



Global Garden
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

MISSION

GLOBAL GARDEN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL will offer children and their families a joyful educational experience rooted in responsive relationships. Our staff will cultivate each child's natural curiosity through a vigorous International Baccalaureate curriculum that emphasizes inquiry, discovery and authenticity. Our students will grow into active, creative participants in the life of the school and in the local and global communities.

Lyric from Ancient Arabia

Our children
are our hearts
developing feet
and walking.

— *Hattan Ibu Al Mu'alla*

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1. State the vision for the proposed public charter school. Describe the vision and core philosophy and the underlying purpose of the proposed school and the school's educational program.
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The vision and purpose of the Founders of Global Garden Public Charter School (GGPCS) is to establish an innovative educational option in Montgomery County that

offers families a new choice for their children within our highly successful public school system. Our vision is of a school designed expressly to improve student performance, not just on the Maryland School Assessments but on measures of the critical thinking skills that prepare students for college and for participation as global citizens. As our hearts develop feet and walk out into the world, we desire to see them well-equipped in mind, body and spirit.

Through innovations that encompass school size and grade span, school culture, curricular approach, daily schedule, yearly calendar, staffing model and use of professional time, we propose to close the achievement gap among GGPCS students by educating children from widely diverse backgrounds through a common, vigorous, interdisciplinary curriculum paced to foster a responsive, joyful school culture. Through adherence to the principles of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program and its Learner Profile, we aim to imbue our students with a deep understanding of the “global garden” concept: that they are children growing up in the global context of their fellow human beings, interdependent with and responsible to each other and the planet.

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- 2. Describe the mission and philosophy for the proposed public charter school. Provide a clear and concise statement that defines the purpose and nature of the school. The mission statement should indicate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree. Avoid jargon and technical terminology. Parents and community members who wish to know more about the school should be able to read the mission statement and get a clear sense of the school and its philosophy.**
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and authenticity. Our students will grow into active, creative participants in the life of the school and in the local and global communities.

Philosophy

Csikszentmihályi (1975, 1990) theorizes that people are happiest when they are in a state he calls *flow*. Flow is a state of concentration and intrinsic motivation, characterized by feelings of great absorption, engagement, competence and fulfillment. To achieve a flow state, the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer must be in balance. If the task is too easy or too difficult, the flow state cannot be achieved. Skill level and challenge level must be matched and high; if skill and challenge are low and matched, then the result is apathy.

We seek at GGPCS to establish this feeling of absorption, engagement, competence and fulfillment for children and adults alike – a collective state of flow that carries everyone in the school community. This is what we mean by a “joyful school culture”; children call this experience of school “fun.” The achievement of a joyful school culture is a goal that can be challenging to measure, but without flow, joy, fun, the school experience can feel like an unsatisfying exercise. We propose to develop a joyful educational experience through a number of approaches encapsulated in our Mission Statement.

First, GGPCS will be a school of connection, an intimate community focused on fostering secure, responsive relationships of trust. This trust is the fertile ground in which each child can take root, take risks, and reach toward academic and personal excellence.

We believe that school is joyful when everyone in the school community feels a sense of belonging, of being known and valued in that community. We aim to achieve this first by keeping our school small – 420 students in grades K-8 at its largest – and by establishing an environment where responsive relationships are carefully cultivated. Parents and other family members will be deliberately and thoroughly included in the school community. When teachers have the opportunity to know families well in relationships of trust, they can respond together to the individual needs of each child;

in turn children feel safe and supported in school, a condition which motivates achievement.

Motivated students report an increased interest in subject matter and tend to be more capable of overcoming difficulties (Boekaerts, 2002). Higher levels of motivation are connected to higher math and reading grades in first and third graders (Broussard et al, 2004), and high motivation is demonstrated to be correlated with success in science and mathematics amongst eighth graders (Dika et al, 2002). Student motivation has also been linked to increased teacher success, which in turn impacts student performance (Belmont, et al, 1993). Even the degree of and attitudes toward motivation displayed by school principals can have a direct impact on student achievement (Renchler, 1992).

With an express focus on creating a culture of connection and belonging, this emotional security can be provided by the school family even for children whose home families are unable to participate fully in the program. Equally, when adult colleagues know each other well and are brought together in culture of connection and shared responsibility, they collaborate more effectively to improve instruction and successfully address the challenges that inevitably arise in institutions of public education.

Second, GGPCS will be a school of choice, where all members of the community – families, teachers, administrators and support staff, local and global community partners – freely come to participate in a high-quality educational experience. All stakeholders will cooperate in shared commitment to the principle that each of us has a responsibility to contribute as knowledgeable, active and compassionate citizens. Students will experience this freedom coupled with responsibility in the classroom: guided to ask good questions, they will learn to choose effective means to pursue answers and then plan to enact their learning in authentic ways.

We believe that school is joyful when everyone in the school community feels a sense of autonomy – the freedom and opportunity to exercise his or her strengths, skills and will within a framework of shared responsibility and purpose. For children, autonomy is offered by a school design that appropriately respects their needs across the spectrum of human development while developing powerful competency in fundamental academic skills. The GGPCS program will resoundingly acknowledge that

children's needs are physical (the need to get outside and play, for example) and social-emotional (the need to feel cared for in the community) as well as intellectual (the need to discover what piques their curiosity, rather than to be told what to be curious about). For teachers, autonomy is offered by a school design that trusts their professional judgment, supports their professional development and participation in decision-making, and allows for personal passion in carrying out an agreed instructional program.

GGPCS has selected the International Baccalaureate program precisely in order to support student and staff autonomy. (Academic Design Section 4 describes in detail GGPCS's Program of Inquiry and candidacy for International Baccalaureate Authorization.) The IB Primary Years Program (PYP) is not a prescribed curriculum, but a framework for the design of a program of inquiry which is both specific to an individual school's population and setting *and* open-ended – that is, largely student-driven in its implementation. Within the rigorous guidelines of the International Baccalaureate approach, GGPCS teachers will have the opportunity to exercise their professional judgment in facilitating the goals and objectives of a shared curricular focus; students will benefit from opportunities to meet the Maryland State Voluntary Curriculum Standards while exercising their developing skills and knowledge along broad lines of inquiry. The PYP offers built-in autonomy and creativity for the whole school community while ensuring academic excellence.

The Founders of GGPCS share a commitment to the mission of the IB Organization, which emphasizes the ultimate purpose of academic excellence.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Third, GGPCS will be a school of depth, with an approach to teaching and learning that honors the notion that “it takes a lot of slow to grow” (Merriam, 1983). A longer school day and an integrated curriculum will accommodate the whole child’s need to dig deep as she or he discovers the world outside school walls and connects with the global human family. Regular opportunities for collaborative planning and staff development will ensure that our exceptional teachers are prepared for and supported in bringing their best into the classroom. A restructured academic calendar will offer an antidote to summer learning loss, increased professional satisfaction, and more opportunities for enrichment. A measured pace will lead to greater achievement in an atmosphere of flow.

We believe that school is joyful when the work is real and meaningful to everyone in the school community. Students at GGPCS will benefit from a strong emphasis on the authentic application of all that is learned in the classroom in community service opportunities. In a second-grade classroom, for example, this means going beyond using pictures of lemons and sugar with illustrated price tags to calculate the cost of pretend lemonade. It means starting with the “big idea” and planning backwards to reach the learning activity that will contribute to 8-year-olds’ understanding of the ways that workers throughout the school contribute the community. Planning a trip on the Ride-On bus to the local Giant, buying the lemons and sugar to make real lemonade which the students then sell at a school event, and using their earnings to buy cooking equipment for GGPCS’s mobile kitchen cart – this is how children learn to be active, creative participants in the life of the school and in the local and global communities.

For the adults in any school, the work couldn’t be more real – it’s the serious business of ensuring that every child, no matter where they start, has the experience of successful learning and achievement. At GGPCS the adults’ work becomes more meaningful through collaboration as active, creative participants in the writing, teaching and assessment of the school’s unique curriculum, in the opportunity to know their students intimately over their entire school career, and in reflective evaluation of their own practice and the school’s program as a whole.

To summarize, our mission is to establish a school of connection and belonging, a school of choice and autonomy, a school of depth and authenticity for children and adults alike. These aspects, we believe, lead collectively to a joyful school

environment and a shared state of flow, which support academic excellence and achievement.

3. What are the goals and objectives of the public charter school? Summarize the goals and associated performance measures in relation to academic performance, organizational viability, and specific school objectives.

The Founding Board of GGPCS has formulated an initial set of strategic, measurable, attainable, results-oriented and time-bound goals and objectives for our school community which we look forward to refining in consultation with MCPS and MCEA as appropriate. They are summarized in the following table.

Goals and Objectives of Global Garden Public Charter School	Associated Performance Measures
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE 1. Adequate Yearly Progress By the end of Year 1 of operation, the school will meet or exceed Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by NCLB, including attendance measures. By the end of Year 2, GGPCS will have met or exceeded the 2013 MSDE Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP. 2. Academic Value Added In the school's first year of operation, each student will progress at least one grade level in reading and math as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition. 3. Equity of Achievement	1. Using MSA results from 2012, the percentage of GGPCS students scoring Proficient or Advanced will meet or exceed the requirements for meeting AYP. Using MSA results from 2013, GGPCS will have met or exceeded the MSDE Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP. 2. Using the Stanford 10 administered in late September 2011 as a baseline measure, 90% of students in grades K-3 will gain at least one full year in reading and math by the time the Stanford 10 is administered again in late June 2012; 80% of students in grades 4-8 will gain at least one full year in reading and math. 3.

In the school's first three years of operation, the gap in achievement between the school's lowest-performing students and its highest-performing students will be significantly reduced.	Using the school's 2014 Stanford 10 and MSA results as measures, GGPCS will reduce gaps in achievement among subgroups of the student population to the same degree or better than in MCPS as a whole.
ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY 1. Community Support Over the school's first year of operation, community support for the school will grow among families, nonprofit organizations, local businesses and global partners. 2. Effective Governance Over the school's first two years of operation, the Board of Governors will demonstrate strong growth, diversity, capacity and commitment.	1. Growth in community support will be measured by a 25% increase, by July 2012, in: *the total number of children applying for entrance or continuing at GGPCS in its second year as compared to Year 1 *the number of nonprofit organizations lending organizational or financial support to the school as compared to the number partnering at the time of application *the number of local businesses acting in cooperation with the school and its mission as compared to the number partnering at the time of application and *the development of five global partners (organizations outside the local area and outside the US) associated with the school 2. By July 2013, *The Board of Directors will grow to or maintain its full complement of 15 members. These 15 members will demonstrate diversity in their demographics, in the amount of time they have been associated with GGPCS, and in their professional skills and capacity. *The Board of Directors will have thoughtfully and actively addressed the role of GGPCS's professional staff in the school's governance. *The Board of Directors will establish 3-5 subcommittees deemed necessary and useful for

3. Fiscal Health Over the school's first three years of operation, GGPCS will maintain adequate or better fiscal health.	the good governance of the school. The Board will have collaborated with multiple stakeholders to create a both a 4-year strategic plan to guide GGPCS's first four years of operation and a plan for establishing the school over the longer term. 3. Over the school's first three years of operation, GGPCS will maintain a balanced budget for the operation of the mandated public school program that adheres to all MCPS audit criteria. Additionally, GGPCS will raise sufficient funds to establish and maintain its optional, fee-based Intersession Programming.
SPECIFIC SCHOOL OBJECTIVES 1. Progress towards IB Authorization In the school's first year of operation, it will make substantial progress towards the goal of authorization as an IB World School. 2. Joyful Educational Experience At the end of the school's first two years of operation, satisfaction with their school experience will increase overall for parents, children and staff.	1. By July 2012, GGPCS will have been accepted as a candidate school for authorization by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Its teachers will have completed required training and the Program of Inquiry will have been written and implemented under the guidance of the IB PYP. 2. A comparison of family and child survey and interview results collected in May 2011 with those collected in May 2012 and May 2013 will demonstrate an overall increase in satisfaction with their school experience. Survey and interview items will address belonging, intellectual vigor, academic achievement, autonomy, authenticity and global citizenship, in alignment with the mission of the school. The sample size will equal 50% or 100 families, whichever is larger. Staff response to the MCPS Climate Survey or a similar instrument will equal 90% of MCPS employees and maintain or increase staff's overall level of satisfaction between September 2011 and May 2013.

3. Diversity in the School Community Over the first three years of operation, the school will demonstrate that it has made comprehensive efforts to develop diversity as measured by the demographic data of families entering the lottery.	3. In May 2013 when GGPCS holds its third enrollment lottery, the demographic data of families entering the lottery will closely reflect the mix of MCPS students as a group, as measured against 2010 demographic data including socioeconomic status.
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4. Describe the curricular program and how it will lead to improved educational outcomes.

In this long section, we give details of our plan for implementing the IB PYP program, the instructional strategies that GGPCS will employ to meet a wide range of student needs, the research that substantiates our approaches, and how we will support excellence in achievement for each whole child entrusted to us.

Curriculum

The Founders of GGPCS are inspired by the Primary Years Program (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) for grades K-5. We plan to undertake the process of becoming authorized as an IB World School beginning in May of 2011, as soon as we have enrolled students and hired our staff (please see Academic Design Section 4.g for details about the IB authorization process). GGPCS students in grade 6-8 will also be instructed through a similar inquiry-based program of study, and authorization in the Middle Years Program will likely be sought in Year 3 or 4 of operation.

[All text in this section describing the IBO PYP is based on Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education (IBO, 2007). A note about terminology: In the International Baccalaureate Organization's document extensively referenced in the section on Academic Design, we have substituted the American spelling of "program" for the British English "programme", and the American English term "interdisciplinary" for the British English "transdisciplinary".]

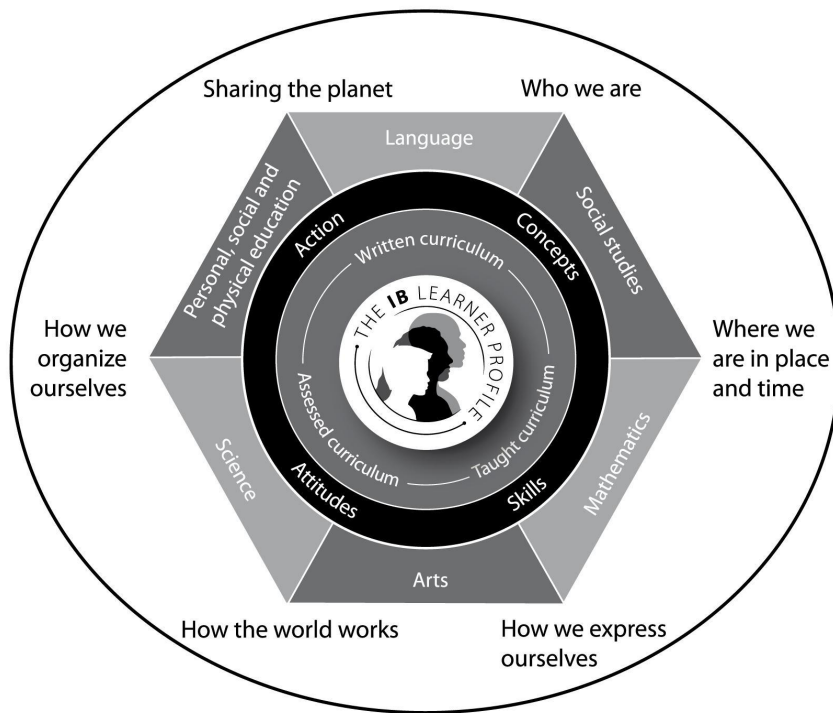
The choice of the IB PYP reflects our conviction that while content standards are important and must be met, an educational process focused on "delivering the

curriculum” or “covering the material” is not enough. Meaningful learning lies in mastering the skills and processes of critical thinking which can then be flexibly applied to any content material which becomes important in the life of the learner. According to the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, an interdisciplinary approach leads students to greater investment in the process of their own education, greater depth of understanding and more skillful, authentic application of learning to life. A student who learns and practices critical thinking becomes part of a global intellectual community, able to discern purposes and problems and act with integrity in considering and addressing them.

This, for the Founding Board of GGPCS, is the definition of academic excellence, and this, we believe, is what constitutes college and work readiness, whatever kind of work an individual undertakes. The American Association of Colleges and Universities identifies this approach with the familiar term “liberal education”:

“From its founding in 1915, AAC&U has focused on advancing and strengthening liberal education for all college students, regardless of their intended careers. While the term is used in multiple ways, AAC&U sees liberal education as a philosophy of education that empowers individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a strong sense of value, ethics, and civic engagement. Characterized by challenging encounters with important issues, and more a way of studying than a specific course or field of study, a liberal education can be achieved at all types of colleges and universities.” (AAC&U, 2010)

- a. **Describe the curriculum that will be used by the school, including the objectives, content, and skills to be taught in the different subject areas at each grade level and in each course.**



This diagram shows how the PYP puts the child at the center of the educational process. At the heart of the PYP is the IB Learner Profile, which describes the personal characteristics we aim to develop in every GGPCS student. This is accomplished through the implementation of the curriculum – as it written by the teaching staff, taught “on the ground” in the classroom, and assessed. The components of the PYP curriculum include knowledge, of course, but also skills, concepts, attitudes and action as they grow out of the traditional disciplines: social studies, mathematics, the arts, science, personal, social and physical education (PSPE) and language. Linking all the disciplines in the PYP are six overarching themes or globally significant issues that lend themselves to deeply authentic long-term study and that prepare young people especially well to participate in the international community.

Goals and Objectives

The IB Learner Profile encapsulates these critical thinking skills, processes and values, and because we believe that the fundamental purpose of education is to guide the

growth of children – mind, body and spirit – into adulthood, it is above all the goal of GGPCS to support the development of each child's qualities as an IB Learner. Our success in this will be indicated by our success in meeting the requirement for IB authorization.

IB LEARNER PROFILE

Inquirers: They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable: They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers: They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled: They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded: They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and the environment.

Risk-takers: They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced: They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective: They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

It bears repeating: the Founders of GGPCS believe that what each of us knows and can do is only one small part of who we are, and that a high-quality education must address the broader question of who each child becomes as she or he learns and grows within a school community. Success in developing this Learner Profile will depend on more than just curriculum. It will depend on a multitude of factors, each contributing to overall success, each addressed by our design for GGPCS.

Content

Based on comprehensive research and practice across a variety of national school systems and schools, the IB PYP is an approach to curriculum that supports this Learner Profile and empowers teachers and school staff to cultivate it through a Program of Inquiry that is conducted *with* rather than delivered *to* the students. The PYP provides a framework to guide coherent instruction from grade to grade, supporting schools in collaboratively designing a school's Program of Inquiry in accordance with the stated mission of their school.

Our Founding Group's Academic Design Committee has mapped out a detailed but preliminary draft of GGPCS's Program of Inquiry for grades K-8 (attached at Appendix AD1) in anticipation of a specific student population at a school in a specific location at a specific time in history. The actual implemented curriculum design will, according to the requirements of the IBO, be rewritten by the staff who are hired to teach at GGPCS. The fundamental subject matter or content of the curriculum at GGPCS will align with that of the Maryland State Curriculum and Standards and will thus not differ substantially from that of any other school in the district or in the state – but our approach to engaging children with that content will.

