative environment where they can make things or solve problems. Cohorts contain both male and female students from a wide variety of races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic levels.

Are Scholars expected to do work between sessions?

Each grade cohort will utilize the “WikiSpaces” learning management platform for work outside of sessions. These online sessions may result in assignments or projects that require some type of at-home work (i.e., taking plants home to water or recording their friends resting heart rates, finishing a presentation, uploading project plans, etc.). The amount of outside work required rarely exceeds one hour in a 2-week period.

How do I sign-in and sign-out my Scholar?

A GSA sign-in/sign-out table will be set up each session just in front of the door to the Parking Garage on the Promenade (lowest) level of the Science Center. A staffer will be there to get signatures and welcome or dismiss Scholars.

Again: there will be 30 minutes of FREE parking in the garage each session for pick-up and drop off (please be sure not to lose the parking ticket). In the event a stay is longer than 30 minutes, GSA staff will provide a parking pass.

What kinds of projects do GSA Scholars work on?

Scholars do everything from short brain teasers to collaborative projects that last months. Within each project there is experimentation, trial and error, and a huge emphasis on the value of failure! Projects are theme based by grade, and are also tied to the public and private resources, educational institutions, and companies in Greater Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. This allows us to schedule all off-site activities at local venues.

GSA is also a place where Scholars learn to build things. That means they'll be working with tools ranging from hammers and saws to 3-D printers – and developing motor-visual skills, self-confidence, and life skills along the way.

What happens if a scholar misses a session?

GSA instructors should be notified immediately if a Scholar must miss a session due to illness or other circumstances. Some make-up work could be required – either in or outside the classroom – to enable a Scholar to stay current with the rest of his/her cohort.

What do scholars do for lunch?

A lunch option is always provided for Scholars and can include items ranging from sandwiches to pizza. Scholars may also pack their lunch. Please note that refrigeration is NOT available for packed lunches.

How often do cohorts meet?

GSA sessions GENERALLY meet every other Saturday, October-July, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Summer Camps (June of each year) run for five consecutive days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The end-of-the-year Overnight at the Science Center (held in August) will normally run from 6:30 p.m. to 9 a.m.

Please note: because of holidays or special events, the “every other Saturday” pattern may not always hold true. ***Please check the yearly calendar to verify session dates.*** The GSA manager will also send out a reminder email whenever a meeting date is off sequence.

What is a “Family Free Day”?

During the program year, GSA will hold a “Family Free Day” where families are invited to attend GSA with their Scholar. The purpose is to let parents and siblings see what their Scholar has been working on. Families will also receive free passes to Great Lakes Science Center so that they can explore and learn together!

What happens at Summer Camp?

The Summer Camp is essentially a five-day session of GSA. Scholars will continue to work on projects and assignments, and will also go on most of their field-trip experiences during this time. Summer Camp hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

What happens at the Culminating Event?

All four cohorts of GSA will attend on this day. In the morning, Scholars will prep their projects and presentations for their families. In the afternoon, families are invited to attend the “Project Showcase” and an award ceremony for all GSA scholars!

What happens at the Overnight?

During the overnight Scholars play games, watch movies, do group activities, eat s'mores, and sleep in sleeping bags – just like at a regular camp! Overnights normally start in the afternoon, and end the following day at 9 a.m. Boys and girls sleep on separate floors of the Science Center with chaperones specifically designated for each group.

For additional information or questions, please contact:

Sharon L. Fain
Great Science Academy Manager
Great Lakes Science Center
601 Erieside Avenue
Cleveland, OH, 44114
216-696-2109

Email: fains@glsc.org
Emergency: 440-371-1829