



Poolesville High School

Independent Studies Program Overview

2026-2027



At Poolesville High School we believe every student by design has the right to a well-rounded and rigorous education that prepares them for success in college/career and beyond.

Through our local school programming, students have the opportunity to select, access, and engage in a variety of academic courses, leadership, and enrichment opportunities based on their individual and unique interests and abilities.

Academic Coursework

All local students have access to rigorous coursework that they select based on their needs & interests.

Access to rigorous coursework including honors and Advanced Placement courses in English, Math, Social Studies, Science, Computer Science, Spanish, Art and Music, and electives including:

- ❖ Publications
- ❖ Discrete Mathematics, Linear Algebra, Applied Statistics, Vector Calculus
- ❖ Law, World Military History
- ❖ Anatomy & Physiology, Marine Biology, Cellular Physiology, Introduction to Genetics, Organic Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Thermodynamics, Quantum Physics, Forensic Science, Materials Science, Networking, Cyberforensics, Programming Languages

Focused Academic Pathways

All local students have the opportunity to select a focused and concentrated area of academic study that goes above and beyond the required state of Maryland graduation requirements. Although engaging in and completing a concentrated area of study is not required, it is encouraged. Each focused area of study supports the goal of ensuring students develop a deep understanding of the connections between classroom learning and work/volunteer experiences that will support their future intentions upon graduating.

Local students who select a concentrated area of study should expect to complete multiple courses in the approved area of their choosing.

Leadership

Building the leadership capacity of local students is a foundational component of a well-rounded and rigorous education. Local students may elect to join the Falcon Ambassadors. Falcon Ambassadors are committed to developing their own leadership skills while also working to ensure that all members of the PHS community feel heard, seen, valued, and supported. **Although participation as a Falcon Ambassador is not required of ISP students, it is encouraged.**

Enrichment

Enrichment learning serves to enhance the overall educational experience. Local students will be offered a variety of ways to engage in enrichment and hands-on experiential learning. These opportunities will take place both inside and outside of the classroom and include, but are not limited to, hands-on learning, guest speakers, and field trips. All experiential learning opportunities are tied directly to the curriculum and serve to enhance the overall learning environment. As ISP is an opportunity for students to explore their unique interests, **each student's experiential learning within the ISP program will also be unique.**

The ISP Certificate

ISP students who elect to complete a focused academic pathway are eligible to earn the ISP certificate.

An ISP Certificate signifies that a student went beyond the required state of Maryland graduation requirements and engaged in a focused learning opportunity that connects classroom learning to college/career and community goals.

At the conclusion of their senior year, all ISP students who complete a focused area of study will be expected to present their learning surrounding:

- ❖ Academic Skills and Connections
- ❖ Transferable Skills
- ❖ Future intentions

Detailed information about focused pathways and the senior presentation will be shared with students each year during course registration and during the second semester of their senior year. Students will receive this information through their focused pathway course(s).

ISP Points of Contact

Name	Contact Info	Reach out with questions about...
Allison Wilder , Magnet Coordinator	<i>Allison_C_Wilder@mcpsmd.org</i>	Overall Magnet Programming
Terese, Robichaud , ISP Head of House	<i>Terese_Robichaud@mcpsmd.org</i>	Overall ISP Programming



Pooleville High School

ISP Certificate Overview

2026-2027



At Pooleville High School we believe every student by design has the right to a well-rounded and rigorous education that prepares them for success in college/career and beyond.

Through our local school programming, students have the opportunity to select, access, and engage in a variety of academic courses, leadership, and enrichment opportunities based on their individual and unique interests and abilities.

The ISP Certificate

An ISP Certificate signifies that a student went beyond the required state of Maryland graduation requirements and engaged in a focused learning opportunity that connects classroom learning to college/career and community goals. Students are eligible to earn an ISP certificate by completing an approved focused academic pathway.

At the conclusion of their senior year, all ISP students who complete a focused area of study will be expected to present their learning surrounding:

- ❖ Academic Skills and Connections
- ❖ Transferable Skills
- ❖ Future intentions

Detailed information about the senior presentation will be shared with students during the second semester of their senior year. Students will receive this information through their focused pathway course(s).