Our approach to content will facilitate each child's understanding that we grow and live in a “global garden,” a world community larger than any one of us but made up of infinite variations on the human theme. As a PYP school, our curriculum will be based on five essential elements: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and action, described as follows in the PYP.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE WRITTEN CURRICULUM

Knowledge: Significant, relevant content that we wish the students to explore and know about, taking into consideration their prior experience and understanding.

Concepts: Powerful ideas that have relevance within the subject areas but also transcend them and which students must explore and re-explore in order to develop a coherent, in-depth understanding.

Skills: Those capabilities that the students need to demonstrate to succeed in a changing, challenging world, which may be disciplinary or interdisciplinary in nature.

Attitudes: Dispositions that are expressions of fundamental values, beliefs and feelings about learning, the environment and people.

Action: Demonstrations of deeper learning in responsible behavior through responsible action; a manifestation in practice of the other essential elements.

While the existing MCPS curriculum thoroughly addresses what children should know and be able to do, we find the addition of Concepts, Attitudes and Action to be a crucial difference for GGPCS. In our view, the ultimate purpose of work done in school is not excellence as measured by tests and assessments but the ability of children to demonstrate “a coherent, in-depth understanding,” “fundamental values” and “responsible behavior through responsible action” in the real world of human beings in their environment. The addition of these essential elements is a call for authenticity in the curriculum, and GGPCS’s Program of Inquiry will emphasize the authentic application of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes through action.

In the PYP, student learning is interdisciplinary, an approach which is endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Reading Association, the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the Speech Communication Association, and the International Council for Elementary Science:

“...educational experiences are more authentic and of greater value to students when the curricula reflect real life, which is multifaceted – rather than being compartmentalized into neat subject-matter packages. Interdisciplinary instruction capitalizes on natural and logical connections that cut across content areas and is organized around questions, themes, problems, or projects rather than along traditional subject-matter boundaries. Such instruction is

likely to be responsive to children's curiosity and questions about real life and to result in productive learning and positive attitudes toward school and teachers.” (Consortium for Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning, 1995)

In the PYP, instruction is rarely compartmentalized and never departmentalized within the K-5 classroom. Inquiry into themes of global significance transcends the boundaries of the traditional subject areas and frames learning throughout the program. Students explore and inquire collaboratively from the multiple perspectives of their individual experiences and backgrounds. Sharing experiences increases students’ awareness of, and sensitivity to, the experiences of others in and beyond the local or national community.

Home

Ask me where is home
 and I will tell you
 a house
 a street
 a neighborhood
 a town
 Someplace safe and solid
 where I eat
 I run
 I sing
 I nap
 Someplace I can pinpoint
 on a map
 But what if I were an astronaut
 with the world dangling below me
 like a yo-yo from a giant’s hand
 and home was the whole planet?
 Would I be wise enough to understand
 the worth
 of my new address: Earth

~ Marilyn Singer

Knowledge

The PYP takes the view that it is not enough just to know; knowledge must be informed by safe, solid experience, by a variety of perspectives and by values. Our

vision for GGPCS is of a school that cultivates wisdom enough to understand the worth of our shared address: Earth.

The PYP introduces the idea that there are ways of learning the traditional subject areas that are especially effective in developing perspectives and values.

“...it is immensely important that the PYP curriculum model includes an outline of a coherent, flexible and interpretive written curriculum that frames a body of knowledge which supports the IBO, its mission statement and its learner profile. This decision is driven by the belief that there are areas of knowledge that, while important for any student, are especially significant in schools that aim to promote international-mindedness on the part of their students.

The importance of the traditional subject areas is acknowledged: language; mathematics; social studies; science; personal; social and physical education; and the arts; and indeed these are specified as components of the PYP curriculum model.

However, it is also recognized that educating students in a set of isolated subject areas, while necessary, is not sufficient. Of equal importance is the need to acquire skills in context, and to explore content that is relevant to students, and transcends the boundaries of the traditional subjects. “To be truly educated, a student must also make connections across the disciplines, discover ways to integrate the separate subjects, and ultimately relate what they learn to life” (Boyer 1995). Ernest Boyer proposed that students explore a set of themes that represents shared human experiences such as “response to the aesthetic” and “membership in groups”. He referred to these as “core commonalities”. Boyer’s work has been seminal to the development of the PYP. Debate and discussion, representing multiple perspectives, about this idea of human commonalities has led to the selection of six interdisciplinary themes, shown below, that are considered essential in the context of a program of international education.

These themes:

1. Have global significance – for all students in all cultures
2. Offer students the opportunity to explore the commonalities of human experience

3. Are supported by knowledge, concepts and skills from the traditional subject areas but utilize them in ways that transcend the confines of these subjects, thereby contributing to a interdisciplinary model of teaching and learning
4. Will be revisited throughout the students' years of schooling, so that the end result is immersion in broad-ranging, in-depth, articulated curriculum content
5. Contribute to the common ground that unifies the curricula in all PYP schools” (p.11)

The interdisciplinary themes that drive the PYP inquiry are described below, and the design of the GGPCS curriculum is centered around these six themes, which fit neatly into our planned six half-term units of study. (Please see Academic Design Section 4.f for an explanation of our academic calendar.)

PYP INTERDISCIPLINARY THEMES**Who we are**

An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human

Where we are in place and time

An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives

How we express ourselves

An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic

How the world works

An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment

How we organize ourselves

An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment

Sharing the planet

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution

Our students will inquire into, and learn about, these globally significant issues in the context of Units of Inquiry, each of which addresses a Central Idea. The interdisciplinary themes provide a basis for discussion and interpretation within a school, and allow for both local and global perspectives to be explored in the units. Within each unit, lines of inquiry guide students' exploration of the Central Idea, rather than to prescribe it. These units, articulated both horizontally over the course of a year and vertically from Kindergarten through 8th grade, collectively constitute GGPCS's Program of Inquiry, and are summarized in a Unit Matrix which is attached at Appendix AD1.

We have additionally identified a focus for each of these PYP interdisciplinary themes which expresses an aspect of our GGPCS mission and our emphasis on students' relationship with the "global garden" and which supports the development of a coherent, in-depth understanding of an important aspect of each theme.

School Year 2011-2012	Fall I	Fall II	Winter I	Spring I	Spring II	Summer I
IB PYP Themes for Inquiry	How we organize ourselves	Who we are	Where we are in place and time	How we express ourselves	Sharing the planet	How the world works
GGPCS FOCUS	WORK	FAMILY	TRAVEL	STORY	LAND	GARDEN

Below are samples from the GGPCS Unit Matrix detailing the scope of a single Unit of Inquiry from grades 1, 4 and 7. Please note that the approach to the Program of Inquiry differs in the middle school grades 6-8. In grade 6-8, GGPCS will continue with an inquiry-based, interdisciplinary approach to learning modeled after the PYP program implemented in the elementary grades. The middle school curriculum aligns with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum but is structured to a more traditional middle-school model. Please see Academic Design Section 4.f for further detail on the design and daily schedule for our middle school program and Section 4 .c for information about how the GGPCS Program of Inquiry is aligned with the Maryland State Curriculum and Standards.

Grade 1 Unit of Inquiry		Grade 4 Unit of Inquiry	
Where we are in place and time		Sharing the planet	
TRAVEL		LAND	
OUR SCHOOL, YOUR SCHOOL Central idea Every school is part of a system of schools in the larger community Key concepts		WHERE HAVE ALL THE DINOS GONE? Central idea Extinction comes about because of natural and human-influenced changes in the environment. Key concepts	

form, change, connection Related concepts properties, adaptation, relationships An inquiry into *locating where we are in relation to other schools in Montgomery County and in the US *comparing our school to others: how do schools reflect the community where they are located? *ways to connect with other schools: in writing, online and in person Math Focus: Position How do we get from our classroom to the playground? Science Focus Constructions	connection, responsibility, change Related concepts consequences, interdependence, initiative An inquiry into *the process of extinction in local species of the past and species of the present (Maryland's mastodons and blue crabs) *natural changes in the environment compared with those that are human-influenced *our ability and responsibility as stewards of the planet to address the threat of extinction Math Focus: Congruent & Symmetrical Figures Where do we find symmetry in nature? Science Focus Geology: minerals and fossils
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Grade 7 Unit of Inquiry

SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012		WINTER I / SPRING I	
Central Idea		Technologies have developed over time that allow use and exploitation of the land.	
7 th Grade: Land		American plantations	
Humanities		19 th Century America – Explore plantation society before and after the Civil War – Compare and contrast northern industrial use of the land with southern agrarian life – Examine the lives of yeomen farmers, black slaves and sharecroppers – Visit Museum of American History	
English		Genre: Short Story (related to the African American experience in the 19 th century)	

Science	Plant biology
Math	The math and economics of farming – Visit Morven Park, Leesburg, VA: “ From Swann's Castle to Governor's Mansion: Exploring an Old Southern Estate”
Arabic	Slavery in Arab societies
Arts	Civil War photography; documentary photography
Information and Communication Technology	– use Internet research and an appropriate software application to document 19 th century farming practices
PE	learn sports and games of cultures studied

In developing an individual Unit of Inquiry organized around a Central Idea, we have considered the need for each unit to be:

Engaging: of authentic interest to the students, involving them actively in their own learning

Relevant: linked to the students’ prior knowledge and experience, and current circumstances, and therefore placing learning in a context connected to the lives of the students

Challenging: extending the prior knowledge and experience of the students to increase their competencies and understanding

Significant: contributing to an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of the theme, and therefore to an understanding of commonality of human experiences

Central Ideas are broad, basic ideas, usually applicable across international and cultural boundaries, that lend themselves to inquiry and discussion. Our success as a school will be measured in part by our students’ understanding and expression of these Central Ideas at the end of each Unit of Inquiry. Here are some of the Central Ideas from the GGPCS curriculum:

K: Plants are an important part of the web of life.

1: Growing a food like wheat uses natural and human resources.

- 2: Maps record and convey information about our place in the world.
- 3: Honesty is a powerful force in human relationships.
- 4: People have arrived in the United States both by choice and by force.
- 5: Human beings seek to secure their right to self-determination and independence.
- 6: Water travel enabled exploration and led to conflict between cultures.
- 7: Conflicting ideas about the use of land impact our choices about how we feed ourselves and steward the planet.

It will be noted that very often in the GGPCS curriculum direct connections are made to food in general and to specific foods and their role in world cultures and history. The Founders of GGPCS hypothesize that by putting food (and its source, the “global garden”) at the heart of our curriculum, we will have engaged every single child from Day 1. There is nothing more motivating, in our experience, than offering students an opportunity to eat in school; there is nothing more universal than humans’ need to feed ourselves and at the same time nothing more culturally rich, specific and significant than the foods we choose – or have no choice – to eat.

Concepts

Like the “Central Idea,” the “Key concepts” and “Related concepts” noted in each unit are drawn from the PYP’s expression of significant ideas that bear purposeful, structured inquiry over time. A grasp of these concepts promotes a learner’s understanding within many contexts and subject areas.

The Founders of GGPCS agree with the IBO’s position on concepts:

- The expansion of the curriculum and the pressure to cover the syllabus have resulted in many students leaving school with superficial levels of understanding.
- By starting with the students’ prior knowledge, and by confronting and developing their earlier conceptions and constructs, teachers can begin to promote real understanding.

- The exploration and re-exploration of concepts leads students to work gradually towards a deepening of their conceptual understanding as they approach those concepts from a range of perspectives.
- Interdisciplinary units, where concepts are used to support and structure the inquiries, provide a context in which students can understand and, at the same time, acquire essential knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Certainly the PYP concepts are not the only ones worth exploring. Taken together, however, they form a powerful curriculum component that drives the teacher- and student-constructed inquiries that lie at the heart of the PYP curriculum. At GGPCS we further believe that this is an appropriate approach to learning for students of every intellectual ability and educational background, given appropriate support by the school community. The concepts are:

- **Form** – The understanding that everything has a form with recognizable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorized.
- **Function** – The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated
- **Causation** – The understanding that things do not just happen, that there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences
- **Change** – The understanding that change is universal, inevitable and in the process of movement from one state to another
- **Connection** – The understanding that we live in a world of interacting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect other
- **Perspective** – The understanding that knowledge is moderated by perspectives; different perspectives lead to different interpretations, understandings and findings; perspectives may be individual, group, cultural or discipline
- **Responsibility** – The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings, and the actions they take as a result do make a difference
- **Reflection** – The understanding that there are different ways of knowing, and that it is important to reflect on our conclusions, to consider our methods of reasoning, and the quality and the reliability of the evidence we have considered

Each of these key concepts is presented in more detail in Appendix AD2. Their expression in the GGPCS curriculum can be seen, again, by reading the Key and Related concepts noted within each Unit of Inquiry.

Skills

Through their instruction in the Program of Inquiry, GGPCS students will acquire and apply a set of interdisciplinary skills (lease see Appendix AD2 for more detailed descriptions of these skill sets).

- **thinking skills**, including comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation
- **social skills**, including accepting responsibility, cooperating, resolving conflict
- **communication skills**, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, presenting
- **self-management skills**, including spatial awareness, organization, time management
- **research skills**, including observing, planning, collecting data, interpreting data

These interdisciplinary skills are distinguished from subject-specific skills such as using a compass rose to locate the cardinal directions on a map, applying knowledge of word roots, prefixes and suffixes in spelling the word “hyperlinguistic,” or calculating the sum of $4,229 + 3,878$. While subject-specific skills are of course addressed in the written, taught and assessed curriculum at GGPCS, it is the broader, interdisciplinary skills that together are essential to navigating the Program of Inquiry but also to participating as a creative, principled and reflective citizen of the local and global community.

INCIDENT

Once riding in old Baltimore,
Heart-filled, head-filled with glee,
I saw a Baltimorean
Keep looking straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small,
And he was no whit bigger,
And so I smiled, but he poked out
His tongue, and called me, "Nigger."

I saw the whole of Baltimore
From May until December;
Of all the things that happened there
That's all that I remember.

— *Countee Cullen*

Attitudes

"Of all the things that happened there/That's all that I remember." Research into the lasting effects of the school experience suggests that often, what we take away from school into adulthood is not the knowledge or skills that we have learned and which, through practice, have become an unconscious part of us. Instead, what we remember is how it felt to be in a new school, which teacher sat us on her lap and helped when subtraction seemed impossible, which playground game of horse and rider still gallops through our dreams – or that bitter year when we were teased.

The inclusion of Attitudes as an essential element of the GGPCS PYP curriculum ensures that we address the important question of what we want our students to feel, value and demonstrate at school and beyond. As noted in the beginning of this section, we believe that knowledge, concepts and skills alone do not make an internationally-minded person. It is vital that there is also focus on the development of personal attitudes towards people, towards the environment and towards learning, attitudes that contribute to the well-being of the individual and of the group. GGPCS recognizes the importance of a decidedly secular but values-laden curriculum, and these aspects of our students' growth will be monitored and assessed just as we

assess their progress in learning math or science concepts. Please see Academic Design Section 12.a for further information on GGPCS's plan for assessment of student attitudes, summarized as follows in the PYP.

ATTITUDES

Appreciation: Appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people

Commitment: Being committed to their own learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility

Confidence: Feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices

Cooperation: Cooperating, collaborating, and leading or following as the situation demands

Creativity: Being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas

Curiosity: Being curious about the nature of learning, about the world, its people and cultures

Empathy: Imagining themselves in another's situation in order to understand his or her reasoning and emotions, so as to be open-minded and reflective about the perspectives of others

Enthusiasm: Enjoying learning and willingly putting the effort into the process

Independence: Thinking and acting independently, making their own judgments based on reasoned argument, and being able to defend their judgments

Integrity: Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness

Respect: Respecting themselves, others and the world around them

Tolerance: Being sensitive about differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others

Action

Finally, a main rationale for our selection of the PYP for GGPCS lies in our conviction that education, to reach its ultimate goal, must extend beyond the school-bound intellectual exercise to include the thoughtful and appropriate action that arises from socially responsible attitudes. An explicit expectation of the PYP is that successful inquiry will inspire responsible action initiated by the student as a result of the learning process. This action will extend the student's learning or it may have a wider social impact, and will clearly look different within each age range. At GGPCS we will prioritize for all learners the opportunity and the power to choose action; to decide on their actions; and to reflect on these actions in order to make a difference in and to the world.

We recognize the challenges inherent in advocating action among schoolchildren, particularly the role of the teacher in creating opportunities that will lend themselves to the possibilities of student-initiated action. Action should be seen as a voluntary demonstration of a student's empowerment in the context of the expectations laid down in the program. Voluntary action must remain precisely this if we truly believe in the values we advocate. Furthermore, we must remember that today's complex issues do not often suggest simple or self-evident solutions, and that inaction is also a legitimate choice; indeed, sometimes, inaction may be the best choice.

At GGPCS we will open opportunities for every student to enact their learning at least three times each school year. This action may be taken by an individual student or by a group of students working collaboratively. In the broadest sense of the word, action can mean service: service to fellow students and to the larger community, service to others at home in the United States or elsewhere in the world. For example, participation in the relief effort for the people of Haiti following the January earthquake would have provided a meaningful opportunity for GGPCS 4th graders to act in conjunction with their studies of the African slave trade and the journey of the immigrant. For middle school students in particular, the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the "good of the group" is important developmental work. Now that school has replaced the home as the place of adolescents' "work," our school must address this need to take productive action with responsibilities that affect the

welfare of others, which develops the young person's ability to function as a responsible and productive adult (Coleman in Gregory, 2000).

In summary, the content of the GGPCS Program of Inquiry will address, through a focus on attitudes and action in the context of knowledge, concepts and skills, the growth of each child's mind, body and spirit.

- b. Outline the instructional and assessment methods and strategies that will be employed to enhance student learning, monitor progress, assess performance, and inform instruction.**

In this section we will focus on instructional methods and strategies. Please see Academic Design Sections 4.g and 12 for a detailed discussion of GGPCS's assessment methods and strategies.

Inquiry-based instructional methods and strategies

To review, a hallmark of the PYP is the collaborative planning process that focuses on using the written curriculum to define Central Ideas that are themselves conceptually based. These central ideas are selected to enhance each student's understanding of issues of global significance, as expressed through the interdisciplinary themes. The focus of instruction should be on students' understanding of a Central Idea, and the inquiry should be structured to develop this understanding.

Teachers at GGPCS will be trained by the IBO and the school's IB Coordinator to participate both in the PYP planning process and in facilitating inquiry in the classroom for all students. Their first job, during the summer of 2011, will be to work with the preliminary draft Program of Inquiry presented here and make it "their own" with attention to the specific student population GGPCS has enrolled. Please see Operations Section 4 for details of our staff selection, training and professional development plan, and a note on Teacher Excellence at the end of this section.

The inquiry approach encourages students to be actively involved in their own learning and to take responsibility for that learning. Inquiry allows each child's understanding of the world to develop in a manner and at a rate that is unique to that child. The Founders of GGPCS recognize that there is a role for drill and practice; a

daily period has been reserved in our schedule for foundational practice in both literacy and numeracy skills (Word Work and Number Work; see Academic Design section 4.f for information on our common schoolwide schedule). However, we believe that teaching to the fullest extent possible about central ideas that are concept-based leads to the most substantial and enduring learning, and to the most authentic, joyful school experience.

GGPCS teachers will support students' efforts to construct meaning from the world around them by drawing on their prior knowledge, by providing provocation through new experiences, and by providing time and opportunity for practice, reflection and consolidation. This constructivist approach respects the children's developing ideas and understandings of the social and natural world; it continually stimulates students' revision and refinement of their models of how the world works. It implies a pedagogy that is significantly – but not completely – dependent on students' inquiry, where the planning incorporates a range of experiences that acknowledges the diversity of students' prior knowledge.

