

Greyhound Virtual Academy
2025-2026 Student/Parent Handbook
Shippensburg Area School District

Contents

Why GVA?	2
About GVA.....	2
Partners in Success.....	3
GVA Contacts	3
Entering GVA.....	3
Kindergarten through 3 rd grade	3
4 th – 8 th grade	3
9 th -12 th grade.....	4
Enrollment Process for GVA.....	4
Attendance.....	4
Reporting absences.....	4
Unexcused absences/ Truancy.....	5
Policies	5
Student Code of Conduct.....	5
Shippensburg Area School District Policies.....	5
Grades	5
Testing retakes.....	5
Make up work	6
End of academic year	6
Consequences of course failure	6
Grades K-8.....	6
Grades 9-12.....	6
Graduation requirements	6
Probation	6
Incomplete course or dropping a course	7
Transportation	7
Part-time students	7
Transportation for field trips	7
Returning to Brick and Mortar	8
State Assessments and AP, SAT or PSAT Testing	8

State mandated testing (PSSA and Keystone).....	8
Advanced Placement (AP) Exams.....	8
SAT and PSAT Exams	8
Technology.....	8
Equipment and Connection requirements	8
Accessing course content.....	8
Support	8
Responsibilities	9
Lost or Damaged Technology Hardware.....	9
Special Education Services.....	9
Field trips.....	9
Extracurricular Activities	10
Physical Education	10
Academic Integrity	10
GVA Acknowledgement Form.....	11
Chromebook Parent/Student User Agreement	11
Parent/Guardian Agreement	12
2025-2026 Academic Calendar	13

Why GVA?

Choosing Shippensburg Area School District’s Greyhound Virtual Academy (GVA) offers families many benefits. Unlike other cyber schools, GVA is part of the Shippensburg Area School District (SASD). This means:

- You can participate in all of SASD school events, activities, and extracurriculars
- You can earn a SASD diploma
- You’re part of the Greyhound family!

While you will experience your courses differently than our students attending the brick-and-mortar buildings, you are a Shippensburg Area School District student. You are held to those same standards as outlined in the grade-respective Student Handbook, including regular attendance and participating in state assessments. In addition to helpful and supportive course teachers, you also have your GVA Coordinator who is available for questions and support.

We are committed to working with you in accomplishing our mission: empowering all learners to define their talents, exercise effective collaboration and communication, and refine their critical thinking skills to succeed.

About GVA

GVA is part of the Capital Area Online Learning Association (CAOLA) consortium which uses the Genius course management portal. Courses are created/managed by learning partners such as Accelerate Education and eDynamic. Students learn asynchronously, accessing their course content from a variety

of locations and at times during the day that is convenient for your family. Rather than meeting teachers face to face, students communicate with their assigned teachers via the online portal or email.

As a GVA student, you have two options of cyber to best fit your needs.

- **Full-time cyber program.** Allows students to work full time from the comfort of your home.
- **Hybrid cyber program.** Allows students to take some classes online at home and some classes in the school (high school students only).

Partners in Success

To be successful in the GVA, both students and their parent/guardians must be motivated and engaged in the learning process. Students must be self-sufficient, independent learners because they are not meeting face to face with teachers. Students spend time reading and researching new content and unfamiliar concepts without the attention of a face-to-face instructor.

Elementary students will need adult support within the family unit to help them learn how to navigate the online courses and technology. Middle and high school students need their parents/guardians to ensure regular attendance, to help motivate their students to engage with the learning, and to support students in completing assignments on time. Regular attendance and completing daily assignments are essential for academic success in GVA.

Your GVA Coordinator is here to help you learn the platform and to help troubleshoot. They also monitor your attendance, progress and grades. Your course teachers are available for tutoring and support as well.

We work together towards your student's success.

GVA Contacts

Mr. Chris Debias, 9-12 Coordinator; Christopher.debais@shipk12.pa.us

Mrs. Jeannie Coons, K-8 Coordinator; Jeannie.coons@ship.k12.pa.us

Dr. Susan Donat, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; susan.donat@ship.k12.pa.us

Entering GVA

Courses through GVA use a different curriculum from our brick-and-mortar courses, with different units of study and different pacing for the academic work. For that reason, there are limitations on when students may enroll in GVA. Students may always enter GVA at the beginning of an academic year.

Kindergarten through 3rd grade

K-3 students enroll GVA at the beginning of a new academic year. Students who are transferring from another CAOLA school may transfer into GVA at any point.