Focused Academic Pathways

All ISP students have the opportunity to select a focused and concentrated area of academic study that goes above and beyond the required state of Maryland graduation requirements. **Although engaging in and completing a specialized academic pathway is not required of ISP students, it is encouraged.**

ISP students who select a specialized area of study are expected to complete multiple courses in the approved area of their choosing.

Each focused area of study supports the goal of ensuring students develop a deep understanding of the connections between classroom learning and work/volunteer experiences that will support their future intentions upon graduating.

Approved Focused Academic Pathways

Area of Study	Core Coursework	Elective Coursework
AP Capstone Certification <i>Sequential AP Coursework that develops skills in research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing, and presenting.</i>	❖ AP Seminar/English 10 ❖ AP Research ❖ A minimum of 4 additional AP Courses	❖ AP Language & Composition
PHS Educational Leadership Internship Pathway <i>A teacher internship program that consists of classroom learning centered on instructional teaching practices and real-time application of teaching practices as a classroom intern.</i>	❖ Educational Leadership Internship	❖ AP or Honors Psychology ❖ Honors or AP coursework within the internship content area.

Approved Focused Academic Pathways

Area of Study	Core Coursework	Elective Coursework
PHS Advanced Music Pathway <i>Students expand on foundational musical skills to develop a unique artistic and performance voice. By immersing themselves in multiple music courses, students experiment with diverse genres, take creative risks, and build a portfolio of compositions, technical mastery, and refined performances.</i>	❖ A minimum of 3 (level 1 and 2) Music Courses ❖ AP Music Theory	❖ Music National Honor Society
PHS Visual Arts Pathway <i>Students expand on foundations art skills to develop a unique artistic voice. By immersing themselves in multiple art courses, students experiment with diverse media, take creative risks, and build a cohesive body of original art work.</i>	❖ A minimum of 3 (level 1 and 2) Art Courses ❖ AP Studio Art ❖ AP Art Portfolio	❖ AP Art History ❖ Art National Honor Society
MCPS Career Readiness Pathway <i>College/Career Research and Development is a two-year program of study that prepares students with academic, technical, and workplace skills necessary to pursue future education and employment in a career field of their interest upon graduation from high school.</i>	❖ Completion of one of the MCPS Career Readiness program requirements. ❖ For more detailed information click here.	
MCPS Internship & Apprenticeship Pathway <i>The MCPS intern and apprenticeship program is designed to provide students the opportunity to gain authentic workplace experience to advance career and college plans.</i>	❖ Internship	❖ AP Psychology ❖ Financial Math or AP/ Honors Statistics
Project Lead the Way Engineering Pathway <i>A national engineering program that teaches students to apply science, math, and technical knowledge to solve complex, open-ended problems in a real-world context.</i>	❖ Completion of the PLTW program requirements. ❖ For more detailed information click here.	
Design Your Own Pathway <i>Students work in collaboration with school staff and counselors to design a sequence of courses and a capstone goal tailored to their unique and individual interests,</i>	❖ Proposals must be submitted for pre-approval. ❖ Students should use this form to submit their proposal. ❖ The deadline to submit proposals is the interim date of Marking Period 1.	

ISP Certificate Points of Contact

Name	Contact Info	Reach out with questions about...
Ms. Allison Wilder , Magnet Coordinator	<i>Allison_C_Wilder@mcpsmd.org</i>	Overall Magnet Programming
Ms. Stefanie Draisen , Center Lead Teacher	<i>Stefanie_E_Draisen@mcpsmd.org</i>	Overall Center Programming
Ms. Terese, Robichaud , ISP Head of House	<i>Terese_Robichaud@mcpsmd.org</i>	Overall ISP Programming Career Readiness Pathway Design Your Own Pathway
Mr. Terry Young , CTE Resource Teacher	<i>Terry_W_Young@mcpsmd.org</i>	Project Lead the Way Pathway AP Capstone Pathway
Ms. Shannon Heaton , Fine Arts	<i>Shannon_M_Heaton@mcpsmd.org</i>	Visual Arts & Music Pathway

ISP Certificate Points of Contact

Resource Teacher		
Ms. Leslie Gum , Educational Leadership	<i>Leslie_Gum@mcpsmd.org</i>	Educational Leadership Pathway
Mr. Sean Foster , Internship & Apprenticeship	<i>Sean_Foster@mcpsmd.org</i>	Internship and Apprenticeship Pathway