Inquiry, interpreted in the broadest sense, is the process initiated by the students or the teacher that moves the students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding. Its strategies include but are not limited to:

- Exploring, wondering and questioning
- Experimenting and playing with possibilities
- Making connections between previous learning and current learning
- Making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- Collecting data and reporting findings
- Clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- Deepening understanding through the application of a concept
- Making and testing theories
- Researching and seeking information
- Taking and defending a position
- Solving problems in a variety of ways

Inquiry involves an active engagement with the environment in an effort to make sense of the world, and consequent reflection on the connections between the experiences encountered and the information gathered. Inquiry involves the synthesis, analysis and manipulation of knowledge

In the PYP, the lively, animated process of inquiry appears differently within different age ranges. It happens predominantly through play in the early childhood years and becomes progressively more structured in the rest of the elementary years. This demands that GGPCS teachers be thoughtful participants in, and monitors of, the ongoing exploration and investigations that the students engage in or initiate. In particular, the teachers of students in grades K-2 need to be mindful of the role of the learning environment when presenting provocations to the students, for them to wonder at, and be curious about, and to stimulate purposeful play. Teachers of older students will acknowledge that although exploration and investigation may be more structured for children aged 8-14, this element of purposeful play will always have a role in making the inquiry a joyful and emotionally satisfying experience for children and teachers alike.

An explicit expectation of the PYP, again, is that successful inquiry will lead to responsible action initiated by the students as a result of the learning process. This action may extend the students' learning, or it may have a wider social impact. Both inquiry and action will clearly look different within each age range and from one age range to the next.

The PYP planner

If the Unit Matrix is the summary document of a PYP Program of Inquiry, the PYP planner is a detailed, working outline of each Unit of Inquiry. The implementation of GGPCS's final Program of Inquiry will be holistic and coordinated in order to ensure coherence in the school's curriculum as a whole. The PYP planner is an elegantly concise worksheet that allows teachers of a particular class of children to plan, document and reflect on one concept-driven Unit of Inquiry and its Central Idea. Our PYP planners will be used by all GGPCS teachers – classroom teachers, world language teachers, visual arts, performing arts, technology and physical education teachers – since all teaching will be organized around the exploration of a central idea. Appendix AD1 contains one Unit of Inquiry each from grades 1, 4 and 7 with

curriculum in each of these “Workshop” subjects built in, to show how these areas that are so often distinct from classroom work can be integrated into the inquiry.

The PYP planner document provides a detailed record of both teachers’ and students’ work on Unit of Inquiry, including sections for teachers to record

- the title and proposed duration of the Unit
- a summary of the interdisciplinary theme, the central idea and the summative assessments that will be used to evaluate children’s understanding of the central idea
- a summary of the key concepts to be emphasized, the lines of inquiry that will define the scope of the study, and the teacher’s questions and provocations that will drive the inquiry
- a column for detailing the learning experiences that might be suggested by the teacher as well as those suggested by the students, which is aligned to
- a column detailing the possibilities for recording and assessing both children’s prior knowledge and skills and evidence of growth and progress with respect to the interdisciplinary concepts, skills, and attributes of the IB Learner Profile
- a column for review and reflection on to what extent the purposes of the unit were met and how, which is aligned with
- a column for review and reflection on the extent to which the essential elements of the PYP were addressed
- a section for recording the student-initiated inquiries that arose during the course of the study
- a section for general teacher notes on the process and outcomes of planning and implementing the Unit of Inquiry

What does inquiry look like in the classroom?

With the PYP framework and with the principles of inquiry firmly in mind, all instructional activities will be thoughtfully matched to our end goal of developing students who habitually demonstrate the characteristics of the IB Learner Profile by the time they leave GGPCS. In addition, our instructional activities will:

- start, once again, with the basic assumption that every child brings a natural curiosity and a need for both challenge and support in finding success
- be vigorous – engaging, relevant, challenging and significant
- honor a range of learning styles and characteristics and be flexibly adjustable to meet the needs of individual learners at a classroom level
- acknowledge that all children benefit from working and learning in a variety of groupings
- consist of active rather than passive learning experiences as the normal daily routine, with particular emphasis on moving the learning outside the classroom walls
- rely on information provided by genuinely cooperative home-school relationships with parents and families
- be data-driven and based on timely student assessment as described in Academic Design Section 12a.

To illustrate, visitors to GGPCS are likely to see the following instructional activities and others like them taking place in a classroom. For each activity, the grade and Unit of Inquiry during which the activity might occur is noted.

SAMPLE CLASSROOM INQUIRY ACTIVITIES

Exploring, wondering and questioning

Working as a class to generate a list of questions about where humans come from (3, Heroes and Villains)

Experimenting and playing with possibilities

Working independently to build a model of the classroom using wooden unit blocks (K, Our School, Our Space)

Making connections between previous learning and current learning

Individually writing predictions about an upcoming class trip based on a local travel experience with family or school (4, Journey to a New Home)

SAMPLE CLASSROOM INQUIRY ACTIVITIES

Making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens

Planning as a class a fair way to watch the process of decomposition over six weeks by placing an apple, a banana and a potato on the windowsill (2, Green Magic; Brown Gold)

Collecting data and reporting findings

Individually surveying parents and neighbors at home about what languages they speak and in what contexts (1, Our GGPCS Family)

Clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events

Participating in a whole-class discussion about how slavery supported plantation society (7, American Plantations)

Deepening understanding through the application of a concept

Working in a small group using measurement skills to calculate the perimeter and area of the school pond (6, Contemporary Waterways)

Making and testing theories

Revisiting the school garden as a class record data about whether bean seedlings kept under glasses overnight survived the predicted frost (K, Dig In and Grow!)

Researching and seeking information

Using computer search engines to gather the most recent data about the world's top ten endangered species (4, Where Have All the Dinos Gone?)

Taking and defending a position

Signing up at home to make a public comment to the Board of Education; then writing and delivering a speech on a topic of interest to the student

Solving problems in a variety of ways

Debating the pros and cons of a controversial topic by weighing the arguments, symbolically, with coins on a balance scale (3, If Truth Be Told)

As the table above demonstrates, students at GGPCS will be instructed in whole-class groupings, where common culture is built; in small groups – formed either homogeneously and heterogeneously according to gender, skill or concept level, age, and interests – and individually in one-on-one conferences with the teacher. Instruction will be further tailored to each child’s needs through

- the use of self-differentiating approaches such as Writing Workshop and Reading Workshop;
- through flexible grouping across classes to facilitate accelerated learning; and
- through the use of parent and community volunteers trained to support the teachers in specific classroom activities such as taking spelling inventories or leading science-related cooking projects.

Additionally, this small set of sample activities demonstrates our belief that a key factor in student academic success lies in engaging families in the educational program in meaningful ways. For more information on the ways that parents will be invited, enabled and supported in actively partnering with GGPCS in the education of their children, please see Academic Design Section 14 and Governance Section 7.

A Note about Teacher Excellence

While we include details of GGPCS’s plan for recruiting, hiring and training our school staff as requested in the Operations Section of this application, we find it important to address the question of teacher quality and capacity here in the Academic Design section. The research suggests that teacher quality variables are more strongly related to student achievement than class sizes, overall spending levels, teacher salaries and even student demographic characteristics (Darling-Hammond, 1999).

Therefore, although it may seem obvious, it is worth noting that none of our vision for a common, vigorous program of instruction with success for every student at GGPCS can become reality without a staff of exceptional educators in place. Indeed, if we were elsewhere than in Montgomery County, where fully 84% of serving teachers hold a Master’s degree or the equivalent, we might not opt to offer the demanding, world-class IB program.

Since GGPCS teachers will also be employees of MCPS, they will first need to meet the following high standards expected of new and experienced teachers recruited to MCPS.

MCPS Minimum Qualification Standards for New and Experienced Teachers

- Bachelor's degree in the applicable field of education
- Maryland State certified
- Knowledge of MCPS curriculum, techniques for integration, MCPS policies and effective instructional practice
- Understanding of the teaching/learning process, including ability to provide multicultural education
- Ability to infuse technology into the curriculum
- Ability to work effectively with administrators, colleagues, central office and school based staff, students, parents and community.
- Excellent oral and written communication and human relations skills

In addition to seeking teachers with these MCPS-required qualifications and abilities, we will seek to enrich our students' school experience by employing teachers who also bring an extra depth of personal experience, commitment and energy as well as excellent pedagogical skills. In our interview and selection process (please see Operations Section 4 for further details) we will seek candidates who

- Share the vision of GGPCS and a passion to implement the mission and goals of GGPCS
- See themselves as inquirers and lifelong learners who strive for excellence
- Have a commitment to professional development and professional collaboration
- Collaborate effectively with others, including interacting well with leadership and members of the faculty and staff
- Have an interest in assuming a schoolwide leadership responsibility
- Are able and desire to work with diverse student populations
- Work well with families and are comfortable with meaningful parent involvement

- Recognize the essential need to learn about each student and his or her family and use this information to personalize instruction
- Willingly draw on many different resources to enhance instruction
- Promote interaction, independent thinking, and expression of diverse view points among their students
- Use classroom management strategies effectively and creatively to maximize student learning
- combine a Bachelor's Degree and general work experience or a Bachelor's Degree and additional teacher-training qualification
- are IB-trained or educated
- are fluent in any other world language

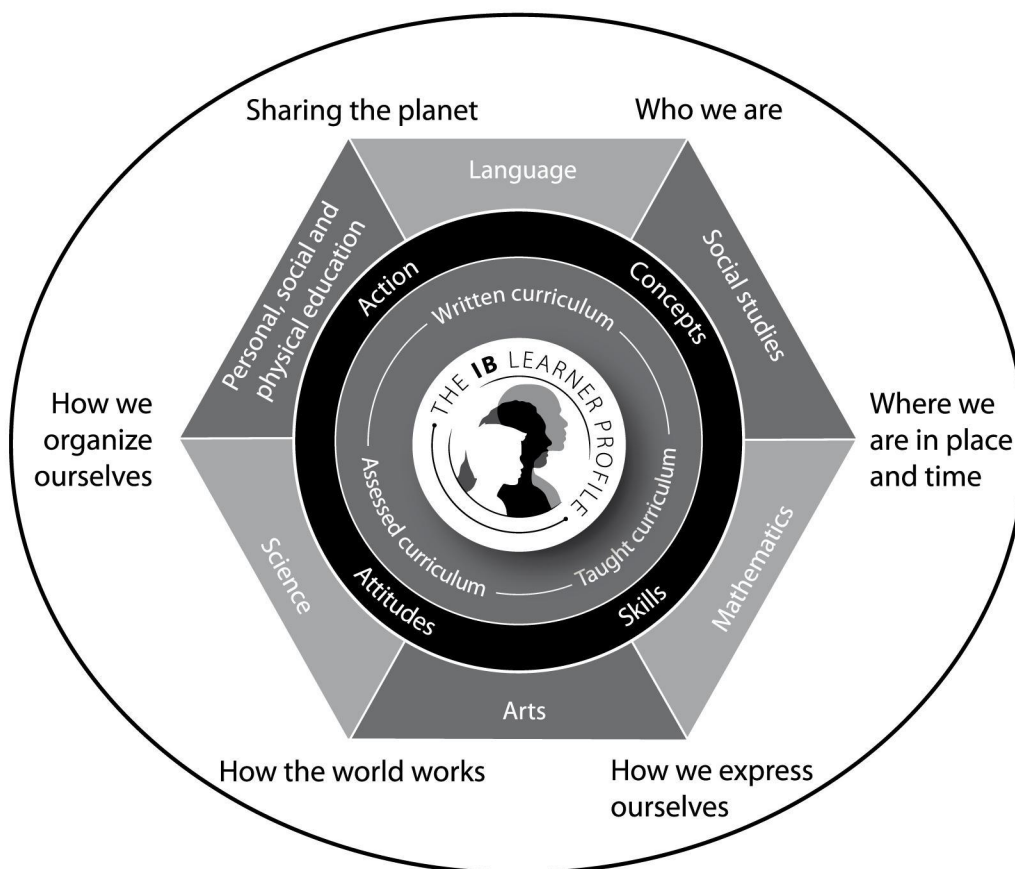
The development of a school staff who themselves embody the characteristics of the IB Learner Profile and who are committed to the specific mission of GGPCS is essential to the success of our educational program for students, and will be measured as part of our overall ongoing assessment. Please see Academic Design Section 4.g for details of our assessment against IB standards.

We have included a number of elements in our school design to support every teacher in bringing her or his best into the classroom.

- Our small school community will foster a sense of connection and belonging among the staff as well as among students
- We anticipate hiring a mix of very experienced and newer teachers who will be assigned in ways that allow wisdom and energy to benefit from each other
- Our organization of the grades into clusters (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) will ensure that no teacher ever “walks alone,” even if she or he is alone on grade level.
- Our Wednesday afternoon professional development period, combined with ample common planning time, will allow for meaningful collaboration among colleagues.
- Involving teachers in decision-making at the local school level

- c. Explain how the curriculum is aligned with Maryland Content Standards and the voluntary state curriculum.

Again, we share the views of the International Baccalaureate Organization, the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking and the Consortium for Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning: an interdisciplinary approach leads students to greater investment in the process of their own education, greater depth of understanding and more skillful, authentic application of learning to life.



However, we acknowledge that to be accountable to MCPS, to parents and to the movement in the U.S. towards a common, rigorous set of academic standards, it is important for us to document the ways in which GGPCS's Program of Inquiry will

address the content standards of the traditional academic disciplines. To this end, we have prepared a sample Unit Matrix for grades 1, 4 and 7, found in Appendix AD1, that shows how we have approached alignment of the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum standards with the Units of Inquiry grade. For clarity we provide one example below from our 1st, 4th and 7th grade Units of Inquiry. In addition, in the section that follows we provide a brief statement for each of the MSC subject areas that details the particular approach that we envision for GGPCS.

Grade 1 Aligned Unit	Grade 4 Aligned Unit
How we organize ourselves	Who we are
WORK	FAMILY
HOW CAN I HELP? Central idea Each person contributes to their community using a unique set of skills and attitudes. Key concepts function, connection, responsibility Related concepts Relationships, citizenship, collaboration An inquiry into *roles, jobs and tools within our school *skills and attitudes that support a community *our individual strengths Math Focus: Geometry GeoPhoto Project: using digital cameras, what geometric shapes can you photograph on a walk around the school? Science: The Measure of Me (incorporating Myself and Others) Social Studies Content Standards 1, 2, 3,4, 5, 6 English Language Arts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 World Language 1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 5.1, 5.2 Technology 2.A, 3.B, 3.C, 4.A, 5.A, 5.B Physical Education	STAND BY ME Central idea Oppression and moral courage each take many forms. Key concepts perspective, reflection, responsibility Related concepts equity, self-esteem, conflict resolution An inquiry into *power struggles, bullying and oppression *what it means to stick up for yourself and others *conflict resolution Math Focus: Congruence Collect data on the meaning of congruence & its relevance to our classroom & school community. Science: Matter: liquids, solids, gases Social Studies Content Standards 2, 5, 6 English Language Arts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 World Language 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2 Technology 2.A, 3.A, 3.B, 4.A, 4.B Physical Education

How we organize ourselves	Who we are
WORK	FAMILY
3 Health 1, 3	1,3,4, 5, 6 Health 1,4

Grade 7 Aligned Unit

LAND	
Humanities Social Studies Content Standards 1,2,3,4,5,6	Medieval Europe -compare and contrast the lives of feudal lords and serfs -explore the social and economic justifications for class structure -examine the technologies developed that allowed exploitation of the land
English English Language Arts 1,2,3,4,5	Genre: Historical fiction related to the Middle Ages such as <i>Catherine Called Birdy</i> by Karen Cushman
Science 1,2,5,6	The geography of Earth
Math 1,2,3,4,5,6,7	Math 7/IM/Algebra Prep Rediscovering classical math at the end of the Middle Ages
Arabic World Languages 1,2,3,4,5	The Middle East in the Middle Ages: position and direction vocabulary, numbers and dates Trip: The Islamic Center of Washington, DC
Arts 1,2,3,4	Medieval art: architecture and illuminated manuscripts
Technology	

2,3,4,5	-use primary sources available online and PowerPoint to develop a graphic and written comparison of Europe and the Middle East in the Middle Ages
Physical Education 2,4,5,6	-learn about the Islamic sport of polo and its relationship to the horseback tournaments of the Middle Ages and modern hockey -learn and practice hockey and fencing skills with emphasis on the concepts of “territory” and “right of way”

Brotherhood

I am a man: little do I last
and the night is enormous.
But I look up:
the stars write.
Unknowing I understand:
I too am written,
and at this very moment
someone spells me out.

Hermanadad

Soy hombre: duro poco
y es enorme la noche.
Pero miro hacia arriba:
las estrellas escriben.
Sin entender comprendo:
también soy escritura
y en este mismo instante
alguien me deletrea.

— *Octavio Paz*

Social Studies

Most of what we learn — about ourselves, about the physical world and about our place in it — we learn through our relationships with or in the company of other people. At GGPCS social studies holds a special place in the curriculum, because its focus on people and their relationships with each other and the environment mirrors children's learning through their interactions with people and the environment. Indeed, the PYP's six interdisciplinary themes could be framed as social studies questions, and in the GGPCS Program of Inquiry, social studies serves as the core of the interdisciplinary Program of Inquiry.

The Founders of GGPCS believe that the fundamental aim of public education in the U.S. is equipping children to participate in a democratic society. Our social studies emphasis on attitudes and how they inspire us to action as teachers and learners is an expression of our commitment to high-quality public education for all. Therefore, while we do not at all dispute the primary place of language and literature and mathematics learning for their own sakes, GGPCS will emphasize the use of reading and math skills as tools for pursuing richly relevant social studies inquiries. GGPCS teachers will integrate concepts and skills from these and other academic areas within children's daily experiential work in social studies.

Global Garden's Program of Inquiry for grades K-2 recognizes that young children have a shorter history of experiences in the world and are in the early stages of developing their knowledge and symbol-making capabilities; their Units of Inquiry encourage exploration of the concrete visible world around them. Because they are not

developmentally ready for abstract ideas about places further away in time and space, our Units of Inquiry for K-2 are based on children's daily experiences of the here-and-now.

Family, school, and neighborhood are the sources of social studies topics at this level. Since the family is the young child's primary reference, GGPCS curriculum will represent the cultural diversity of the families who make up our school community. Each child and family is considered unique; each family's heritage and contributions to our society are shared and valued as integral to daily classroom life. GGPCS teachers will begin a Unit of Inquiry by investigating children's experiences and knowledge about the central idea. The lines of inquiry will gradually widen as children develop their own questions, participate in their own investigations, and move outside the classroom to broaden and deepen their understandings through visits elsewhere in and beyond the school. In the classroom, they share and discuss these experiences in meetings and use play to recreate and construct meaning.

Play is the means through which these young children think, feel, and create meaning. Their "textbooks" include the open-ended materials – such as blocks, paint, water, sand, paper, pencil and crayons – through which they investigate and work through what they know and don't know about their physical and social world. Within the safe context of play, children try out roles, act out "what-ifs", express ideas, try out solutions to problems, and simply imagine. Through the symbolic nature of play, making things stand for other things through physical, visual, and verbal means, children lay the foundation for future, more sophisticated abstract and symbolic thinking.