4th – 8th grade

In addition to enrolling at the beginning of the academic year, students in grade 4 through 8 may enroll in GVA during windows between marking periods. The window opens one week before the beginning of the marking period and closes one week after a marking period/quarter begins to ensure a successful experience.

9th-12th grade

High school students may enroll in GVA courses two weeks before the marking period/quarter begins. The deadline to enroll in a high school course is two weeks after a marking period/quarter begins. There is no enrollment for new students ten-calendar-days after the start of a new marking period. The online modules are designed that all assignments must be completed for a grading period. *Students are responsible for the entire marking period's content regardless of when they enter.*

Enrollment Process for GVA

1. Schedule a meeting with the GVA Coordinator to discuss your interest in online learning. Online learning is not for everyone. While students gain flexibility over when in the day they log in, it requires motivation and self-discipline to remain on pace with assignments. It also takes organization to juggle multiple online courses. Parents have the responsibility to provide an environment conducive for concentration and study, ensure the student is logging in daily and ensure students are completing and submitting assignments.
2. Prior to the meeting, the GVA Coordinator provides the parent with a copy of this handbook and reviews the student's attendance records and prior academic progress.
3. Parent/Guardian and the student meets with the GVA Coordinator to discuss any concerns, review the GVA handbook, sign the contract, and pick up the hardware. The GVA Coordinator will ensure the student has access to their courses and provide an overview of how to navigate the platform to the family. **Parent/guardian attendance at this meeting is required.** These meetings occur at the high school or middle school during the academic day.
4. The GVA Coordinator enrolls the student in a **ten-calendar-day trial period. During this time, students demonstrate they will attend regularly, stay on-pace with assignments, and maintain passing grades. Students unable to demonstrate regular attendance, or unable to stay on-pace and maintain passing grades will be unenrolled in GVA and re-enrolled in the brick-and-mortar building.** K-3 students may not re-enroll until the next academic year. 4-12 students must wait to re-enroll until the next marking period/semester. Note: Students who are placed into GVA as a result of disciplinary issues are not eligible for the trial period.
5. Students who successfully complete the ten-calendar-day trial period with regular attendance, staying on-pace with assignments and maintaining passing grades remain enrolled in GVA.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for student success. We want you to succeed and to graduate on time! We encourage and appreciate your assistance in establishing a regular attendance pattern for your child.

State law requires regular school attendance for all children ages 6-18 as outlined in District Policy 204. This policy is enforced for all students grades K-12. To be considered present, you must log into your CAOLA account by 11:59 pm each day the Shippensburg Area School District is in session. Students who don't log in will be reported as absent for that day.

NOTE: Being present is not enough to remain on pace for the course.

Reporting absences

A student must have a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence.

Email the excuse to the attendance officer at your brick-and-mortar building, copying your GVA Coordinator.

Shippensburg Area Senior High School	sashsattendance@ship.k12.pa.us
Shippensburg Area Middle School	samsattendance@ship.k12.pa.us
Shippensburg Area Intermediate School	saisattendance@ship.k12.pa.us
James Burd Elementary School	jbesattendance@ship.k12.pa.us
Nancy Grayson Elementary School	ngattendance@ship.k12.pa.us

All notes must be received within three (3) school days of the absence. If a note is not received within three school days of the absence, the absence is marked unexcused.

Unexcused absences/ Truancy

Unexcused absences of students under the age of 18 are illegal.

- After four (4) unexcused and/or unlawful absences, the school is required to create a Student Attendance Improvement Plan during a meeting with the parents.
- After five (5) days of absence, a notice/reminder will be sent from the school office.
- After six (6) unexcused and/or unlawful absence, the school is required to make a referral to a District or local attendance program and/or Children & Youth Services and possible citation with District Magistrate.
- After ten (10) days of absence, a medical excuse from a physician is required for each additional absence.
- The District Social Worker may be called at any time student attendance is a concern.

Policies

Student Code of Conduct

All GVA students are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct as published in the district handbooks located at <https://shippensburgarea.schoolinsites.com/handbooks>.

Shippensburg Area School District Policies

School district policies are located at:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/ship/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies>

Grades

GVA students demonstrate their learning through a variety of activities which may include quizzes, essays, tests, and forum discussions. Students (and their parents/guardians) have immediate and continuous access to grades by logging into the system. Grades for assessments and tests will be posted within 24-48 hours from the date they were submitted. Student GPA and class rank will be calculated by the local school district. Report cards and progress reports will be distributed by the local school districts.

