

Trust the science behind the seal.



ST★R Report

Sonoma Country Day School Graduates with GBAC STAR Accreditation

In this issue

Continue to Differentiate Yourself
Renew Your GBAC-Trained Technician Status

Making Things Safer in the Workplace
Understanding and Mitigating
Infectious Diseases

Charting Your Course
GBAC Webinar on Process Mapping



Sonoma Country Day School installed plexiglass dividers and a tent as part of its program to ensure the health and safety of students during lunch.

Sonoma Country Day School Graduates with GBAC STAR Accreditation

Seventy miles north of San Francisco, in the heart of California's wine country, emerged a country day school that became the textbook example for keeping students, teachers and staff safe during the pandemic. By December 2020, Sonoma Country Day School (SCDS) was one of the only schools in the county to have students back in the classrooms, thanks in part to achieving GBAC STAR facility accreditation.

"While under some of the most restrictive health orders in the country, we pursued an emergency waiver with the Sonoma County Department of Health pointing to this program we have in place and that we're safe to open. A big part of that was having the GBAC STAR accreditation, and they eventually let us bring back our

students," Sean McFarland, Operations Manager, Sonoma Country Day School, said. "We brought back students slowly, two grades at a time, starting with TK and K, beginning in August. Then it was first and second grade in September. By December, most all students were back in the classroom."

Serving 285 students and located in Santa Rosa, Calif., SCDS offers an academic program focused on fine and performing arts, music, world languages and social and emotional learning. Throughout the pandemic, SCDS committed to offering safe, full-time, in-person learning for grades TK-8. School leaders say that drawing on the experience of providing in-person learning throughout the difficult 2020-21 school year has made SCDS confident

in its safety protocols and ability to offer a world-class education that supports the academic, creative and social-emotional growth of students.

Not Just Window Dressing

"In early summer 2020, we looked to provide a framework to demonstrate that we were doing everything we could and holding ourselves to the highest standards of cleaning and disinfection," McFarland said. "We found GBAC STAR and it seemed to be the gold standard; it's not just window dressing. These 20 elements force you to examine your policies and procedures, organizational structure, waste management, risk mitigation and more. All of these areas forced us to dive deep in our processes and

Here, Custodian Maria del Carmen deep cleans, while on the front cover, Lead Custodian Fernando Reyes oversees cleanup in a classroom.



“While under some of the most restrictive health orders in the country, we pursued an emergency waiver with the Sonoma County Department of Health pointing to this program we have in place and that we’re safe to open.”

— **Sean McFarland**, Operations Manager, Sonoma Country Day School

changed a lot of the ways we were doing things.”

SCDS was the first school in the United States to pursue GBAC STAR accreditation, and the learning curve was significant for all parties, including the contracted custodial service the school employs. Guidelines that were already established for airlines, stadiums and hotels didn’t fit for SCDS, but McFarland says by working with GBAC they were able to develop a process that meets the needs of academic facilities such as SCDS and others. He noted that GBAC staff have been helpful, very responsive and great to work with. Given that positive environment and the impressive impact of attaining GBAC STAR, SCDS eagerly applied and achieved reaccreditation in December 2021.

Calming the Stakeholders

Obtaining the GBAC STAR was an impressive accomplishment for the school, and leaders have employed that accreditation in a successful communications effort to ease concerns about reopening the school. “When we reopened, we had a lot of nervous teachers who were resistant. To show that we had the GBAC STAR accreditation and we had a framework for keeping the school safe helped to reassure them,” McFarland said. “And we had a lot of nervous parents who weren’t ready to have their

kids come back. We did a lot of parent emails and communications and posted our infectious disease control plan on the website. In December 2021, we used Facebook to announce our reaccreditation.”

As McFarland looks back on the accreditation journey, he points to areas that could be of particular interest to other organizations. “The element that really impacted us was risk mitigation, element seven. You identify the risks that you have: biohazards, ergonomic hazards, slips, trips and falls, chemical hazards and so on. Then we figured out how to better manage those risks and use training to lessen the risk. We don’t want to send a custodian into a dangerous situation,” McFarland said. “Before GBAC STAR, we had zero documentation on what was accomplished on a daily basis. Having that developed has been super helpful.”