As the interests and socio-emotional and cognitive abilities and needs of older children develop, so does their ability to reason abstractly. Their social studies include concepts from the arts and sciences, history, geography, political science, economics, technology, sociology, and anthropology. GGPCS middle school students will use primary sources to gather information and express ideas, work with simultaneous variables, reason with cause and effect relationships, and sequence events in ways that make more complex studies possible. As they become less self-involved, children grow in their appreciation of other perspectives, and are able to respect and consider lifestyles, values, and ideals different from theirs. For these reasons, middle school Units of Inquiry will tend to be cultural and historical studies

that are geographically and/or temporally distant and compare and contrast these studies with their own experiences.

- **VSC Standard 1.0 Political Science:** Students will understand the historical development and current status of the democratic principles and the development of skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens.
- **VSC Standard 2.0 Peoples of the Nation and World:** Students will understand how people in Maryland, the United States and around the world are alike and different.
- **VSC Standard 3.0 Geography:** Students will use geographic concepts and processes to understand location and its relationship to human activities.
- **VSC Standard 4.0 Economics:** Students will identify the economic principles and processes that are helpful to producers and consumers when making good decisions.
- **VSC Standard 5.0 History:** Students will use historical thinking skills to understand how individuals and events have changed society over time.
- **VSC Standard 6.0 Social Studies Skills and Processes:** Students shall use reading, writing, and thinking processes and skills to gain knowledge and understanding of political, historical, and current events using chronological and spatial thinking, economic reasoning, and historical interpretation, by framing and evaluating questions from primary and secondary sources.

THE FIRST BOOK

Open it.

Go ahead, it won't bite.

Well...maybe a little.

More a nip, like. A tingle.

It's pleasurable, really.

You see, it keeps on opening.

You may fall in.

Sure, it's hard to get started;
remember learning to use

knife and fork? Dig in:
 You'll never reach the bottom.
 It's not like it's the end of the world –
 just the world as you think
 you know it.
 – *Rita Dove*

Reading and English Language Arts

“Dig in:/You'll never reach the bottom.” Learning to read is a rite of passage for young children and an accomplishment that empowers the student and offers infinite opportunities to move a step further, a layer deeper in understanding through the enjoyment and interpretation of texts of all kinds. However, acquisition of the full range of reading skills depends heavily on the earliest years, and failure at this stage has serious consequences.

Success in beginning reading is a key prerequisite for success in reading in the later years. Longitudinal studies (e.g., Juel, 1988) have shown that children with poor reading skills at the end of first grade are unlikely to catch up later on, and are likely to have difficulties in reading throughout their schooling. It is in the early elementary grades where the gap in performance between children of different races first appears, and this gap is perhaps the most important policy issue in education in the U.S. (Slavin et al., 2009)

GGPCS is therefore committed to supporting successful literacy learning for each student, from early years acquisition of phonics knowledge through the middle years development of fluency and mechanics through to a later emphasis on literary styles and genres. This includes making sure that every one of our students finishes 2nd grade with the tools they need to continue on the road to being Readers. In our view, an excellent foundation in reading requires three things only: a love of reading, a solid grasp of the phonological system of the English language, and a writing program that brings these first two together in daily guided practice.

We will accomplish this goal through a number of our school design elements. First, our K-2 classes are the smallest in the school, and in addition to assigning (in Year 1) one paraeducator to the two K classes and one shared by 1st and 2nd grades, we also plan to seek an IB coordinator qualified to offer reading support throughout the early

years. A school as small as GGPCS typically requires only .25 to .5 of a position to coordinate IB training and curriculum development, which frees a professional with the right qualifications to provide substantial small-group reading instruction on a daily basis. This means that in addition to services affecting reading development such as library/media, ESOL or special education, our four early years classes will have at their disposal five instructional staff focused on reading. This grows substantially in Year 2 when our Workshop teachers – art, music and PE – become full time and are assigned most of the morning to K-2 classes.

This staffing model, combined with the use of classroom volunteers and older reading buddies, will allow us to develop a love of reading in our students. When we say “love of reading,” we mean the social-emotional associations that grow out of intimate, shared early reading experiences and underpin lasting success in reading. This experience, which approximates the lap-reading that takes place in literacy-rich households, positively impacts comprehension, vocabulary development and fluency. In our view it is no surprise that a recent summary of best practice found greater effectiveness over time demonstrated in “instructional process programs, especially cooperative learning programs in which students help one another master reading comprehension skills in small teams or pairs” (Slavin, p. 7).

A crucial provision for developing this emotional investment in the reading process is quality literature. A priority for GGPCS in our first years will be to supply each classroom with a sizeable collection of trade books to supplement those available in our school library. These will include selections that range across the genres in support of our Program of Inquiry, often supplied in sets so that each classroom can become a community of readers with a stock of shared texts and references—“core books.” In addition, particularly in K-3, we will take care in selecting high quality leveled books using guidance from *Matching Books to Readers: Using Leveled Books in Grades K-3* (Fountas and Pinnell, 1999) and other sources, so that teachers can frequently evaluate children’s progress as readers.

Second, we will carefully review and select (or create) the best phonics teaching program we can find, and then provide our teachers with the professional development to use it well. This means building skills through a measured amount of drill presented as playfully as possible, and through the range of modes that young children use to learn: visual, auditory, kinesthetic. By second grade, many children

will have mastered the 46 phonemes of the English language and most of their attendant wide variety of spellings and will be ready to move on to orthographic, structural language study. But for those who have not yet reached that level, the availability of a consistent system known and used throughout the school will provide support either until mastery in decoding and spelling is reached or until other measures are taken to meet special needs. Along the way, a regular assessment of developing reading skills through inventories and running records taken at least three times a year for every child in K-3 will provide the diagnostic data that teachers require to pinpoint individual needs. (Please see Governance Section 8 for a request regarding local reading assessments.)

As this foundation of attitudes and skills in reading is established, GGPCS will develop students' practice through a Reading Workshop approach that is based on a concept of a class as a community of readers, pursuing their personal interests through their own reading choices, participating in partner, small- and large-group reading activities and in whole class inquiries into the uses and interpretation of reading selections. This approach has the huge benefit of being both self-differentiating – so that students can work at their own proximal level of challenge – and being rooted, again, in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. The teacher's role is central in setting the atmosphere and modeling what it means to be a committed, skilled reader.

The third component is discussed below, under Writing.

- **VSC Standard 1.0 General Reading Processes**
- **VSC Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text:** Students will read, comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate informational text.
- **VSC Standard 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text:** Students will read, comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate literary texts.

WHILE WRITING

Let the words come to you
 Let the words escape you; flowing through your body to your pen
 Let the words lead you through your whole life
 Let the words seize you
 Let the words rip you from your world and take you to theirs
 Let the words uncover your deepest thoughts
 The words make feelings express themselves
 The words make real life seem like fantasy
 The words make us feel like nothing will ever be bad
 And I love the words

– *Daisy, age 10*
 after Langston Hughes’s “April Rain Song”

Writing

Like social studies, writing holds special place in the curriculum at GGPCS because of its powerful impact on the development of children’s intellect, understanding of self and emotional investment in the products of their effort. A Writing Workshop program that, in the early years, allows children to establish a notion of themselves as writers and as creators of meaning, is the third essential component of a balanced literacy program. Like Reading Workshop, Writing Workshop is an approach that begins with the notion of autonomy: that we write best and with greatest motivation when we write about topics of our own choice. In the early years classroom, Writing Workshop has the role of allowing children to practice their skills in applying knowledge of the phonological system, language mechanics and conventions, again in a self-

differentiating daily practice. In K-2, Writing Workshop also leads to a strong hands-on bookmaking element which encourages children to see themselves as authors with something important to say to the world.

Once this self-image is established along with fluency in the physical act of writing, it becomes very much easier, as children mature through to the middle school, to guide

their choice of topics and genres and develop their ranges not only as writers but as reader-writers tasked with the responsibility to participate in the literacy – and eventually literary – community of their peers. The Writing Workshop approach is easily woven throughout the Program of Inquiry to serve as a tool for exploration, for consolidation of concepts and skills, and for summative expression of understanding. Again, the teacher’s role as model, as practitioner and as coach is centrally important.

- **VSC Standard 4.0 Writing:** Students will compose in a variety of modes by developing content, employing specific forms, and selecting language appropriate for a particular audience and purpose.
- **VSC Standard 5.0 Controlling Language:** Students will control language by applying the conventions of Standard English in speaking and writing.
- **VSC Standard 6.0 Listening:** Students will demonstrate effective listening to learn, process, and analyze information.
- **VSC Standard 7.0 Speaking:** Student will communicate effectively in a variety of situations with different audiences, purposes, and formats.

World Language

GGPCS bases its second language instructional model on past and current research in language acquisition. Along with the International Baccalaureate Organization, we believe that language learning is about authentic communication, and best practice in language instruction also includes first- and second-language literacy. Research has shown that students who study a second language in a coherent and consistent fashion that emphasizes written and spoken communication often score higher on standardized tests. This is because foreign language learning has now been identified as a cognitive problem-solving activity as well as a linguistic activity. Studies have shown repeatedly that foreign language learning increases critical thinking skills, creativity, and flexibility of mind in young children. Students who are learning a foreign language out-score their non-foreign language learning peers in the verbal *and* the math sections of standardized tests (Caccavale, 2010).

Our model, an immersion approach which emphasizes utilization of first-language skills (particularly Spanish at GGPCS) to enrich both ESOL and second-language

instruction, is at the cutting edge of current language instruction methodology. ESOL students bring a wealth of global knowledge and cultural information to any school; GGPCS intends to make full use of that knowledge which will enrich the experience of all students.

In addition to Spanish in K-5, GGPCS proposes an innovative offering of Arabic starting in 6th grade. Arabic is identified by the Federal Government and in the world language community as one of the three “critical languages” along with Chinese and Korean, meaning that the demand in the US for speakers fluent in Arabic is greater than the supply. Because Arabic is so different from English, beginning Arabic instruction earlier than high school increases the chances that learners will develop a level of fluency and literacy by graduation.

Offering Arabic at GGPCS also aligns with our mission to develop global citizens who are prepared to participate knowledgeably and with integrity in their relations with the global community. The US has many close ties with countries of the Arabic-speaking and Muslim world, and the opportunity to focus in our middle-school curriculum on the history and contributions of those countries and our relations with them adds a level of meaning and authenticity that is sorely needed in our nation. We are fortunate also to live in an area where resources for excellent Arabic teaching and opportunities to apply Arabic learning are plentiful, such as the Arabic Flagship Program at University of Maryland.

1.0: Communication

- 1.1. *Interpersonal*: Students exchange information orally and in writing in the target language in a culturally appropriate manner to provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.
- 1.2. *Interpretive*: Students understand and interpret the target language in its spoken and written form on a variety of topics.

Presentational: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a wide variety of topics in the target language.

2.0: Culture

2.1. *Practices and Perspectives*: Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of another people's way of life, and the relationship between their patterns of behavior, and the underlying beliefs and values that guide and shape their lives.

2.2. *Products and Perspectives*: Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the products, symbols, beliefs, and values of the target culture.

3.0: Connections

3.1. *Across Disciplines*: Students reinforce and further knowledge of other content areas through a language other than English.

3.2. *Added Perspectives*: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are available only through a language and its cultures.

4.0: Comparisons

4.1. *Language*: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and English

4.2. *Culture*: Students demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

5.0: Communities

5.1. *Practical Applications*: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

5.2. *Personal Enrichment*: Students use the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Mathematics

For math instruction, GGPCS has elected to adopt the Singapore Math textbook series in use in many schools and districts in the US and all over Singapore, where 4th and 8th grade students consistently excel on international measures of math proficiency. MCPS conducted a successful short-term pilot of Singapore Math starting in 2000, in which “Singapore pilot students significantly outperformed students in the Control A schools in every quarter at all grade levels.” [MCPS Office of Shared Accountability,

“Evaluation of the Singapore Math Pilot Program: Year 2 Report of Findings” (February 2003).

Users recommend Singapore Math’s simple and effective approach, logical structure, coherent curriculum, and focus on the skills necessary for later success in algebra. The Singapore Math approach treats young students as future adults who will need technical mathematics and the ability to do serious mathematical thinking in their careers.

Each concept is introduced with a simple explanation — often just a few words in a cartoon balloon. Students with weak reading and math skills benefit hugely from this direct simplicity. However, the textbook’s attractive, simple appearance does not diminish its effectiveness. Beginning in 3rd grade, the powerful bar model technique is introduced. Practice problems in Singapore Math are designed to teach skills step by step. The first few practice problems in a typical lesson might provide the appropriate bar model, while succeeding problems require the student to construct it the model themselves.

The texts, which have the additional benefit of representing a wide range of ethnicities and language backgrounds, are carefully crafted so that students are presented with hints and examples for applying new concepts and algorithmic techniques, thus providing the scaffolding for learning. Over time, students learn to apply the bar model’s variants to problems that use the full range of math operations and terms to express basic concepts like “subtraction” or “proportion.” This focus on the language of mathematics is important for all students, but especially for English language learners engaging with word problems in classroom projects or on assessments.

Singapore Math teaches at a slower pace and in more depth because it focuses instruction on the essential math skills recommended in the Curriculum Focal Points (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2006). As a result, students make more rapid progress in those essential skills; for example, they learn multiplication in 1st grade. This effect — slower pace resulting in more rapid progress — works for students who perform on, above, or below grade level. Along the way, the emphasis is on helping students achieve mastery, so that reteaching of skills is kept to a minimum.

At GGPCS we will aim to group students for math instruction with the textbook that is at their level of understanding – not necessarily at their grade level. Our daily math foundation block will be a time during which students receive instruction in small groups at their own level – usually in their assigned classroom but occasionally with students of other classes as appropriate. Work in mathematics, as throughout the Program of Inquiry, will be supported by a rich collection of manipulatives and tools such as pattern blocks, fraction circles, base-10 blocks, balance scales as well as books that address mathematical concepts through stories and poems as well as informationally.

Finally, although Singapore Math's explanations are simple and direct, they challenge students to think. According to a 2005 study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR),

the Singapore texts are rich with problem-based development in contrast to traditional U.S. texts that rarely get much beyond exposing students to the mechanics of mathematics and emphasizing the application of definitions and formulas to routine problems. (p. xii)

Each Singapore textbook contains several units made up of several chapters. Each chapter has a Test A and an optional Test B, and each unit has a Cumulative Test. Test A consists of free response questions and assesses students' grasp of mathematical concepts while developing problem-solving skills. In Cumulative Tests A and B, questions from earlier units are incorporated into each test. These tests focus on review and consolidation through the integration of concepts and strands. GGPCS professional staff will collaborate to determine the best use of these options, along with teacher-designed formative and summative assessments, to diagnose and track student progress in math throughout the school. (Please see Governance Section 8 for a request regarding local math assessments.)

GGPCS will use Singapore Math through grade 6. At this point we will introduce the Foerster's textbooks for 7th and 8th grade math, Algebra 1 and Algebra 2, for those students who are ready.

The coverage of math topics is complete, and the presentation is clear and easy to follow. Examples are worked out in detail. Terms, concepts, and procedures are all

clearly defined. Word problems are appropriately linked to increases in what the students can do, and the problems include many creative, interesting applications.

There is a serendipity in having selected Arabic as the Language B of GGPCS's middle school program. The word *algebra* comes from the Arabic language and much of its methods from Arabic/Islamic mathematics developed by Muhammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī (c. 780-850). Our middle school curriculum will take advantage of this connection in its Program of Inquiry.

- **VSC Standard 1.0 Knowledge of Algebra, Patterns, and Functions:** Students will algebraically represent, model, analyze, or solve mathematical or real-world problems involving patterns or functional relationships.
- **VSC Standard 2.0 Knowledge of Geometry:** Students will apply the properties of one-, two-, or three-dimensional geometric figures to describe, reason, or solve problems about shape, size, position, or motion of objects.
- **VSC Standard 3.0 Knowledge of Measurement:** Students will identify attributes, units, or systems of measurements or apply a variety of techniques, formulas, tools or technology for determining measurements.
- **VSC Standard 4.0 Knowledge of Statistics:** Students will collect, organize, display, analyze, or interpret data to make decisions or predictions.
- **VSC Standard 5.0 Knowledge of Probability:** Students will use experimental methods or theoretical reasoning to determine probabilities to make predictions or solve problems about events whose outcomes involve random variation.
- **VSC Standard 6.0 Knowledge of Number Relationships and Computation/Arithmetic:** Students will describe, represent, or apply numbers or their relationships or will estimate or compute using mental strategies, paper/pencil or technology.
- **VSC Standard 7.0 Processes of Mathematics:** Students demonstrate the processes of mathematics by making connections and applying reasoning to solve problems and to communicate their findings.

Science

The Founders of GGPCS believe that the most important resource for science education is also the most readily available, if only we make time for it: the natural world outside the walls of the school. A priority in designing our schedule, planning our Program of Inquiry and eventually, in selecting a site for GGPCS, is to provide our students with as much access to the outdoors as possible, in the belief that Richard Louv is right about our children suffering from “nature-deficit disorder” (2005). His thesis is that the outdoors is as essential to a child's health and well-being as good nutrition and plenty of sleep. We agree with the assertion that children – and the rest of us for that matter – require regular contact with nature to maintain physical and emotional health.

To this end, a first project at GGPCS will be to make a school garden either on or near the grounds. We have already enlisted community support for this venture from Montgomery Victory Gardens, a nonprofit organization devoted to helping Montgomery County residents grow, eat and celebrate fresh, local food. With appropriate attention to health and safety at all times, all students in the school will be engaged in planning, building and planting the garden, which will become a focal point for scientific observations, investigations and experimentation.

To address other content in the science curriculum, GGPCS plans to avail itself of one of the great strengths of the MCPS curriculum: its provision for science through self-contained kits that are delivered to classrooms 3-4 times per year. A complete set of materials is supplied, along with teacher guidance and resource materials for carrying out hands-on investigations that are typically engaging for children and easy to adjust for the needs of a particular class, if not to the limitations of time in the traditional school day.

This is a service of MCPS that GGPCS would like to partake of, with a few adjustments, if possible. The GGPCS Program of Inquiry (Appendix AD1) shows how we have linked the kits currently in use to the Units we have planned for each grade. In most cases the content of the kits provided for a certain grade does align with our Units of Inquiry for that grade, but in some cases we have shifted a science topic up or down a grade in order to better integrate it with our program.

With only two kits needed per grade at GGPCS at our largest, we hope to come to a simple arrangement with MCPS whereby GGPCS would use the Taylor Science Materials Center as a “library,” sending GGPCS staff to pick up necessary kits at the appropriate time for our Program of Inquiry and then returning them for resupply. There may also be some kits that over time GGPCS would like to purchase for the school’s permanent resource collection, either from MCPS directly or from the original supplier.

- **VSC Standard 1.0 Skills and Processes:** Students will demonstrate the thinking and acting inherent in the practice of science.
- **VSC Standard 2.0 Earth/Space Science:** Students will use scientific skills and processes to explain the chemical and physical interactions (i.e., natural forces and cycles, transfer of energy) of the environment, Earth, and the universe that occur over time.
- **VSC Standard 3.0 Life Science:** The students will use scientific skills and processes to explain the dynamic nature of living things, their interactions, and the results from the interactions that occur over time.
- **VSC Standard 4.0 Chemistry:** Students will use scientific skills and processes to explain the composition, structure, and interactions of matter in order to support the predictability of structure and energy transformations.
- **VSC Standard 5.0 Physics:** Students will use scientific skills and processes to explain the interactions of matter and energy and the energy transformations that occur
- **VSC Standard 6.0 Environmental Science:** Students will use scientific skills and processes to explain the interactions of environmental factors (living and non-living) and analyze their impact from a local to a global perspective.