Testing retakes

Students are permitted to retake any major test that he or she has failed. The student must request a retake for the test through the advisor. The advisor will determine if the request is appropriate and will notify the online grader of the request. The higher score will be recorded in the grade book with the lower score being removed.

Make up work

Students are permitted to make up missed assignments without grade penalty due to excused absences. An incomplete grade may be given on the quarterly report card if the student's make up days overlap with a quarter end date. For marking periods 1-4, (or trimesters 1-2), the student will have ten days after the end of the marking period to complete any work or the incomplete may change to a 0%. Principals will be notified of incompletes for semester grades and may request a conference with the student and parent.

End of academic year

The course ends on the last day of school for the academic year, and all work must be completed by that time, unless the student has an extension due to an excused absence. Students with an IEP or 504 may take up to ten calendar days after the end of the marking period/trimester.

Consequences of course failure

If you believe your student is in danger of failing a course, please reach out immediately to your GVA Coordinator and to your School Counselor. The course teacher is available for online tutoring, and the GVA Coordinator will work to encourage your student to take advantage of that opportunity.

High school students may be eligible for face-to-face, after-school tutoring sessions.

Grades K-8

Students in grades K through 8 student who fail or do not complete a trimester/marketing period of ELA or Math must return to brick and mortar the next trimester or marking period.

Grades 9-12

If a high school student fails a course required for graduation, you must retake the course in person to recover the credit. See your GVA Coordinator for details.

Graduation requirements

See the Shippensburg Area Senior High School Student Handbook, located at <https://shippensburgarea.schoolinsites.com/handbooks>

Probation

We want our students to be successful! However, cyber school may not be the right fit for all learners. Your GVA Coordinator monitors student progress to ensure they are doing well in school. Therefore, we place students into a probation status if any of the following occurs:

1. Student is more than one week behind pace.
2. Student incurs three unexcused absences.
3. Student course average is an F.

The purpose of the probation is to ensure parents/guardians are aware of the issue and to offer support through your GVA Coordinator and School Counselor. Your course teacher is available for tutoring. Students in grade 9-12 may also take advantage of the district after-school tutoring.

The GVA Coordinator will email parent/guardian and the student, copying the School Counselor and building principal. The parent/guardian letter will include:

- the reason(s) for being placed on probation
- the course(s) in jeopardy
- the current course grade
- the start and end date of the probation period
- the date the student will return to brick and mortar if behavior is not addressed.

The probation period is for ten school days. Students who remain behind pace, incur an additional unexcused absence or are unable to bring up their course grade within those ten days will be unenrolled in the course and re-enrolled in brick-and-mortar courses. See Returning to Brick-and-Mortar section for an important note on transportation.

Students enrolled in CAOLA for disciplinary issues are not un-enrolled. The GVA Coordinator will notify parent/guardian, the School Counselor, and the building principal. Parents/Guardians will be reminded that truancy charges may be filed, and the potential fee for incomplete course work.

Incomplete course or dropping a course

Districts must pay our learning partners for each course in which a student enrolls. To be financially responsible to our taxpayers, when a student does not complete a course or drops out of a course, the family incurs a financial penalty.

1. Students have ten-calendar-days to drop an online course without incurring a penalty. The guardians/parents MUST email the school counselor, copying the GVA Coordinator, and building principal indicating your intent to drop the course.
2. The ten-calendar-day drop window begins on the assigned course start date listed in Genius and includes weekends. SASD may charge a fee (\$130 - \$340) for dropping a course after the ten-day window has expired.
3. **Students drop a course after the ten-calendar-day window incur the fee even if they have never accessed the course.**
4. **Students who do not complete at least 25% of a course part within the assigned date range will be charged for the cost of the course (\$130 - \$340).**

Transportation

Part-time students

Bus transportation is provided at the beginning of the school day and at the end of the school day. Students are responsible for providing their own transportation mid-day if they are hybrid students. Students are not permitted to remain on school property if they are not enrolled in courses.

Transportation for field trips

For trips to other school buildings within the districts, parents/guardians need to provide transportation to the building and remain with the student until they meet the GVA Coordinator. Only parents serving as official chaperones may attend the event.

For destinations other than district buildings, students must arrive at the designated departure building and ride district-provided transportation to the destination. Students are prohibited from driving to field trips unless special permission is granted from a building administrator.