While the pandemic may come to an end or settle into an endemic role, McFarland notes SCDS will maintain the process improvements by obtaining the GBAC STAR because it simply makes sense. “We see many aspects of this accreditation that will remain post-pandemic. They’ve all contributed to making our campus the healthiest that it’s ever been. We want to keep our teachers healthy and keep students healthy, too,” McFarland said. “With GBAC STAR, we don’t see the absences that we used to see. We



Sonoma Country Day School installed dozens of handwashing stations across the campus.

used to have outbreaks in classrooms: a stomach thing in kindergarten with eight kids out. That’s gone. Kids aren’t missing school like they used to and neither are the teachers. At SCDS, we’re bringing up our facility’s health quotient, and my key takeaway is that GBAC STAR has been there for us.” ★



Renew your GBAC-Trained Technician Status

Now is the time to renew your GBAC-Trained Technician status to ensure you are armed with critical knowledge in the fight against infectious diseases in the workplace. To date, more than 20,000 professionals have equipped themselves with the impressive credential of GBAC-Trained Technician. To receive their certification, GBAC-Trained Technicians completed the "GBAC Online Fundamentals Course: Cleaning & Disinfection Principles." Those who have taken this course should register now for this renewal opportunity to maintain their status.

"The GBAC-Trained Technician status provides value on many levels such as serving as a visible commitment to healthier environments, offering an opportunity for professional development

and much more," Melissa Wernersbach, GBAC Academy Education Manager, said. "Do not miss out on the opportunity to renew your status because your education and experience matter more than ever."

Important Learnings

GBAC-Trained Technicians are individuals armed with the planning, knowledge and processes needed to respond to a biohazard crisis in the workplace. These professionals are able to prepare for, respond to, recover from and be resilient to biohazards in the workplace. The technicians have been trained in infection and contamination control measures for infectious disease outbreak situations such as the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).

The Renewal Course includes:

- Cleaning & Disinfection Principles
- Breaking the Chain of Infection through cleaning and disinfection. This section includes emphasis on the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)
- Importance of proper cleaning and disinfection for health
- GBAC protocol for response and remediation
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE), tools and equipment
- How international professionals can find information specific to their own countries.

Maintaining Your GBAC-Trained Technician Status

"The ongoing pandemic highlights the importance of infection prevention and control measures to help reduce the spread of many pathogens. The need for GBAC-Trained Technicians is critical for our communities," Wernersbach said. "Renewing your status allows you to distinguish yourself as a professional with a better understanding of the science of infection prevention that enables businesses to implement effective long-term plans to reduce the spread of diseases like COVID-19 and its variants. If you don't know your GBAC-Trained Technician status, send an email to the GBAC Academy at gbacademy@issa.com."

New Online Course Makes Renewing Easy

Students taking this course must have already completed the GBAC Online Fundamentals Course 1.0 or 2.0. Successful completion will renew your GBAC-Trained Technician status for one year from your finishing date. To renew, complete the 2022 renewal course, which builds on your GBAC-Trained Technician education by introducing the concepts of chain of infection, scalable response, hierarchy of control and more.

Through this streamlined course—which is available in five languages, your renewal will:

- Cost 67% less than the original course
- Take only 30 minutes to complete
- Be valid for another 12 months

Current ISSA Members and the GBAC STAR Community can purchase the renewal course for \$30, although you will need to send an email to gbacademy@issa.com for a coupon code to use at checkout. The charge for non-members is \$50. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/gbac-trained-technician-renewal>. ★



**GBAC-TRAINED
TECHNICIAN™**

Has Your GBAC-Trained Technician Status Expired?

Complete the 30-minute online course and
renew your status for 2022



RENEW TODAY



Free Training to Help Facilities Break the Chain of Infection

The numbers demonstrate that people are returning to indoor environments that were transformed by COVID-19. For example:

- Hotel occupancy rates and the demand for rooms are rising
- Convention centers are starting to hold more in-person events
- Airports continue to experience increased passenger traffic.

In all of these cases, a thorough infectious disease prevention program that prioritizes cleaning and disinfection practices along with other mitigation strategies will help protect guests and staff.

30-Minute Infectious Disease Awareness Course is Ideal For Your Entire Workforce

CloroxPro® has donated Infectious Disease Awareness Course scholarships to assist in educating schools, service providers, hotels, airports, athletic facilities, restaurants and other public

spaces on how to maintain healthier and safer environments. This is a great opportunity to access for FREE the latest training developed by the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a division of ISSA that helps businesses prepare for, respond to, recover from and be resilient to biological threats.

Valued at \$50, this 30-minute online course elaborates on breaking the chain of infection through:

- Proper cleaning and disinfection practices
 - Indoor air quality considerations
 - Other pivotal mitigation strategies
- Students will learn about risk assessment in addition to infectious disease prevention programs in the workplace. Plus, they will gain working knowledge of cleaners, disinfectants and personal protective equipment (PPE) that is applicable to all employees, not just cleaning staff.