OUT

I like *out*
 better than in
 but in is where
 my days begin;
in is for sleeping
 and waking up
 and bathtubs and such,
 but I don't like *in*
 nearly as much
 as toes in the dew
 and the mist on my face
 and the sky for my roof —
 my favorite place
 is *out*: out where
 the world is showing.
 I don't care if a
 storm is blowing.
 Step aside *in* because I am going
out!

— Constance Levy

Physical Education

“...my favorite place /is *out*: out where/the world is showing.” PE has an important role to play in various aspects of human development — physical, social, personal and emotional — and while it is not assumed that PE must take place outside, at GGPCS we will emphasize this in order to develop our students’ understanding of their place in the “global garden” and their connection to the outdoor environment wherever possible. MCPS has shown a commitment to connecting children to the environment in its SERT and GreenKids programs through the Audubon Naturalist Society, a program which we also will apply to participate in.

Our commitment at GGPCS to bringing children and nature together can be seen in our provision of appropriate time for outdoor play through our expanded student day

(see Section 4.f for details of our innovative schedule). It shows also in our plans to establish a sizeable garden on the grounds of our school facility, and in our relatively generous provision for field trips and other activities outside the normal scope of the traditional school day.

Part of the rationale for GGPCS's commitment to outdoor physical education is our understanding of the effects of appropriate free play time on learning, discussed also at Academic Design Section 4.f. Research indicates that outdoor activity – running, climbing, jumping rope, digging in the garden or crossing a creek on a path of rocks – increases blood flow to the brain, improving focus and attention and lifting the mood. Increased blood flow to the prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain that inhibits impulsivity, also supports more self-controlled behavior. All of these effects add up to a correlation between physical activity and academic success. As we select and prepare a facility for GGPCS and consider our play space, we will bear in mind these needs.

PE in the PYP

The PYP takes a different approach to physical education than the Maryland State Curriculum, combining it with aspects of personal and social education to create a designation called PSPE: personal, social and physical education. In this section we focus on PE as one aspect of this broader designation; we address the Social-Emotional Learning aspects in Academic Design Section 14 on school culture.

GGPCS students will experience a wide variety of physical activities to help develop their movement skills. Through these activities, students can increase their confidence and cooperative skills. They will develop an understanding of the role of physical activity in a healthy lifestyle in order to make informed choices, and the cultural significance of physical activities for communities and individuals. Our curriculum emphasis on the role of food in our individual and family lives as well as its physiological and cultural aspects will be a major part of both our PE and Health education programs.

PE helps to build links with parents, the local community and beyond. It is often an area that is especially important for students with diagnosed (and undiagnosed) specific learning needs because they are often able to participate fully in PE activities

in a way they are unable to in other areas of the curriculum. Students of all abilities are challenged to improve their PE skills, but they are also supported and encouraged to enjoy physical activity and see it as part of a healthy and active lifestyle with connections to other areas of the curriculum and community.

- **VSC Standard 1.0 Exercise Physiology:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use scientific principles to design and participate in a regular, moderate to vigorous physical activity program that contributes to personal health and enhances cognitive and physical performance on a variety of academic, recreational, and life tasks.
- **VSC Standard 2.0 Biomechanical Principles:** Students will demonstrate an ability to use the principles of biomechanics to generate and control force to improve their movement effectiveness and safety.
- **VSC Standard 3.0 Social Psychological Principles:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use skills essential for developing self-efficacy, fostering a sense of community, and working effectively with others in physical activity settings.
- **VSC Standard 4.0 Motor Learning Principles:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use motor skill principles to learn and develop proficiency through frequent practice opportunities in which skills are repeatedly performed correctly in a variety of situations.
- **VSC Standard 5.0 Physical Activity:** Students will demonstrate the ability to use the principles of exercise physiology, social psychology, and biomechanics to design and adhere to a regular, personalized, purposeful program of physical activity consistent with their health, performance, and fitness goals in order to gain health and cognitive/academic benefits.
- **Explain how the curriculum:** Students will demonstrate the ability to enhance their performance of a variety of physical skills by developing fundamental movement skills, creating original skill combinations, combining skills effectively in skill themes, and applying skills.

Health

As with PE, the approach to health education at GGPCS will be based on our understanding of its role in the area of PSPE. Many of our Units of Inquiry include a focus on health education as part of the integrated inquiry-based curriculum, and the

need to develop children's concepts and practices of healthy behavior has never been more urgent.

Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled, and today, nearly one in three children in America are overweight or obese. One third of all children born in 2000 or later, particularly those from lower-income communities, will suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives; many others will face chronic obesity-related health problems like heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, and asthma. As discussed further in the Operations Section 6, GGPCS will join First Lady Michelle Obama's new national campaign, Let's Move!, to raise a healthier generation of kids, and GGPCS's commitment to health education will be a part of our participation in this initiative, which we believe rivals that of closing the achievement gap in importance for our nation's ongoing success.

A further area that GGPCS particularly intends to address in grades 4-8 is family life and sexuality education.

Of concern for public health is that while current age of physical maturation has declined, this has not been matched by developments in the social support and education children may require at increasingly earlier ages. Consequently, psychosocial maturity (i.e. social puberty) may now lag behind physical development by a greater period than at any time previously in human history. Such a temporal dissociation is not without health consequences (Downing and Bellis, 2009).

The earlier onset of puberty in children, combined with the ready availability in the media of information and content previously considered "off-limits" for children, demands that schools do a better job of educating our younger adolescents to make healthy decisions in this area. The Founders of GGPCS have begun the search for a program, appropriate for use in the public school classroom, that will provide facts about anatomy and human development, but also help students clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the emotional and social aspects of sexuality.

This intent seems to be aligned with the section of MCPS Regulation IFA-RA which states that "All topics taught in courses or subjects shall be relevant to curriculum as outlined in MCPS documents and as required in state and MCPS regulations to ensure a

balanced and sensitive presentation and respectful, appropriate inclusion of multiple perspectives, particularly in the case of topics of controversy.”

Even before this stage, however, and as a school that is deliberately welcoming to all kinds of families, GGPCS has made a commitment to implement the *Welcoming Schools* initiative of the Human Rights Campaign throughout the school. Initiated by parents and educators to support students whose family structures are not typically well represented or included in school environments, *Welcoming Schools* is also a response to educators who have asked for help in addressing anti-gay name-calling and bullying. *Welcoming Schools* for all students growing up in our increasingly diverse world (HRC website, 2010). We have also received a commitment of assistance from an HRC staffer in implementing this program (see Appendix G3). The issues addressed by this program directly impact children’s physical, social and emotional health, and we consider them an appropriate focus at GGPCS.

- VSC Standard 1.0 Mental and Emotional Health
- VSC Standard 2.0 Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
- VSC Standard 1.0 Personal and Consumer Health
- VSC Standard 1.0 Family Life and Human Sexuality
- VSC Standard 1.0 Safety and Injury Prevention
- VSC Standard 1.0 Nutrition and Fitness
- VSC Standard 1.0 Disease Prevention and Control

Fine Arts (Combined)

The GGPCS arts curriculum will follow the IB approach to the arts. Like the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum for the Arts, the International Baccalaureate arts curriculum is guided by four overarching standards. Each of these standards are elaborated by several strands, which will be met in each year of the program at the appropriate developmental level. Like the VSC, these standards interrelate with each other and form the basis of the students’ experience in the arts. The IB arts program offers opportunities for students to:

- **understand** how the arts play a role in developing and expressing personal and cultural identities
- **appreciate** how the arts innovate and communicate across time and culture
- **become** informed and reflective practitioners of the arts
- **experience** the process of making art in a variety of situations
- **explore**, express and communicate ideas
- **become** more effective learners, inquirers and thinkers
- **develop** self-confidence and self-awareness through art experiences
- **appreciate** lifelong learning in and enjoyment of the arts

The IB standards both meet and exceed the expectations laid out in the VSC arts content standards. While both sets of standards emphasize the historical importance of the arts, the role of criticism and aesthetic judgments, the ability to perceive and respond, and the ability to produce works (music, dance, theatre, art) through creative expression, the IB arts curriculum goes further to integrate the concept of “Personal Engagement”. Along with the idea that students will become mindful of their own and other cultures and use their experiences to advance their artistic development, this Personal Engagement standard supports each student’s opportunity to “initiate, explore, negotiate with others,” learn to “take risks,” and “develop his or her ability to interact with others” in a “supportive and sensitive way” (IB arts guide, Middle Years Programme). These skills have been highlighted by a recent Harvard University study that found that thorough engagement in the arts instills habits of mind that impacts positive learning across the curriculum (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, Sheridan, 2007).

The following chart expands on this notion, showing the parallels between the VSC and IB arts standards, with the IB student objectives, while indicating the strengths of the IB program:

IB Standard (with strands)	Compatible VSC Standards
<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i> 1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the art form studied in relation to societal, cultural, historical and personal contexts 2. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the elements of the art form studied, including specialized language, concepts and processes 3. communicate a critical understanding of the art form studied in the context of their own artwork	<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i> 1. 2.0 Historical, Cultural and Social Context 2. Creative Expression and Production 3. 1.0 Perceiving and Responding
<i>Application</i> 1. develop an idea, theme, or personal interpretation to a point of realization, expressing and communicating their artistic intentions 2. apply skills, techniques and processes to create, perform and/or present art	<i>Application</i> 1. Partially addressed by VSC 3.0 2. 3.0 Creative Expression and Production
<i>Reflection and Evaluation</i> 1. reflect critically on their own artistic development and processes at different stages of their work 2. evaluate their work 3. use feedback to inform their own artistic development and processes	<i>Reflection and Evaluation</i> 1. 4.0 Aesthetics and Criticism 2. 4.0 Aesthetics and Criticism 3. 4.0 Aesthetics and Criticism
<i>Personal Engagement</i> 1. show commitment in using their own artistic processes 2. demonstrate curiosity, self-motivation, initiative and a willingness to take informed risks 3. support, encourage and work with their peers in a positive way 4. be receptive to art practices and artworks from various cultures, including their own	<i>Personal Engagement</i> 1. Not addressed by VSC 2. Not addressed by VSC 3. Not addressed by VSC 4. 2.0 Historical, Cultural and Social Context

Integration of the arts into the GGPCS school day

In Year 1 of GGPCS's operation, budget considerations limit the school to a .5 visual arts teacher and a .5 performing arts teacher, resulting in a weekly one-hour Workshop in each discipline for students. Over the next three years of operation, as GGPCS grows, we will increase this allocation to a full-time visual arts teacher and a full-time performing arts teacher. Later, if budget allows, we plan to add a separate instrumental music teacher.

Over the course of the year, the students will have the opportunity to thoroughly engage in drawing, painting, ceramics, wood, fiber, and computer graphics studies, as well as instrumental music, vocal music and dance incorporated into drama instruction. During arts Workshops throughout the year, students will create a developmentally appropriate "artist's journal" which they will utilize for written ideas, notes, sketches, drawing exercises, design plans, and self-evaluations.

Visual and performing arts teachers will follow work from the GGPCS Program of Inquiry just as the classroom teachers do, in order to ensure integration of Workshop content with the content of each Unit of Inquiry. For example, the visual arts Workshop during the 6th grade's study of the Age of Exploration (see the GGPCS Program of Inquiry at Appendix AD1) will include related studies of Linear Perspective in the Renaissance era, mixing pigments for painting, and sculpting with stone. In the performing arts Workshop during that Unit of Inquiry, students will engage in the complete production of a Shakespeare play – set and costume design, performance, and accompanying period music composed by students.

In the K-5 arts Workshop periods, classroom teachers will team with the arts teachers to lower the student-to-teacher ratio and to ensure synergy between classroom inquiry and arts experience. Integrated arts instruction enriches learning in all content areas and incorporates best instructional practices: children learn more completely and comprehensively when engaged in understanding concepts through multiple modalities. Though arts integration is not a substitute for teaching the arts for their own sake, integrating the fine and performing arts into content areas serves to build skill and competency in the arts as well. This philosophical approach to instruction provides a methodology where teachers help students develop more

complex thinking skills, which has significant impact across all instructional and curricular areas.

Assessment

Assessment in the arts will be continuous, and will be comprised of formal and informal authentic assessments. The procedures for assessment, as well as the assessment criteria, will be shared with both students and parents as an aid to the learning process. Quarterly assessment in the arts will follow the county's requirements. For example, in the visual arts, the students will complete, as appropriate for their age and stage, the quarterly assignments and assessment sheets utilized in MCPS. In addition, the students will be assessed throughout the year based on the I.B. standards of Knowledge and Understanding, Application, Reflection and Evaluation, and Personal Engagement. Each student will earn an achievement level based upon his/her performance throughout the year. For example, for Knowledge and Understanding, the levels range from limited knowledge and understanding, to excellent knowledge and understanding.

Art makes a difference

In an Aug, 2009 letter to schools and educational community leaders, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan wrote, "I write to bring to your attention the importance of the arts as a core academic subject and part of a complete education for all students. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) defines the arts as a core subject, and the arts play a significant role in children's development and learning process. . . The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem solvers who are confident and able to think creatively. These qualities can be especially important in improving learning among students from economically disadvantaged circumstances."

The International Baccalaureate program of study also recognizes and promotes the importance of the arts as a core subject, as well as a method to engage students' critical thinking throughout the school day, and GGPCS will treat it as such.

- 1.0 *Perceiving and Responding: Aesthetic Education* – Students will demonstrate the ability to perceive, interpret, perform and respond to ideas, experiences, and the environment through visual arts, music, dance and dramatic forms.

2.0 *Historical, Cultural, and Social Context:* Students will demonstrate an understanding of the history, traditions and conventions of the visual arts, music, dance and drama as essential aspects of history and human experience.

3.0 *Creative Expression and Production:* Students will demonstrate the ability to organize knowledge, ideas and techniques for creative expression in the production of visual art, music, dance and drama.

4.0 *Aesthetics and Criticism:* Students will demonstrate the ability to make aesthetic judgments.

Technology Literacy (Information and Communication Technologies)

GGPCS acknowledges the ever-increasing impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on teaching and learning (and on the preparation of this application).

...new literacies have emerged in association with technology. Gilster (1997) defines *digital literacy* as the ability to communicate with an ever-expanding community to discuss issues, gather information, and seek help. Likewise, *global literacy* is the capacity to read, interpret, respond, and contextualize messages from a global perspective (Burniske 2000). Additional literacies include *technology literacy*, *visual literacy*, and *information literacy* (Brown et al. 2005)

GGPCS views technology as a tool for learning with its own set of skills, and as an additional subject area with particular importance at this moment in history as tools and protocols for their use are developed. As a PYP school, GGPCS will plan for collaboration within the school and with MCPS to identify and agree on the aims for the use of ICT and its tools. ICT will be used critically, with integrity, and with specific attention to the validity and reliability of information gained through its use, and with attention to the cost of ICT tools relative to their usefulness in the elementary and middle school classroom. Once a model for ICT use is identified, GGPCS staff will be trained to use technologies provided and use of the technologies to enhance and support learning and teaching.

The use of ICT can:

1. Document the learning, making it available to all parties
2. Provide opportunities for rapid feedback and reflection
3. Provide opportunities to enhance authentic learning
4. Provide access to a broad range of sources of information
5. Provide students with a range of tools to store, organize and present their learning
6. Facilitate communication with a wide-ranging audience

Many GGPCS students will bring previous experience and knowledge that can be drawn upon to enhance the learning of others, including that of the teacher. As in other areas of the curriculum, use of ICT in PYP classrooms will develop within a community of learners.

ICT can significantly support students in their inquiries, and in developing their conceptual understanding. For GGPCS students, technology can also provide vital opportunities to capitalize on real-life activities, problem-solving skills, and authentic literacy conversations with other learners – especially those in our global community with whom they might never have an opportunity to connect. GGPCS students will both consume and create content in preparation for their future in a connected society.

- **Standard 1.0 – Technology Systems:** Develop foundations in the understanding and uses of technology systems
- **Standard 2.0 – Digital Citizenship:** Demonstrate an understanding of the history of technology and its impact on society, and practice ethical, legal, and responsible use of technology to assure safety
- **Standard 3.0 – Technology for Learning and Collaboration:** Use a variety of technologies for learning and collaboration
- **Standard 4.0 – Technology for Communication and Expression:** Use technology to communicate information and express ideas using various media formats

- **Standard 5.0 – Technology for Information Use and Management:** Use technology to locate, evaluate, gather, and organize information and data.
 - **Standard 6.0 – Technology for Problem-Solving and Decision-Making:** Demonstrate ability to use technology and develop strategies to solve problems and make informed decisions
- d. **Describe the criteria and procedures that will be employed for the selection of textbooks and other instructional materials.**

School Library Media Center

One of the requirements for authorization as an IB World School is that the school have an appropriately-resourced school library. This is especially important for schools implementing an inquiry-based curriculum and for GGPCS since we do not currently anticipate purchasing textbooks or curricular programs beyond Singapore Math and Foerster's Algebra for math instruction, and possibly a phonics approach. We will employ full-time Library Media Specialist who will be responsible, for carrying out the responsibilities detailed in Policy EDA-RA, School Library Media Center. Because of budget constraints we plan for a .5 Library Media Specialist in Year 1, but the GGPCS library media center will be open throughout the school day with the assistance of family and/or community volunteers, who will also be recruited as is customary to aid in maintaining the library collection.

We will begin our first year of operation with a core collection of literature and reference books that are both age-appropriate and in line with the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, and add to the library collection yearly from the proceeds of donations, grants, and budget allocations by the school. GGPCS teachers and librarians will collaborate in the selection of materials to ensure that the library resources support the inquiry-based, interdisciplinary program. The library media center will be also be equipped with computers and software programs in a environment to facilitate student and staff learning, research, analysis, and communication.

Instructional Materials

We anticipate that in the vast majority of cases the instructional materials we wish to use will have already been approved by MCPS through its Policy IIB-RA, Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books. In cases where a member of the GGPCS community wishes to add a new item to the GGPCS Media Center or Instructional Resource Collection, the following procedure will be followed, and documentation will be submitted to MCPS using Form 365-25: *Record of Evaluation for Instructional Materials* for print and non-print materials or Form 365-29: *EPIC-DROM/Computer Software Record of Evaluation* for electronic materials.

1. An Instructional Materials Selection Committee will be established, composed of the IB Coordinator, the Media Specialist, the Parent Representative to the Board of Directors, one additional parent volunteer, one teacher from grades K-5 and one teacher from grades 6-8.

It will be important to establish this Committee early in the summer of May 2011 so that it can work to equip GGPCS with appropriate materials for its opening in September 2011.

2. An item may be proposed to the Committee by any member of the GGPCS community but two members of the IMS Committee must sponsor the item. For example, if a student suggests a book for the library, the book must be reviewed and sponsored by two members of the IMS committee in order to be considered by the whole committee.
3. The IMS Committee will meet monthly beginning in September 2011 to consider each proposed item. If support or review of the item is available from an outside source (such as a literary review journal or subject area council), this support or review should be presented along with the item at the meeting.
4. An item can be approved for addition to the GGPCS Media Center or Instructional Resource Collection by a simple majority vote.