Returning to Brick and Mortar

Students leave cyber learning for a variety of reasons. If you are un-enrolling from GVA, you are expected to report to the brick-and-mortar-school the next day. Your School Counselor will provide you with your schedule. Please note that while we communicate your return to the transportation office, **it may take up to five business days for the SASD Transportation Office to adjust bus schedules to provide transportation. Parents are responsible for providing student transportation during that window.**

State Assessments and AP, SAT or PSAT Testing

State mandated testing (PSSA and Keystone)

The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires student participation in PSSA and Keystone testing. These tests are administered in the district brick and mortar schools. Your GVA Coordinator will provide you with the day/time of these required assessments.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

Students who wish to take AP Exams should contact their Senior High School Counselor to determine the date, time, and location. While these tests are online, they are proctored exams. The cost of AP Exams is the responsibility of the student.

SAT and PSAT Exams

Students wishing to take SAT exams should contact their SASD School Counselor to determine date, time and location. The cost of the SAT and PSAT exams is the responsibility of the student.

Technology

Equipment and Connection requirements

The SASD provides our GVA students with a Chromebook, a power cord, and a carrying case. This equipment remains the property of SASD and must be returned upon exiting the GVA program. DSL or Cable Internet connection is the recommended internet connection speed, while a 56Kbps modem connection is the minimum recommended. Slower dial-up connections, while feasible, are not recommended.

Accessing course content

Access the site at <https://caola.caiu.org/login>. (Consider bookmarking the site to make access easier.) An example of the Genius dashboard is below. If you have issues logging into Genius and/or accessing your course, contact your GVA advisor as soon as possible.

Support

Technical support is available to GVA students for the Chromebook and courseware associated with the cyber program. We are unable to provide support for your local network, internet provider, or for computers not provided by the SASD, or for students not enrolled in the GVA program.

Part-time GVA students taking single classes within the district building should report all issues to their GVA advisor. The advisor will assist the student in resolving the problem.

Full time GVA students should report computer issues to the Shippensburg Area School District help desk. Call (717) 530-2700 ext. 1050 or email help@ship.k12.pa.us. All issues reported during the school day will be responded by school personnel within 24 hours, or the next school day.

If the issue is accessing or submitting coursework, contact the CAIU helpdesk. Include the student's name, courses affected, and other salient details to assist the help desk in resolving the issue. Call(717) 732-8403 or email caola-support@caiu.org

Responsibilities

Do not allow others to use your account and do not sign in using others' accounts. GVA students are part of the Shippensburg Area School Student and expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct as published in the district handbooks located <https://shippensburgarea.schoolinsites.com/handbooks>.

Lost or Damaged Technology Hardware

Report any malfunction of computer hardware as soon as possible. The staff will discuss the specifics with the student/parent to determine if the problem is hardware specific or software related and will determine a plan of action.

Families/students are generally financially responsible for their equipment. In most circumstances where there has been loss or damage, parents will file a claim with their homeowner's insurance carrier. The school will assist with this process by submitting all information related to cost and value of the equipment. The family/student must immediately forward copies of the police report, fire report, insurance claim, and any other applicable reports to the GVA Coordinator who will then forward the information to the appropriate personnel.

Replacement Equipment - SASD will arrange for replacement equipment after:

- Copies of all applicable reports and claims have been received
- Appropriate arrangements have been made by the student/family to compensate the school for the loss;
- The family/student signs a revised agreement that reflects the issuance of new equipment;
- The damaged equipment is returned, if applicable.

Special Education Services

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or 504 plans will be accommodated within the courseware. Parents who believe their child is eligible for special education should contact SASD for further assistance. SASD will work with the parent and student to ensure proper procedures are followed with appropriate results. Communication between the student's advisor and online teachers will ensure the student receives the proper modifications outlined in the IEP or 504 plans. To ensure that each student has the proper support for their individual needs, please contact the SASD Special Education Department at (717) 530-2700 ext. 1042.

Field trips

Full time GVA students may participate in school sponsored activities if they are not on disciplinary action. GVA students are SASD students, and are expected to abide by school policies, including behavioral expectations and the dress code. SASD dress code policy will be enforced and any student found in violation of the dress code policy will not be allowed to participate in the field trip.

Students wishing to attend field trips or social activities must communicate their intent with their GVA Coordinator. The GVA Coordinator will work with the building principal to make arrangements. GVA students are responsible for notifying their online teachers of their excused absence. Students are responsible for completing missed work during the field trip. See Transportation for Field Trips Sections.

Extracurricular Activities

GVA students are SASD students. As such, they are welcome and encouraged to participate in extracurricular sports and other activities. All district students are expected to abide by school policies as published in the student handbook including eligibility requirements. (High school students enrolled in GVA due to disciplinary issues are not permitted to attend SASHS activities.)