To learn more and register, click on the link in the ad below this article. ★

New Infectious Disease Awareness Course Scholarships

LEARN MORE



Display Your Success with Pieces from GBAC STAR Store

Unique pieces to proclaim your achievement of GBAC STAR™ accreditation to visitors, customers, competitors and employees are always available at the GBAC STAR Store. This is the one-stop shop for GBAC STAR products, including wall plaques, door decals and much more. New items are regularly added so it makes sense to browse and fill your cart often at the GBAC STAR Store.

Why Shop With Us?

The store is the only place to find GBAC STAR items. We are passionate about helping facilities make the most of their facility accreditation and share their success with their employees, customers and visitors. And we pride ourselves on partnering with organizations to create unique products that meet their needs.

Bulk Orders Are Welcome

Special pricing is available for bulk orders. Email dpetrulakis@lakecountypress.com for details.

Missing Something

If you don't see what you're looking for in the store, we can create custom orders. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

Already Reaccredited? Purchase More Updated Decals

If you are a facility that has achieved reaccreditation, be sure to stock up on updated GBAC STAR decals.

Get Started

Create an account today to browse products. Order fulfillment is limited to GBAC STAR Accredited Facilities or Service Providers. Please have your Accreditation ID number (found on the certificate) ready to place your order.

Proudly and easily communicate the news of your impressive achievement by displaying the GBAC STAR to your customers, competitors, vendors and staff. Visit gbac.org/store to shop now! ★



Creating an Auditing Toolkit

The Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, is developing a Measurable Auditing Toolkit to provide an in-depth overview of cleaning and disinfection auditing technology and programs. This toolkit will include definitions, technology and program listings, implementation guidance, recommendations, data reporting, analysis and more.

"We go beyond simple validation such as ATP or visual checks and include discussions on technologies and programs that provide measurable data and analytics," Michael Diamond, Senior Director, Technology and Programs, GBAC, said. "Our goal is to create a well-defined resource that facilities, EVS departments, infection preventionists and building service contractors can utilize to establish methods and processes that will

provide clear, measurable insights on the cleanliness and contamination levels of their specific environment."

Some key features to be found in this resource include the ability to measure "wetness," UV dosing, surface contamination and establishing if a surface has been wiped (cleaned) or not.

"These efforts are not only specific to surfaces; the GBAC Measurable Auditing Toolkit will also include technologies and programs that provide measurable data and analysis for air and water," Diamond said. "Afterall, pathogens don't simply settle on surfaces."

GBAC is currently accepting submissions to be considered for inclusion in the Toolkit. If you are interested in getting involved, complete this survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GBACAuditingToolkit> ★

Where Do We Stand

GBAC STAR Facility Reaccreditation

GBAC STAR Family Reaccreditation is an annual process that builds on an initial accreditation to ensure those facilities continue to evolve, improve and advance with the performance-based GBAC STAR program elements. More than 4,000 facilities make up the GBAC STAR Family and many are in the process of reaccreditation, while others are initially becoming accredited.

GBAC STAR Family

As of January 15, 2022

88% of facilities committed to reaccreditation

571 facilities reaccredited

To learn more about this process, contact GBAC Sales at <https://gbac.issa.com/contact>.

Infectious Disease Awareness in the Workplace: COVID-19 Considerations

Cleaning for health, rather than cleaning for appearance, must be prioritized to protect all stakeholders in our communities. This is especially true as the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge us with the emergence of new variants, and has forced businesses and organizations to reconsider and reconstruct long-established cleaning and disinfecting procedures.

To assist in this effort, the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a division of ISSA, recently launched “Infectious Disease Awareness in the Workplace: COVID-19 Considerations,” a GBAC Academy course. It is designed to help businesses and organizations and their frontline workers understand the basics of infectious diseases, with a special emphasis on COVID-19, and how to mitigate infectious diseases in the workplace. This course enables individuals in any business environment to understand infectious disease principles, and how cleaning and disinfection support health and safety.

“We’ll explore the importance of an infectious disease or communicable disease prevention program in the workplace, and how it will not only help with mitigation or prevention plans to stop the spread of infectious diseases like COVID-19 in the workplace but also how it may help with regulatory compliance,” Melissa Wernersbach, GBAC Academy Education Manager, said. “The Infectious Disease Awareness in the Workplace course will cover how infectious diseases spread and make people sick. From there, we’ll discuss the chain of infection and the importance of breaking that chain with effective cleaning and disinfection practices, indoor air quality considerations and other key mitigation strategies.”