The IMS Committee will apply the following criteria for nonconsumable materials and equipment purchased for use at GGPCS:

- Print and other media resources should be inclusive where applicable, representing all ethnicities, socioeconomic groups, family configurations and language groups

represented authentically (see the GGPCS Nondiscrimination Policy included at Appendix 3).

- They should offer high value in relation to cost.
- They should be durable in relation to their purpose: equipment should be simple and flexible enough to be useful across a range of ages and uses in the classroom; print and other media should be manufactured to last at least three years.

The creation of unit-related, daily use materials is left to teachers in order to meet specific needs. GGPCS staff will be expected, in the spirit of collaboration and community, to make teacher-created materials available to colleagues through a designated central storage area for its Instructional Resource Collection. This will include all kinds of materials used in classroom instruction that will not be catalogued into the GGPCS Media Center. This maintenance of this collection, organized according to a principle agreed by the staff as a whole, will be an ideal parent volunteer responsibility.

- e. **Describe how the school will meet the needs of special students, including English language learners, students with an Individualized Education Program or Section 504 plan, as well as students covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Include how services such as screening, evaluation, diagnostic and psychological testing, and health-related support to students would be provided.**

SNOWFLAKES

Sometime this winter if you go
To walk in soft new-falling snow
When flakes are big and come down slow

To settle on your sleeve as bright
As stars that couldn't wait for night.
You won't know what you have in sight—

Another world—unless you bring
A magnifying glass. This thing

Of crystals. Do you like surprise?
Examine him three times his size:
At first you won't believe your eyes.

Stars look alike, but flakes do not:
No two the same in all the lot
That you will get in any spot

You chance to be, for every one
Come spinning through the sky has none

We call a snowflake is the king

But his own window-wings of sun:

 Joints, points and crosses. What could make
 Such lacework with no crack or break?
 In billion billions, no mistake?

— *David McCord*

“No two the same in any lot...” GGPCS's program includes innovations designed to meet the needs of all learners, including English Language Learners and students with a range of identified disabilities, in a supportive and inclusive learning community. We believe that students need to learn in an environment that enables them to appreciate and celebrate differences in themselves and others. In an inclusive school, children learn from each other – not only academics, but compassion and understanding.

GGPCS will apply Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to all classroom instruction. UDL principles provide guidelines for differentiating how information is presented to students, how students engage with the material, and how they demonstrate their knowledge. A summary of these three UDL principles and their application in the classroom is included in Appendix AD3. Through the application of these principles most student needs can be met in the general education classroom. In addition, co-teaching, small-group instruction, self-differentiating approaches, collaborative groups, peer tutoring, and the use of research-based interventions implemented by resource staff including reading specialist, Special Education teacher, ESOL teacher, and counselor will support the learning needs of most students.

GGPCS's low student: teacher ratio will allow teachers to give all students a significant amount of individualized attention and our inquiry-based curriculum allows for a high level of differentiation. The extended day and restructured academic calendar will benefit all students but particularly those with special learning needs and those with disabilities. Our foundational Word Work and Number Work periods mean that students with special needs can receive targeted reading and math interventions while still having meaningful access to the core curriculum. The full integration of visual and performing arts, physical education and technology instruction into the main curriculum creates opportunities for students with disabilities to demonstrate their understanding of concepts in less “academic” ways.

In “those with special learning needs” we include students identified as Gifted and Talented through our Screening and Identification process described below. Again, the extended day schedule and restructured calendar will provide GGPCS with opportunities for differentiation through the Units of Inquiry. Our plan to make the most of community volunteers will allow us to offer opportunities to work with a volunteer mentor in particular area of interest, and further enrichment will be available during Wednesday Club and Intersessions. Our aim is to offer intellectually

challenging work with an emphasis on depth of understanding, bearing in mind the age and stage of the whole child and exercising care in allowing too much acceleration too quickly.

Finally, classroom-based general education teachers will have regular opportunities to collaborate during weekly Wednesday afternoon professional development sessions and during common planning time. Professional development in Year 1 of GGPCS's operation will include UDL principles and instructional strategies, Responsive Classroom, and positive behavioral supports.

Screening and Identification:

All GGPCS students will be screened at the beginning of their careers at GGPCS. Screening data will be collected through parent interviews and conferences, through records that may come with students transferring from other schools, and from the baseline data in reading and math provided by our Stanford 10 testing. This information will be used to identify students who may require academic intervention, whether due to identified or potential disabilities or delay or due to other circumstances.

At any time during his or her time at GGPCS, a child may be identified for further screening by teacher observation, family input or on-going progress monitoring using curriculum-based measures. As soon as students are identified as progressing more slowly than same age peers, as functioning at a lower level of achievement, or as experiencing social-emotional challenges, they will be considered candidates for intervention using a Collaborative Problem-Solving process which always includes the classroom teacher and parents and may also include an administrator or other resource staff as needed.

Student Problem-Solving and 3-Tiered Response to Intervention

At GGPCS, the Problem-Solving for Student Success process is envisioned as a holistic process that begins with a thorough and early analysis of all factors that may be affecting the child's school performance to ensure that the team can intervene promptly and not wait for the student to fail.

While school assessment data is part of what is collected and analyzed, decisions are not made based on test scores alone. The students' family situation, educational history, emotional functioning, cultural and linguistic factors and individual strengths are all taken into consideration so that the most appropriate intervention plan can be put in place.

The first stage or tier, the Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) team, is between teacher and parent, or teacher and teacher, and may eventually involve the grade level or content team. They collect and analyze data, and work together to identify specific student needs and develop an intervention plan to be carried out over a limited period of time. During the intervention period, the CPS team will monitor student progress and then reconvene to analyze student data when the period is ended. The CPS process is aligned with a 3-tiered Response to Intervention approach to meeting student needs.

Most tier 1 or CPS-stage interventions may include altering a lesson plan, changing the seat of a student, or reteaching a skill. They are done in the general education classroom by the general education teacher. The parent is an informed participant in this process.

Tier 2 and tier 3 level interventions add supplemental services to the core instruction. They will target students struggling with Mathematics (concepts, fluency, basic facts, computation), Reading (phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension), and Writing (graphomotor, spelling, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and composition). Interventions may also target student behavior and organizational skills, and they are provided by specialists and other resource teachers. (See Appendix AD3 for a more detailed description of the CPS/ EMT/ Special Education 3-tiered approach.)

Eligibility for Special Education

When a student does not make expected gains as a result of the initial intervention with at least one revision, s/he will be referred for an Educational Team Meeting, to which the parents are invited. At this time the intervention to be implemented will involve instruction that is supplemental to the core curriculum and includes more intensive interventions through one or more cycles to determine its effectiveness.

Only if this intervention is deemed unsuccessful at producing sufficient student progress (e.g. the student is not approach grade level standards) is the student referred to an IEP screening meeting.

The following procedures will be followed when any referral is made:

Initial referral leads to a Screening IEP team meeting with the parent, general education teacher, special educator, psychologist and principal. ESOL teacher, counselor, and other related service providers may attend this meeting as requested. At GGPCS, our low student enrollment will allow the Professional School Counselor to serve as the child's advocate in place of an outside Pupil Personnel Worker who may not have an established relationship with the child.

At the Screening meeting, a minimum of 4 pieces of data are examined to determine if there are questions which require evaluations. If the team determines there are questions that require further data, through formal assessment and evaluation, parents sign the authorization for assessment. Parents will be provided copies of Parental Rights: Maryland Procedural Safeguards Notice, 2008 as well as any other services, such as translation, that they need in order to participate fully in the IEP Screening and Evaluation Process.

The student's Case Manager (a designated GGPCS special education teacher) will coordinate the evaluation process and ensure that all assessments are conducted in accordance with IDEA 2004 and Maryland State Regulations (COMAR). Assessments will be conducted by qualified personnel and in a manner that does not discriminate based on culture, language, or socio-economic status. Where issues of English proficiency are suspected, the child is usually referred to the MCPS Bilingual Assessment Team (also known as BAT) prior to a formal evaluation in order to determine the dominant language in which the child should be assessed. GGPCS anticipates using the BAT to support their evaluations of the English language learners.

While GGPCS's Special Education teacher will do educational evaluations, GGPCS anticipates using/contracting with MCPS to provide psychology, speech/language and occupational/physical therapy services, both at the evaluation and at the provision of services stage.

The IEP team will meet again within 60 calendar days to review the assessments, and make a eligibility determination at an Evaluation Meeting. Again, at GGPCS every effort will be made to reduce the amount of time that passes between the Screening and Evaluation meetings. Sixty days is not long in the professional lives of the adult service providers, but two months is a substantial portion of a child's school year, especially if the child is experiencing daily struggle and failure.

At the Evaluation meeting the multi-disciplinary team reviews assessments and determines the student's need for specialized instruction and related services. If a student is determined eligible for special education, the GGPCS IEP team will meet again within 30 days to develop and implement an individualized educational plan (IEP).

IEP Development and Implementation

To develop an appropriate IEP, the team will use evaluation data and consider the student's current levels of academic, cognitive, language, motor, social/emotional and behavioral functioning to develop goals and mastery criteria based on MSDE curriculum standards for the student's grade level. The team will also determine what, if any, accommodations the student will need in the classroom, school building, and to what extent and with which accommodations they will participate in state wide testing. Based on the student's needs, the team will decide how much specialized instruction and which related services and assistive technology the student requires. IEPs will be developed and implemented in a manner consistent with IDEA, MSDE guidelines, and current research-based best practice. GGPCS will use the MCPS IEP system, OASIS/Special Services (O/SS), for documenting the referral and evaluation process throughout the development of an IEP.

Annual Review of the IEP

The IEP team will meet annually to review the IEP. This team will involve the parents, the student as appropriate, a general education teacher, a special educator, related service providers, and an administrator or designee. At annual review meetings, the team will review student progress and make adjustments to or generate new goals, objectives, accommodations, and services as needed. The team may meet to review the IEP more frequently if requested by parents, or other IEP team members, or if the student is not making sufficient progress through the process of a Periodic Review.

The IEP team will report, in writing, quarterly on student progress toward IEP goals. These will be sent home with the written report card. Insufficient progress toward an IEP goal automatically requires a periodic review be scheduled.

Reevaluation

As required under IDEA, a reevaluation will be conducted within every three years to determine a student's continued eligibility for special education services. Reevaluations will also be conducted before exiting any student from special education services. Ninety days prior to a reevaluation due date, the IEP team will meet at a re-evaluation planning meeting, to decide if additional data are needed to determine the student's continued eligibility for special education. In the case where no further data is needed, the team may go straight to a re-evaluation determination meeting. If new data is needed, parental consent will be obtained and new assessments conducted.

Provision of Special Education Services

GGPCS anticipates that we may enroll a larger proportion of students with special needs as families who have been seeking a more accommodating public education option enter our lottery, and that perhaps 15% of our students will require additional support. This includes students receiving special education and related services and those in the pre-referral intervention stages. We have budgeted in the first year for one Special Education Coordinator but are prepared, once students are enrolled, to adjust that if needed to accommodate a larger number of students.

In GGPCS's inclusive classrooms, special education services will be provided by a variety of highly qualified personnel including the general education teacher, special education paraeducator, special educator, and other resource staff. The child's needs are provided for as much as possible within the general education Program of Inquiry through accommodations and modification. Because of the self-differentiating nature of the inquiry approach, all students will work at times on concepts and skills that are appropriate for individual or small-group needs; as often, the class will work as a group with explicit reference to the varying strengths and challenges of each member of the class. Indeed, this attention to individual strengths and needs is built into the Program of Inquiry.

Students will receive remediation instruction for areas of weaknesses from highly trained staff using evidence-based or research-based programs. Co-teaching models that involve collaboration between general education and special education teachers will be used and may include needs-based groups targeting specific academic and/or behavioral interventions.

Where educational needs cannot be best met in the general education classroom even with the support of modifications and accommodations, the student may receive some instruction in a small pull-out group. For example, some students may participate in a specialized reading intervention outside of the general education classroom. GGPCS will designate a “Learning Center” in the school building where students can go to receive specialized instruction, and /or daily coaching to support student organization and executive function needs.

The Learning Center may also be a place where students can receive drop-in afterschool homework support supervised by special educators, paraeducators, and/or volunteers (graduate students, parents, pre-service teachers). The Learning Center would be a school-wide resource, open to all students in need of support regardless of their special education status, though priority will be given to enabling identified students to meet their educational needs and IEP goals.

Related services will be provided by itinerant speech/language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, vision and mobility specialists, counselors and others as needed. GGPCS anticipates contracting with MCPS to provide these related services.

If a student enrolls in GGPCS and the IEP team determines that the student requires a more restrictive setting than GGPCS can provide, the IEP team will collaborate with MCPS and the family to find a more appropriate school placement.

Family Engagement and Support

GGPCS strives to build a supportive community of families, students, and teachers partnering authentically with attention to issues of equity. Parents of children with special needs require a more intensive level of support from their school community, and GGPCS is prepared to provide that. In addition to general conferences and

meetings of the GGPCS Family-School Organization (FSO), GGPCS will hold quarterly parent roundtable discussions focused on topics such as child development, accessing community resources, managing behavior at home, etc. which will be particularly useful to families of children with special needs. Parent roundtables may be run by GGPCS staff and feature experts in the field as guest speakers.

A LAZY THOUGHT

There go the grownups
 To the office,
 To the store.
 Subway rush,
 Traffic crush;
 Hurry, scurry,
 Worry, flurry.
 No wonder
 Grown ups
 Don't grow up
 Any more.
 It takes a lot
 Of slow
 To grow.

— — *Eve Merriam*

f. Describe how the school's academic calendar will differ from that of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), if applicable.

GGPCS proposes implementation of a restructured academic calendar and an extended student day. Both these innovations are at the center of a national education reform movement towards expanded learning time. The very recent report of the Center for American Progress/National Center on Time and Learning (NCOTAL) notes:

As the reality of what it takes to educate all students to the same high standards bumps up against the rigidity of the conventional school calendar the status quo has begun to shift: Expanding time in school has become a core strategy of the national education reform agenda. (*Transforming Schools to Meet the Needs of Students*, Center for American Progress, February 17, 2010). 2010)

This report details the incontrovertible evidence that more time in school, offered with appropriate attention to children’s developmental needs, has a powerful effect on academic outcomes for students who are most likely to fall behind, such as English language learners. As well, “schools with an expanded day, week, and year ensure that all students within a school benefit from increased time for academic and enrichment opportunities.”

Further, the report finds that

Some of the most compelling research on school time is coming from the charter school sector, where nonconformity to the conventional schedule seems to be the norm. A new database of expanded-time schools compiled by the National Center on Time & Learning contains hundreds of charter schools that operate on a schedule that is meaningfully longer than surrounding public schools.

Ideally, GGPCS would like to be one of those public charter schools whose schedule is “meaning-fully longer” than the traditional public school. However, cognizant of both the benefits and limitations of working within our existing school system, the Founding Board of GGPCS has exerted itself to find innovative ways to increase both school time and the quality of the school experience within the bounds of viability.

Each of our innovations — the restructured academic calendar and the expanded student day — is supported by a solid research base and facilitates GGPCS’s ability to create excellence and equity for students within a culture of connection, autonomy, and depth. Rationales for the restructured calendar and the expanded student day are presented in this section; the attendant requests for waivers of local and state policy are in Governance Section 8.

Restructured Academic Calendar

Our proposed academic calendar (Year 1 2011-2012) redistributes the required 180-185 student instructional days over eleven months, beginning in September and ending in July; total instructional days are 183. This calendar respects the limits of the MCEA negotiated contract on teacher duty days, which are not to exceed 195; total teacher duty days are 192.

The GGPCS year is divided into three terms. Each term, lasting approximately 13 weeks, is further divided into two half-terms by a one-week break, and the Winter and Spring Breaks are extended to roughly two weeks each. The traditional long summer break is thereby reduced to six weeks for students.

This restructure of the academic calendar is not a very radical innovation: the 11-month calendar is widely used throughout European school systems, and here in the U.S., NCOTAL identifies nearly 700 schools (many of them public charter schools) in 36 states which operate on this kind of extended, modified, or “year-round” academic calendar. An extended school year re-paces the rhythm of the year to support sustained effectiveness in teaching and learning by giving everyone in the school community opportunities to “recharge their batteries.” In addition, the restructured or modified calendar prevents summer learning loss, promotes English language acquisition, offers working families support and convenience, and increases teacher satisfaction.

GGPCS'S RESTRUCTURED ACADEMIC CALENDAR				
Session	Dates	Holiday / Professional Days Instructional Days	Student Instructional Days	Teacher Duty Days
Fall I	September 6 - October 13	Professional Days Aug.29 - September 2 [Labor Day] MSTA Conference Oct. 14	28 days	33 days
Fall Half-Term Break	October 17 - 21	<i>Optional Intersession Program</i>	5 days	
Fall II	October 24 - December 16	Election Day Nov. 8 Thanksgiving Nov. 24, 25 Professional Day Dec. 7	36 days	37 days
Winter Break	December 19 - 30	<i>Optional Intersession Program</i>	9 days	
Winter I	January 2 - February 17	MLK Jr. Day	35 days	35 days
Winter Half-Term Break	February 20 - 24	<i>Presidents' Day Optional Intersession Program</i>	4 days	
Spring I	February 27 - April 5	Professional Day March 28	28 days	29 days
Spring Break	April 6 - 20	<i>Good Friday April 6 Easter Monday April 9 Optional Intersession Program</i>	10 days	
Spring II	April 23 - June 1	Memorial Day	29 days	29 days
Summer Half-Term Break	June 4-8	<i>Optional Intersession Program</i>	5 days	
Summer I	June 4 - July 19	Fourth of July Professional Day July 11 Professional Day July 20	27 days	29 days
6 Half-Terms 3 Half-Term Breaks 2 Major Breaks	39 weeks	11 holidays	183 days	192 days

Benefits for students

The long, lazy summer vacation which some see as the birthright of the American child has another side. The phenomenon of summer learning loss contributes to the achievement gap between lower and higher income children and youth. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that

“during the school year, lower income children’s skills improve at close to the same rate as their more advantaged peers. However, over the summer, middle- and upper-income children’s skills continue to improve, while lower income children’s skills do not. Summer learning shortfall experienced by low-income children over the elementary grades has consequences that reverberate all throughout children’s schooling and can impact whether a child ultimately earns a high school diploma and continues on to college.” (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olson, 2007a).

If we are serious about closing the achievement gap in Montgomery County, we must find workable solutions to the problem of summer learning loss. As Michelle Rhee asked in a DCPS Chancellor’s Note in April 2009, “How do we strike the right balance? How do we close the achievement gaps that grow with every summer vacation without sacrificing childhood to our drive for achievement?”

A longer school year of 240 days, like that of Japan, is out of reach economically in most districts, nor do most want to go the way of the Asian countries’ educational tradition that places intense pressure on students to perform within a narrow range of expectations. Summer school programs like those offered by MCPS are effective and commonplace in our country, but they are not the only solution. The Founders of GGPCS believe that by spreading instructional days over an additional month of the year, our restructured academic calendar will work to reduce summer learning loss for all our students – especially those from lower-income families who may not enjoy a summer full of travel, visits to the library and enriching summer camp programs.