Talk with your GVA Coordinator about your interests. The Coordinator will provide the details of that program.

Physical Education

Physical education requirements may be satisfied by participating in organized lessons, activities and events. Talk with your GVA Coordinator for the requirements of developing a fitness plan and logging the activities.

Academic Integrity

All district students are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct as published in the district handbooks located at <https://shippensburgarea.schoolinsites.com/handbooks>.

GVA Acknowledgement Form

I have read, comprehend, and agree to the terms stated above in the GVA handbook and the Shippensburg Area School District Student Handbook. I am aware of all consequences if the above terms are not met.

I also acknowledge the policy for dropping courses or for incomplete courses and that I will owe the district money under the following circumstances:

1. I have ten-calendar-days to drop a course without penalty. The ten-calendar-day drop window begins on the assigned course start date listed in Genius and includes weekends. SASD may charge a fee (\$130 - \$340) for dropping a course after the ten-calendar-day window has expired.
2. Students who choose to drop a course after the ten-calendar-day window will receive the penalty even if they have never accessed the course.
3. Students who do not complete at least 25% of a course part within the assigned date range will be charged for the cost of the course (\$130 - \$340).

Student name (printed)
Date:

Student signature

Parent/guardian name (printed)
Date:

Parent/guardian signature:

Chromebook Parent/Student User Agreement

As a student, I agree that I will:

- Use my Chromebook for educational purposes.
- Follow the procedures and policies of the Shippensburg Area School District both at school and at home.
- Protect my device by carrying it securely in my district-issued carrying case and preventing careless or malicious damage.
- Never leave my device unattended in an unsecure or in an unsupervised location.
- Charge my device's battery to full capacity each night.
- Report all damages to or issues with my Chromebook / Laptop to school staff.
- Not alter or attempt to change, disable, or circumvent the management settings, content filters, or virus protection software on my device.
- Never share my device with others.

I understand that any violation of this agreement may result in the suspension or loss of my Chromebook and school network privileges. Additionally, I may face disciplinary action for such violations up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I understand that my family's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring my child meets the expectations outlined in the Chromebook Agreement and follows all district policies.
- Protecting the device, within reason, against damage, loss or theft while it is at home or outside of school.
- Ensuring my child immediately reports damage to the school staff. For Chromebooks, complete replacement will not exceed \$375. Replacement touch screens will not exceed \$175, keyboard will not exceed \$70, and chargers will not exceed \$25.

In consideration of the privileges and opportunities afforded by the use of Shippensburg Area School District technology resources, I hereby release the district and its employees from all claims of any nature arising from my child's use or inability to use these resources, including but not limited to claims that may arise from unauthorized use of a device.

I also understand that it is impossible for Shippensburg Area School District to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the District responsible for materials accessed with a district Chromebook.

Student Name (Please Print): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Asset Tag Number: _____

Equipment or Service	Price	Date received	Parent Signature
Laptop	\$375.00		
Mouse	\$5.00		
Charger	\$25.00		
Course fee for dropped or incomplete course	\$130 - \$340		
Username	Password		

CAIU.geniussis.com

2025-2026 Academic Calendar

August						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
First Day for Students 21 Kindergarten Staggered Start 21 & 22						

September						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
Parent-Teacher Conferences 19,20,24						

December						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
Conference Exchange Day 2						

January						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Start of 2 nd semester 16						

February						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
Last Day Early Dismissal 2 Secondary 10:20AM Elementary 11:00AM						

2 hr. Early Dismissals	District Closed
17-Sep	1-Sep
22-Oct	13-Oct
19,20,24,26-Nov	11,27,28-Nov
17,23-Dec	1,24-31-Dec
28-Jan	1,2, 19-Jan
25-Feb	16-Feb
25-Mar	3,6-Apr
2-Apr	25-May

SUMMARY OF DAYS SCHOOL NOT IN SESSION

Aug. 29	Professional development day
Sept. 1	School closed
Oct. 13	School closed
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day
Nov. 27 - Dec 2	School closed
Dec. 24 - Jan 2	School closed
Jan. 16	Potential snow make-up day
Jan. 19	School closed
Feb. 13	Professional development day
Feb. 16	School closed
Mar. 13	Potential snow make-up day
Mar. 16	Professional development day
Apr. 3-6	School closed
May 25	School closed
June 2	Last day of school (Potential snow make up: June 3 & 4)