According to Wernersbach, also included in the 30-minute course will be risk assessment, hierarchy of control, personal protective equipment or PPE and many more areas. She points out that anyone, including colleagues, vendors, students, co-workers or

customers, can carry an infectious disease into work or school environments, and negatively impact the well-being of those surroundings. This risk heightens the need to protect various stakeholders with improved hygienic cleaning and infection prevention with a workforce that is highly trained. Infectious Disease Awareness in the Workplace: COVID-19 Considerations helps companies meet that challenge.

“The training will provide education and learnings to understand the importance of risk assessments and a layered response protocol to protect customers, visitors, employees and the community at-large,” Wernersbach said. “The overarching goal is to help facilities prepare and provide their staff with education and training for infectious disease prevention and containment.”

She added that CloroxPro® is offering a limited number of scholarships

for this course to qualifying businesses and organizations. Turn to Page 5 of GBAC STAR Report for more details.

While COVID-19 has been in the forefront of prevention discussions, more common diseases such as influenza, pertussis, tuberculosis and others affect millions of people every year and can quickly spread through an organization. Educating frontline workers, such as cleaning professionals, can assist in halting the spread of these diseases throughout the workplace. Training and education is a critical and necessary step.

The GBAC STAR Community and members of ISSA can enroll in Infectious Disease Awareness in the Workplace: COVID-19 Considerations for \$30, however, you will need to obtain a coupon code for this special pricing by emailing gbacacademy@issa.com. Nonmembers will be charged \$50. To register, visit gbacacademy.org/awarenesscourse. ★

GBAC[®] tv

How and When to Test for COVID-19

“How and When to Test for COVID-19” will be covered in the latest edition of BioTalk. Dr. Gavin Macgregor-Skinner, Senior Director, GBAC, digs into the elements everyone needs to know when it comes to testing for COVID-19. Included in his discussion:

- Which test should be chosen
- How the tests work.

Dr. Macgregor-Skinner will also review why some data may not be reported because of the extensive use of rapid test kits.



BioTalk is a production of GBACtv, a webcast series produced by ISSA Media and the Global Biorisk Advisory Council™ (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, and hosted by Jeff Cross, ISSA Media Director. All episodes of BioTalk are available at <https://gbac.issa.com/media/gbactv>. ★

GBAC Webinar Introduction to Process Maps

If you are trying to document who does what, when and how, this upcoming GBAC Academy webinar is for you. "Introduction to Process Maps" is set for noon (EST), February 23 and focuses on:

- How to decide what starts and ends a process
- The importance of decision points
- How to identify the level of detail needed.

The one-hour webinar will offer discussion on the benefits of process maps and how they can assist in a documentation-managed environment.

The GBAC STAR Community and members of ISSA can enroll in Introduction to Process Maps for free, however, you will need to obtain a coupon code for this special pricing by emailing gbacacademy@issa.com. Non-members will be charged \$99. To register, visit <https://gbacacademy.issa.com/product/gbac-webinar-introduction-to-process-maps-free>. ★



Discover how to participate in National Cleaning Week

Sweep up the Benefits and Celebrate National Cleaning Week

Join ISSA, the leading trade association for the cleaning industry worldwide, in celebrating National Cleaning Week, March 27-April 2, 2022. The designated week is designed to emphasize the value of clean and the important, positive impact cleaning has on public health, the environment and our economy. ISSA is proud to be a key driver of this recognition because it represents a unique opportunity to raise public awareness for the value of clean, show appreciation for frontline cleaning professionals and for the GBAC STAR Family to promote their businesses and the cleaning industry.

National Cleaning Week promotes the importance of clean, advocates at the federal and state levels, provides

education and training and raises the profile of the cleaning industry. It is also an opportunity to engage and explore education opportunities, support charitable causes for the benefit of the cleaning industry and much more.

Maintaining a clean environment helps to lower the spread of viruses, bacteria and other pathogens that cause diseases and trigger allergic reactions. It also prevents the growth of mold at work and home spaces. Also, a clean space is closely associated with improved moods, decreased stress levels and enhanced productivity.

For more information visit, <https://events.issa.com/events/national-cleaning-week>. ★



Interested in Improving Efficiency?

Introduction to Process Maps Webinar

Wednesday, February 23 | 12:00 p.m. EST

FREE to ISSA Members and GBAC STAR Community!

REGISTER NOW



GBAC Academy



GBAC STAR

gbac.org
gbacstar@issa.com
 1-800-225-4772 (North America)
 1-847-982-0800