Schools that provide additional enrichment and remedial instructional time through a restructured calendar may also find themselves better able to address learning loss and learning difficulties “just in time.” An extended year allows teachers to slow down and reflect often on student progress, enabling them to address the needs of struggling students as their difficulties arise. Postponing substantial interventions to

the summer can serve to exacerbate learning loss, as students may struggle painfully over an entire academic year and then suffer the additional blow of not being able to catch up during summer school. (Schulte, 2009, 2010)

Benefits for teachers

In Northern Virginia, Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County Public Schools all have some schools that operate a “modified” year-round school calendar (see examples in Appendix 4). These differ from the one GGPCS proposes in running from August through June, but all maintain the standard 180-185 days and 195 teacher duty days. In all cases, the reorganization of the calendar into six-week periods punctuated with by week-long breaks, has powerful benefits for another essential population of a school: the teaching staff.

Fairfax County schools implementing this modified calendar were the subject of a research investigation focused on how a year-round school calendar impacted teachers' motivation and the quality of their professional life. The researchers documented what teachers found to be the benefits of a modified school calendar. These included an increased sense of empowerment, reduced professional stress, more professional options, and less burnout (Haser and Nasser, 2005).

Diane Connolly, former principal of Timber Lane Elementary School (Fairfax County, VA) collected significant data over the 11 years that Timber Lane ran on a modified calendar. Her data showed that discipline referrals dropped by half; that teachers used less sick time (and thus fewer substitutes were required); and that teachers were able to improve test scores when allowed to use their own creativity to develop intersession modules for remedial learners (Schulte, 2009).

Benefits for families

For families, a 9- or 10-month school calendar may have made sense in America's agrarian past when everyone worked the farm, but in today's economy the extended summer vacation does not match the needs of working families. Seventy-seven percent of American women with school-aged children are in the labor force (National Women's Law Center, 2008) which means that for most of those families a 10-week summer means a 10-week juggle of work schedules, day camps, babysitting arrangements or worse, leaving their children unsupervised.

An 11-month calendar can allow high-quality school programming to replace childcare while preserving a more manageable six weeks of summer vacation. In addition, a restructured calendar can create more opportunities for family time and travel because breaks are spread throughout the year rather than concentrated during the summer. Many low-income families have parents who work multiple jobs and who are often not available to participate in school activities. Extending the school year can provide a greater variety of opportunities for parental involvement at times that may be more accessible to them.

GGPCS's Intersession Programming

We acknowledge that restructuring the academic calendar in the way we propose for GGPCS is not enough in itself to make a substantial difference in student achievement or usefulness to working families; after all, we are not able at this time to *increase* the number of days children spend in school, we are merely redistributing them. To make this important difference, GGPCS plans a major development campaign to generate funding for an optional, complementary Intersession program during half-term, Winter and Spring breaks for children and families who choose it.

Intersession programming will operate much as current daycare programs who use MCPS facilities to provide childcare during Winter, Spring and Summer breaks, except that it will be GGPCSI who provides the program. The enrichment activities offered will be selected to complement the work done during school through the IB inquiry program, but will be delivered in a model structured more like the recreational day camps or “kids’ college” programs currently available through the county and through private organizations such as the YMCA and independent schools. Activities will be led by our teachers (hired separately by GGPCSI, outside their MCPS contract), volunteers, our community partners or freelancers with expertise in an appropriate area (see Governance Section 2 for details of our community partnerships). The Principal or a designee will oversee the operation of the Intersession Program and all steps will be taken to ensure legal and responsible conduct of the program.

GGPCSI's plan for Intersession programming is similar to that currently offered in all of the Northern Virginia schools in conjunction with their modified academic calendar. However, unlike Fairfax County's program, which is funded by the FCPS budget, GGPCSI is making the commitment to fund and provide its program separately from

the mandated public school provision of GGPCS. As we build our program, we expect to find support from national organizations such as the Afterschool Alliance and the Wallace Foundation which specifically support quality programming for “out-of-school time.” Our ability to follow through on this commitment is one of the measures of our viability as an organization (see Academic Design Section 3).

Some families who choose to participate will be those who enjoy the benefits of two full-time professional salaries; these families may be asked to pay the fair full cost of the optional, fee-based enrichment programming offered at GGPCS during Intersessions. For children whose parents lack the means to pay the full fee for the Intersession program, we intend to offer financial support through the GGPCSI nonprofit. GGPCSI expects that as in Northern Virginia, the majority of our students will participate during our five available Intersessions. Through their participation in Intersession programming, GGPCS students could gain an additional 5 to 33 days of organized, content-based instruction – and an extra dose of joy.

Necessary waivers and agreements

It is understood that this innovation will require waivers (see Governance Section 8 and Appendix G5 for details). The first will be of the language in Maryland Annotated Code, Education Article, Title 7, *Public Schools*, Subtitle 1, *General Provisions*, Section 7-103, *Required school days and holidays* that assumes an academic calendar of “at least 180 actual school days and a minimum of 1, 080 school hours during a 10-month period in each school year”. We further emphasize that this State Regulation allows that “The county boards of Allegany, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Howard, and Montgomery counties...may elect to operate one or more schools within the county ...on a year-round basis, provided that the 180-day and the minimum hour requirements under this section are met,” and that “Nothing in this section precludes a county board from conducting a year-round pilot study or program that is funded by the county board.” (e.1 and e.2)

Second, we will require a waiver of the MCPS Regulation IDA-RA which provides for the Board of Education to establish “the actual days of student attendance, the beginning and end of the school year, and holidays.” This will allow GGPCS to designate its own days of student attendance as well as the beginning and end of the school year. However, our restructured calendar observes all the holidays required by

the Annotated Code of Maryland and will be aligned, as much as possible, with the traditional Winter and Spring Break dates of the MCPS calendar.

Third, GGPCS requests that MCPS work with the Montgomery County Education Association on our behalf to establish that for teaching staff employed at GGPCS, the 10-month school year be redefined as an 11-month school year although in all other respects the terms of the negotiated agreement are maintained. In a meeting with MCEA leadership in February 2010, representatives indicated to GGPCS that, in keeping with MCEA's participation in an earlier attempt to adopt a year-round calendar at Broad Acres ES, there would be little objection to this innovative measure in a school of choice within MCPS.

In offering a model within MCPS for “more time for learning,” we hope to become a part of Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s push at the federal level for longer school days and longer school years – both to benefit children on a daily basis and to bring American education practices into competitive line with those of other advanced nations.

Expanded Daily Learning Time

In addition to restructuring the academic year we propose to lengthen the traditional MCPS student school day by 1.25 hours, and to use an innovative daily schedule that maximizes opportunities for authentic inquiry in the curriculum, appropriate outdoor playtime, and time devoted to the purposeful development of relationships of trust in the GGPCS community.

Again, the Founding Board’s rationale for this innovation is linked directly to the research on the effects of expanded learning time. A principal source for best practice in expanding learning time in public schools, is the *Expanded Learning Time Toolkit: Redesigning Schools to Enable Higher Achievement and a Well-Rounded Education* (The Broad Foundation/NCOTAL, 2008) prepared in conjunction with Mass 2020. Massachusetts is the state that has successfully piloted expanded learning time in a comprehensive way by adding a minimum of 300 hours to the school year, usually by adding two hours to the school day. Even more telling are the findings in *Listening to Experts: What Massachusetts Teachers are Saying about Time and Learning and the*

Expanded Learning Time Initiative (Mass 2020/AFT Massachusetts/Massachusetts Teachers Association/NCOTAL, 2008), found in Appendix 4.

KEY FINDINGS

Across Massachusetts ...

- Teachers rank “time” as the learning condition that is most responsible for promoting student learning
- Over 60 percent of teachers report there is insufficient time to complete the curriculum, meet the needs of all students, or collaborate with their colleagues about instructional practices
- Teachers in elementary and middle schools are more concerned with the lack of sufficient time than their peers who teach in high schools

In Expanded Learning Time Schools....

- A vast majority (90 percent) believe sufficient time is allotted for core academic subjects and teachers are 40 percent more likely than their peers in non-ELT schools to think there is adequate time to complete the curriculum and meet the needs of all students

More time is benefiting students:

- 55 percent of teachers report their students are learning more
- 78 percent indicate students have more enrichment
- ELT students are significantly more motivated than their peers

More time is changing teaching:

- Nearly six in 10 report more opportunity than before ELT to use multiple teaching methods
- English classes engage in more writing and independent reading; math classes do more project-based learning
- Teachers have an hour more time per week of common planning time than non-ELT schools and are much more likely than peers in non-ELT schools to report that they have adequate time to collaborate
- Teachers harbor more positive feelings about teaching and the professional culture in their schools, despite higher fatigue (p. 3)

Here at home in Montgomery County, MCPS Superintendent Dr. Jerry Weast identified the same issue in a presentation to the Harvard University Public Education Leadership Conference in 2007. “MCPS Challenges and Needs: Time is the Enemy – Teachers need to deliver more individual attention in less time,” reads the final slide.

The GGPCS Student Day

GGPCS proposes an innovative, expanded student school day that lasts from 8:30 am for all students and ends at 4:00 pm. The morning is devoted to a community-building morning meeting and two 90-minute integrated inquiry periods incorporating foundational skills practice (Word Work and Number Work), divided by a 30-minute break. The afternoon is composed of two 60-minute integrated “Workshop” periods in visual arts, performing arts, media/technology and physical education, and the day ends for all students with a read-aloud and closing. GGPCS will also offer three hours per week of immersion-approach world language instruction, one during the morning Inquiry Periods and two hours during the afternoon Workshop periods (this schedule may vary somewhat for the GGPCS middle school). On Wednesday afternoons, all students will participate in Wednesday Clubs, multi-age enrichment activities provided by volunteers and community partners. Total instructional time, exclusive of break and lunch/recess is 5.75 hours, as compared with a traditional MCPS total of 5.25 hours exclusive of lunch/recess.

GGPCS Expanded Daily Schedule for Grade K-5 Students

<u>Daily Schedule M, T, Th, F</u> 8:30 Arrival and Opening 8:45 Inquiry Period I (30 minutes Word Work) 10:15 Morning Break 10:45 Inquiry Period II (30 minutes Number Work) 12:15 Lunch and Recess 1:30 Workshop I 2:30 Workshop II 3:30 Read-Aloud and Closing 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS	<u>Daily Schedule Wednesday</u> 8:30 Arrival and Opening 8:45 All-School Community Meeting 9:15 Inquiry Period I 10:15 Morning Break 10:45 Inquiry Period II 12:15 Lunch and Recess 1:30 <i>Staff Meeting and Development</i> <i>Wednesday Club for students</i> 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS
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$7.5 \times 5 = 37.5$ hrs per week GGPCS

$6.25 \times 5 = 31.25$ hours per week traditional MCPS

GGPCS Expanded Daily Schedule for Grade 6-8 Students

<u>Daily Schedule M, T, Th, F</u> 8:30 Arrival and Opening 8:45 Social Studies 9:35 English 10:25 Morning Break 10:45 Math 11:35 Science 12:25 Lunch and Recess 1:30 Workshop I 2:30 Workshop II 3:30 Read-Aloud and Closing 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS	<u>Daily Schedule Wednesday</u> 8:30 Arrival and Opening 8:45 All-School Community Meeting 9:15 Humanities Block 10:25 Morning Break 10:45 STEM Block 12:15 Lunch and Recess 1:30 Wednesday Club for students 3:30 Read-Aloud and Closing 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS
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What matters as much as – perhaps more than – total instructional time is how that time is used. In accordance with the expectations of and training in the IB PYP approach, GGPCS's longer Inquiry Periods allow for the integration of work in all the

core subject areas and lend themselves to deeper, more authentic explorations of answers to children's own questions about each unit's Central Idea. This block scheduling is also supported by research:

Longer blocks of instruction have been shown to increase student learning, particularly for low-performing students....

The success of block scheduling, however, depends on how well the time is used. Research on block scheduling over the past two decades shows how important it is to train teachers on effective instructional strategies for longer class periods. Without such training, teachers commonly plan for 50-60 minutes of instruction and lack strategies for using the additional 30 minutes of class time effectively.

Some educators and parents are concerned that block scheduling may result in a narrowed curriculum because the longer reading and math blocks may reduce time for subjects such as social studies and the arts and result in the reduction or elimination of recess and physical education. Schools are trying to find ways to increase time for reading and mathematics without sacrificing other subjects and enrichment classes. (Silva, 2007, p. 4)

The IB integrated curriculum model is an ideal solution to this challenge. While one Inquiry Period each morning may focus more on the humanities and one may focus more on STEM subjects, all these curriculum areas will be addressed in the course of a day in a GGPCS classroom with ample opportunities for our students to make connections among the disciplines that intensify both their engagement with school and their learning from it.

Additionally, the GGPCS model increases the power of the interdisciplinary solution by having our paraeducators support our classroom teachers throughout the morning, and then having our classroom teachers support Workshop teachers – visual arts, media/technology, performing arts and physical education teachers – in the afternoon. As the school grows we aim to have two fully-qualified teachers working with each class at almost all times of the day. This staffing plan reduces the overall student-to-teacher ratio during both Inquiry Periods and Workshops and ensures coordination of content through the collaborative use of the Program of Inquiry Unit Planners.

This schedule also allows for a 30-minute morning break and a 75-minute lunch/recess period for students. Just as we know that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, directly impacting a child's availability to learn at school, we know that most every child's favorite subject is recess, and for good reason. The effects of appropriate free play time on learning are increasingly well documented. Outdoor activity that regularly elevates children's heart rates – running, climbing, jumping rope – increases blood flow to the brain, improving focus and attention and lifting the mood. Increased blood flow to the prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain that inhibits impulsivity, also supports more self-controlled behavior. All of these effects add up to a correlation between physical activity and academic success. Physical fitness factors such as aerobic fitness and BMI have been associated with achievement in reading and mathematics among elementary school children (Janz, et al.), improved multi-tasking skills, and reduced effects of AD/HD (Ratey). And of course, playing outside is fun!

As noted in the *ELT Toolkit*,

“The new school day is not about adding time to do more of the same. The redesigned day has expanded students' opportunities for enrichment and experiential learning - including arts, music, physical education, drama, apprenticeships and more. These engaging programs align with students' core curriculum, complementing and enhancing understanding of key academic subjects, while supporting a lifelong love of learning, helping students discover their passions and encouraging them to stay in school.” (p. 21)

This is the purpose of GGPCS's Wednesday Club afternoons. By partnering with community nonprofits and businesses and through mobilization of community volunteers (see Governance Section 2 for details of our partnerships), we have budgeted to offer all children weekly opportunities for enrichment activities that are ordinarily undertaken as afterschool activities for families who can afford it. During the two hours of Wednesday Club, mixed-age groups of children will be able to select each half-term from a number of one-hour Clubs such as Chess Club, Garden Club, Tae Kwon Do or Yoga. We envision activities designed specifically to develop content-area knowledge and skills through clubs such as “Edible Math” or “Word Wizards.” Children who are struggling with particular concepts can be invited to participate in specially designed one-hour Clubs that will strengthen their understanding and support school success, and then can choose another Club “just for fun,” such as Outdoor Art or

Indoor Soccer. Other Clubs may last two hours, such as Swim Club at the local Montgomery County pool or Animal Service Club which might allow older children to volunteer at the Humane Society each week.

A final advantage of the common, expanded schedule for GGPCS is that it facilitates regrouping for differentiation as well as opportunities for fostering connection and trust throughout the school. If all students throughout the elementary school are tackling Word Work each day at 8:45, it is easy to have 2nd-graders who still need direct phonics instruction spend that 30 minutes in a first-grade classroom, while 2nd-graders who are ready for more advanced exploration into the orthography of English join some 4th-graders in the hallway under the supervision of a paraeducator. In addition to the Wednesday morning Community Meeting, where classes or grades can take turns to lead the proceedings and show off their learning to the whole school, a common Read-Aloud period at the end of day allows for 6th graders who may only just have achieved reading fluency to visit twice a week with kindergartners to consolidate their new skills.

The GGPCS Teacher Day

As with our ideal academic calendar, the Founding Board of GGPCS would, in the school of our dreams, add a full two hours as the Massachusetts pilot schools do. However, in respect of the MCEA negotiated contract, our proposed expanded student day coincides exactly with the prescribed 7.5 hour teacher duty day and includes a 30-minute duty-free lunch period for teachers. Teachers are provided their contracted 7 hours of weekly planning time through blocks of noncontact time *during* the student day rather than before or after, and because of our common schoolwide schedule, staff will almost always have the option of common planning time with grade-level or cluster colleagues. The Wednesday Club afternoon frees almost all staff simultaneously for two hours each week, allowing participation in staff meetings, professional development and collaborative planning, as per the understandings of the negotiated agreement:

MCEA and the Board agree with national and state reports that confirm:

- Maximizing instructional time is vital for student learning.
- Teaching and learning take place in different ways, at different times, and by using different styles for individual students.

- Time for paying attention to individual students, for planning and preparing to teach, for observing and assisting colleagues, for group work, and for individual study also needs to be built into the working day.
- To improve our ability to maximize student learning, teachers should have additional opportunities to plan with other teachers, to participate in relevant professional development experiences, and to be involved more fully in making the key decisions that affect their daily responsibilities.
- During the school day, teachers should be able to focus their complete attention on facilitating the learning of their students. However, involvement in school activities is the responsibility of all professional staff.
- More flexible use of time encourages student growth and initiative and enables schools to direct resources more effectively to where they are most needed.
- The parties affirm our mutual commitment to this vision and the conditions needed for quality schools and quality teaching and learning. It is our intention to continuously improve how time is structured and used.

THE GGPCS TEACHER DUTY DAY

<u>Daily Schedule M, T, Th, F</u>	<u>Daily Schedule Wednesday</u>
8:00 12-month professional staff and paraeducators will share responsibility for supervising before-school time.	8:00 12-month professional staff and paraeducators will share responsibility for supervising before-school time.
8:30 Arrival and Opening	8:30 Arrival and Opening
8:45 Inquiry Period	8:45 All-School Community Meeting
10:15 Morning Break	9:15 Inquiry Period I
Teachers and paraeducators will share duty during Morning Breaks. Teachers will have a 30-minute Break Duty twice each week and take the remaining 1.5 hours as planning time.	10:15 Morning Break
10:45 Inquiry Period II	Teachers and paraeducators will share duty during Morning Breaks. Teachers will have a 30-minute Break Duty twice each week and take the remaining 1.5 hours as planning time.
12:15 Lunch and Recess	10:45 Inquiry Period II
Lunch and recess will be supervised by paraeducators. Teachers will take their 30-minute	12:15 Lunch and Recess
	Lunch and recess will be supervised by paraeducators. Teachers will take their 30-minute

<i>duty-free lunch at this time, followed by 30 minutes per day of planning time for a total of 2.5 hours.</i> 1:30 Workshop I 2:30 Workshop II <i>Teachers will usually accompany their classes during Workshop Periods but will be guaranteed at least 1 hour of Workshop time each week free for use as planning time and possibly 2 hours.</i> 3:30 Read-Aloud and Closing 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS	<i>duty-free lunch at this time, followed by 30 minutes per day of planning time for a total of 2.5 hours.</i> 1:30 Professional Development <i>Teachers will take this 2-hour block to participate in scheduled staff meetings, professional development, unscheduled collaborative planning, family conferences and record-keeping</i> 3:30 Read-Aloud and Closing 4:00 Dismissal 7.5 TOTAL HOURS
] Teacher Planning Time = 7 hours	

This is the kind of “Time for Teachers = Student Success” provision that MCEA has focused on in recent months. In a public comment to the Montgomery County Board of Education in October 2009, MCEA President Doug Prouty said, “Our members went into teaching because of their commitment to students. Yet more and more they find themselves unable to spend the time they want to – and need to – preparing for and working with students, because of the demands around paperwork and data entry” (MCEA, 2009). The Founding Board of GGPCS strongly supports the notion that exceptional teachers can only effectively practice their professional art if they have enough time in which to do it and appropriate autonomy over the use of that time.

The MCEA contract acknowledges that its professionals “work with students in ways that go beyond the classroom and routinely devote time beyond the work day to meet student needs” (Article 16.b.4) and we will count on a similar reasonable degree of flexibility from our staff. However, the Founding Board of GGPCS believes that no waiver is necessary to accommodate this innovative expanded student day. MCPS Regulation IDA-RA, Regular School Day Schedules, provides that the Principal of a school is responsible for

1. “Providing a full schedule for instruction, beginning on the first day of the school year, for all students

2. Opening and closing daily sessions for all full-time students at the same time unless an alternative arrangement has been approved by the principal and if necessary, after consultation with the director of transportation, (or the director of special education programs and services in the case of special schools)
3. Maintaining the established schedule every day of the school year”

Thus we find it permissible that the Principal of GGPCS establish and maintain the schedule we propose, opening and closing daily sessions as described. Our specific plans to provide bus transportation within a limited geographic area (see Operations Section 5) may arise as a consideration during charter negotiation, but with an enrollment of no more than 420 students, we anticipate that the impact of our alternative daily schedule on MCPS transportation as a whole will be negligible.

Second, the MCEA contract provides that “schools may decide to change the structure of the student day in an effort to increase instructional time for maximizing student achievement” (Article 16.E.1) It also requires that “Decisions to change the structure of the school day may only be made after a formal process is undertaken to determine best appropriate instructional practices by a multi-stakeholder group, including parents and students, under the direction of the School Leadership Team.” In our view, our Founding Board constitutes a School Leadership Team, the letters of community support we have amassed for GGPCS’s proposed schedule and restructured school year represent the multi-stakeholder group, and this charter school application may be considered the beginning of a formal process already underpinned by research on best instructional practices.

Again, in a meeting with MCEA leadership in February, the GGPCS expanded student day and teacher duty day schedules were scrutinized to ensure that it meets the requirements of the current negotiated contract. Representatives indicated that as long as the contracted 7 hours of planning time are provided, there would likely be no objection on their part to incorporating this innovation into a school of choice within MCPS.

We look forward to working with MCPS and MCEA to lead the way in innovations which directly impact the improvement of student performance, as well as elements of the

GGPCS mission that range from a high-quality implementation of the PYP to the development of a joyful school culture.

g. Describe how the school will assess the level of success of its educational program (including compliance with the local and state assessment programs).

As educators and parents, we believe that the quality of a child's education cannot be measured solely by scores on standardized reading and math tests, which have become the focus of national attention due to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Although these measures have important uses, one-dimensional tests by their nature do not assess students' conceptual thinking, their ability to do research and to evaluate and defend ideas, their skill in expressing and communicating ideas, or their success in collaborative or teamwork settings.

Furthermore, academic achievement is only one part of a successful educational program. In schools our "customers" are children, and as the adults in a school, in a school system, and in a democracy built on shared responsibility, we have a moral obligation to tend and facilitate not only the intellectual development of the children in our charge, but their social, emotional and physical development as well.

GGPCS will, as all public schools must, be judged according to our ability to develop our students' proficiency in reading and math and will participate in the Maryland School Assessment as mandated by the state. However, we will also make it a priority to document success in meeting a broad range of goals that reflect all the ways we aim to educate our students. Everyone involved with an assessment – our teachers, administrators, families and students – will have a clear understanding of the reasons for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success, and the methods by which the assessment is made. The entire school community should also be concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the overall assessment program.

Overview

Our assessment approach will respond to three interrelated needs, in keeping with the IB PYP perspective on assessment.

- the need to discover and monitoring what children know and can do
- the need to record and analyze data
- the need to summarize and communicate information

The purposes of our assessments will be

- to serve as a feedback system that guides teachers in planning for inquiry and individualizing instruction
- to inform colleagues, families and students themselves about what and how each child is responding to the demands and opportunities of the curriculum
- to support students in reflecting on their progress and strengths as well as their challenges and areas of need
- to guide the school leadership in making decisions about the overall program of GGPCS

Assessment at GGPCS will incorporate data from four main sources:

- criterion-referenced measures
- value-added assessments
- ongoing assessment of classroom teaching and learning
- mission-driven evaluation

Additional accountability will be provided by the IBO's ongoing assessment of our success in meeting the requirements for IB authorization.

In this section we address assessment of our overall educational program through state, local and IB assessment programs. Assessment of student performance beyond the basic state and local testing requirements are addressed in Academic Design Section 12.a.

Criterion-referenced assessment: Maryland School Assessment

GGPCS will follow all the state mandated rules and regulations for administering the Maryland School Assessment in 3rd-8th grade. As required for all Maryland State public schools, we will aim for all our students to reach the NCLB goal of 100% proficiency in 2014, and for current gaps in achievement among ethnic and racial groups to be eliminated. For NCLB accountability, each student's performance is graded as Basic, Proficient, or Advanced. In Years 1-4 of operation, GGPCS will aim to meet the following goals for its students:

Goals and Objectives of Global Garden Public Charter School	Associated Performance Measures
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE 1. Adequate Yearly Progress By the end of Year 1 of operation, the school will meet or exceed Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by NCLB, including attendance measures. By the end of Year 2, GGPCS will have met or exceeded the 2013 MSDE Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP. 2. Academic Value Added In the school's first year of operation, each student will progress at least one grade level in reading and math as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition. 3. Equity of Achievement In the school's first three years of operation, the gap in achievement between the school's lowest-performing students and its highest-performing students will be significantly reduced.	1. Using MSA results from 2012, the percentage of GGPCS students scoring Proficient or Advanced will meet or exceed the requirements for meeting AYP. Using MSA results from 2013, GGPCS will have met or exceeded the MSDE Annual Measurable Objectives for AYP. 2. Using the Stanford 10 administered in late September 2011 as a baseline measure, 90% of students in grades K-3 will gain at least one full year in reading and math by the time the Stanford 10 is administered again in late June 2012; 80% of students in grades 4-8 will gain at least one full year in reading and math. 3. Using the school's 2014 Stanford 10 and MSA results as measures, GGPCS will reduce gaps in achievement among subgroups of the student population to the same degree or better than in MCPS as a whole.

IB authorization assessment

Part of GGPCS's accountability plan is earning the authorization of the IB Program. GGPCS will follow a three-year authorization process to be recognized by the International Baccalaureate Organization as an authorized IB World School.

During Years 1 and 2 GGPCS will be a candidate school. These years are implementation years during which the IBO monitors the school's progress toward full authorization. Upon full implementation and approval by the IBO, GGPCS aims to become an Authorized IB World School in Year 3.

IB Program standards provide a set of criteria against which both GGPCS and the IB can measure success in the implementation of the PYP. To be authorized by the IB, GGPCS must make a commitment to work towards meeting all the standards and practices. These form the basis of a self-study, which GGPCS will undertake as part of the Program evaluation process. The evaluation report will contain commendations, recommendations and matters to be addressed based on the school's progress towards achieving these standards and practices or performance indicators.

For each standard there is a set of performance indicators; please see Appendix AD2 for the complete document.

Section A: Philosophy

- Standard A1: There is close alignment between the educational beliefs and values of GGPCS and those of the PYP.
- Standard A2: GGPCS promotes international-mindedness on the part of the adults and the students in the school community.

Section B: Organization

- Standard B1: The school demonstrates ongoing commitment to, and provides support for, the Program through appropriate administrative structures and systems, staffing, and resources.

Section C: Curriculum

- Standard C1: A comprehensive, coherent, written curriculum, based on the requirements of the Program and developed by GGPCS, is available to all sections of the school community.
- Standard C2: GGPCS has implemented a system through which all teachers plan and reflect in collaborative teams.

- Standard C3: Teaching and learning at GGPCS empowers and encourages students to become lifelong learners, to be responsible towards themselves, their learning, other people and the environment, and to take appropriate action.

Section D: Students

- Standard D1: Students learn to choose to act, and to reflect on their actions, so that they contribute to their own well-being and that of the community and the environment.
- Standard D2: In the final year of the Program, all students complete an exhibition project that allows them to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning.

Our progress towards IB Authorization will be part of our measure of overall school success as noted in the Goals and Objectives of Academic Design Section 3.

Specific School Objectives

1. Progress towards IB Authorization In the school's first year of operation, it will make substantial progress towards the goal of authorization as an IB World School.	1. By July 2012, GGPCS will have been accepted as a candidate school for authorization by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Its teachers will have completed required training and the Program of Inquiry will have been written and implemented under the guidance of the IB PYP program.
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WHAT FIFTY SAID

When I was young my teachers were the old.
I gave up fire for form till I was cold.
I suffered like a metal being cast.
I went to school to age to learn the past.

Now I am old my teachers are the young.

What can't be molded must be cracked and sprung.
 I strain at lessons fit to start a suture.
 I go to school to youth to learn the future.

— *Robert Frost*

5. Describe the uniqueness of your program; include concept design, techniques, and/or practices.

There is nothing unique about the core values of Global Garden Public Charter School; we share a deep commitment to the core values of MCPS.

- We start with the assumption that every child can learn and succeed, and that where children come from and the cultural resources they bring to the school setting play an important part in their success.
- We believe that excellent teaching and learning are fundamentally connected to the ethical values of openness, integrity and respect in relationships within the school system, and to responsiveness and accountability to the needs of individual children and their families.
- We seek to foster and sustain systems and structures that support and improve teacher effectiveness.
- We take seriously the need for children to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will equip them to contribute as global citizens.
- We support the strengthening of family-school relationships and the expansion of civic, business and community partnerships to improve student achievement.

The uniqueness of GGPCS's program lies in the synergy of our school design, our curricular program and instructional approaches and our overall mission, depicted graphically below. It is our conviction that these elements can mobilize and optimize resources – human, financial and temporal – to improve achievement for each and every child: “What can't be molded must be cracked and sprung.”



Small Size

First, GGPCS's deliberately smaller school will foster an intimate, more responsive learning community, where no child, teacher or family is left behind:

"...small schools can create a more intimate learning environment that is better able to address the needs of each student and teacher. Students, teachers, and parents may all be better served when a school is small enough to allow for effective communication amongst educators, students and the school community. In small schools, meaningful relationships are fostered and opportunities for collaboration are cultivated.

A small school offers an environment in which students are more visible. When students are better known, teachers can more easily identify individual talents and unique needs of each student, offering a more personalized educational experience.

A small school staff size allows more opportunity for teachers to know each other well, more easily share information about their students, collaborate to solve problems, and generally support one another.

Small schools are a way of restructuring schools and the human relationships inside them.” (Small Schools Workshop, 2010)

The largest elementary school in the MCPS system, Spark Matsunaga, serves 948 students and the typical elementary school enrolls 450-650 students. Similarly, the largest middle school is Pyle with 1289 students with an average range of 700-1100 students. GGPCS would be unique in limiting enrollment to 420 Kindergarten through 8th grade students at its largest. Please see Academic Design Section 6 for the rationale for keeping GGPCS small.

K-8

Second, GGPCS will offer a K-8 school structure which will extend the range of students served from Kindergarten through 8th grade. This design allows middle-school students’ academic needs to be met in a setting where they continue to “belong,” where the challenging transition to adolescence can be better observed and supported and where they can use their skills and maturity to offer leadership to younger students, in keeping with the needs of young adolescents to make a contribution to the community.

A K-8 school will also allow families to enroll more of their children in the same school for longer, strengthening their commitment to and engagement in the school

over time. There is currently no school in MCPS that offers parents the choice of a K-8 experience, while a large number of successful independent schools in and around Montgomery County are structured as K-8 or K-12. Please see Academic Design Section 6 for details of our target population.

Open Enrollment

Third, as a public charter school GGPCS is required to enroll any student residing in Montgomery County who is otherwise eligible and who is selected by lottery. Currently, while MCPS offers 887 Special Schools/alternative programs, there are only a few that are open to any eligible student without qualification or residency requirements. The availability of the rest of these options to families is restricted, sometimes severely, by geographic area of residence, application requirements, admission processes or transportation and space limitations.

Global Garden will transcend MCPS's own Red Zone/Green Zone distinctions by recruiting students from all over the county, both geographically and demographically, in keeping with the MCPS commitment to leading for equity. Please see Operations Section 1 for details of our enrollment plan.

Expanded Learning Time

Fourth, GGPCS will offer a restructured academic calendar and an expanded daily schedule to support our conviction that "it takes a lot of slow to grow." Current state regulation and MCPS scheduling allow for 185 days of school per year, which amounts to about 1,125 hours per year.

While GGPCS does not find it possible to increase the overall number of instructional days, we do believe that redistributing them over eleven months can make an impact on summer learning loss for all children and especially for those from lower-income families who tend to lose the most. With the addition of our separate, optional Intersession programming, we will add up to 33 days of organized, content-based enrichment programming to the school year and offer "just in time" support to children who may be struggling academically.

In a successful effort to raise achievement across the board, MCPS has focused on core subject instructional time with the effect of limiting children's other experiences

during the school day. In a typical elementary school, children squeeze lunch and outdoor playtime into about one hour and art, music and PE receive focus for 45-50 minutes per week each. Even social studies – in our view the core of core subjects in an institution of public education – and science are often allocated only 65-90 minutes per week each. Our proposed expanded daily schedule adds 1.25 hours per day without affecting the contracted teacher duty day, and our interdisciplinary curriculum combined with an innovative common schoolwide schedule makes the most of every minute children are at school.

MCEA's call for more time for teachers supports the Founders' conviction that our traditional school schedule, established during the time when the US was a nation of farmers, denies both teachers and students the opportunity to do their best. It takes a fair balance of activities and a fair amount of time to dig in and go deeper in the pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning. GGPCS is in consultation with the MCEA on these provisions for more time for teaching and learning, and we look forward to their support in establishing this innovative school schedule for GGPCS. Please see Academic Design Section 4.f for a discussion of our provision for expanded learning time.

IB Primary Years Program

Fifth, GGPCS's inquiry-based, interdisciplinary curricular approach, supported by the International Baccalaureate Organization, bring academic vigor through instructional methods and a mission aimed at developing "international-mindedness:"

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The PYP program offers a distinct alternative to the current MCPS curricular approach, which is to provide instruction in the traditional subject areas supported by

a series of individual instructional guides. In the experience of the Founders, MCPS teachers in the regular classroom are not generally encouraged to present content material in ways that encourage students to make connections across subject areas.

The PYP takes a different view, which is endorsed by every major council for subject area teaching.

“An interdisciplinary education which draws from the knowledge and processes of multiple disciplines should encourage students to become active learners equipped with the analytical, interpretative, and evaluative skills needed to solve real-life problems. Eliminating artificial barriers among subject areas gives students a broader context for solving real-life problems.” (Consortium for Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning, 2008)

While the IB curriculum for Middle Years and at the Diploma level is available at a number of schools in MCPS, the highly-regarded Primary Years Program is only available at College Gardens ES to the students who are assigned to that school. Our participation in the IB authorization process will strengthen our ability to offer this challenging and vigorous program of instruction for every student and add an additional PYP program in a different geographical area that is available to every family in Montgomery County.

Substantial Foreign Language Instruction

Sixth, Global Garden’s provision for substantial foreign language instruction opens an option for early world language acquisition that does not exist anywhere else in the county. One of the hallmarks of any IB program is instruction in a world language, and while language immersion programs are offered at seven MCPS elementary schools and six middle schools, substantial foreign language instruction is not offered at any other elementary school, despite what research shows about the optimum conditions for language learning. GGPCS’s commitment to provide three hours per week of Spanish or Arabic instruction for every student in K-8 will be unique in the county. Please see Academic Design Section 4.c for a discussion of our world language offerings.

Joyful School Culture

Finally, GGPCS's explicit mission to create a joyful school culture focuses on an aspect of the educational experience which goes unremarked in the mission of MCPS as a whole and in only one individual MCPS school that we can find: fun! This feeling of flow, of joy, of fun creates motivation and leads to effort, investment and high achievement for everyone in the school community. Please see Academic Design Section 2.b for a discussion of the meanings of joy in a school setting.

6. Describe the target population.

As detailed in the section on goals and objectives, one of our principal aims in establishing GGPCS is to create a school community that better reflects the rich demographic diversity of Montgomery County. For this reason, we emphasize that GGPCS is open to the enrollment of any K-8 student in the county; there is no one target population.

Having said that, the Founders of GGPCS are highly committed to developing a strong sense of community at GGPCS — and with issues of equity in mind, we envision our primary target population as those students residing within the boundaries shown on the map in Appendix OP2. We plan to provide transportation to students within these geographic boundaries and will particularly target these areas in our recruitment and outreach efforts.

- a. **Identify how many students will be enrolled each year over the years of the proposed initial charter term. Explain the rationale for selecting this particular school size.**

GGPCS plans to serve 23 students in grades K-7 in its first year, growing to 372 students in grades K-8 by Year 4. In Years 5 and 6, we will add a second 4th and 5th grade to reach a total of 18 classes in Grades K-8 and 420 students, our maximum enrollment. A chart summarizing our enrollment plans is on the following page.

We will work diligently to ensure that our total student population does not fall far below this number or grow much above it, in keeping with our commitment to offer

Montgomery County families and students the well-established benefits of a small school.

We are aware of and fully support the move towards universal pre-K, although we have not proposed to include pre-K in this application. We will review our position regarding funding and support for Pre-K each year to determine whether we are able to offer it at GGPCS.

GGPCS Enrollment Projection, Years 1-4			Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4	
	GR AD E	Stu de nts per cla ss	Cl as se s	Stu den ts	Cl as se s	Stu den ts	Cl as se s	Stu den ts	Cl as se s	Stu den ts
K-2 Cluster	K	22	2	44	2	44	2	44	2	44
	1	22	1	22	2	44	2	44	2	44
	2	22	1	22	1	22	2	44	2	44
3-5 Cluster	3	22	1	22	1	22	1	22	2	44
	4	24	1	24	1	24	1	24	1	24
	5	24	1	24	1	24	1	24	1	24
Middle School	6	24	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
	7	25	1	25	2	50	2	50	2	50
	8	25	0	0	1	25	2	50	2	50
Total School			10	233	13	305	15	352	16	374

Rationale

In keeping with our mission to establish and maintain an intimate learning community, we intend to limit enrollment to two classes at each grade level K-8, our goal for Year 6. Unlike a traditional neighborhood public school where enrollment can wax and wane over time, we anticipate being able to fill every space every year, which translates into long-term stability in funding and in provision for students.

Small school size impacts every aspect of the educational experience from affective and social benefits such as increased engagement and satisfaction for every member of the school community to higher academic achievement. In addition, and crucially for a school district committed to closing the achievement gap, the benefits of the

small-school experience are highest for economically disadvantaged and minority students. Jewell (in Cotton, 1996) writes,

If minority students must struggle more to achieve a solid public education and if large districts and large schools find it increasingly difficult to achieve solid educational results for their students, we may be acting contrary to the interests of all concerned by organizing our public education system in a manner which assigns high proportions of minority youngsters to large schools within very large school districts (p. 152).

Please see Appendix AD5 for further research support for our choice of a small school.

Precisely because of our school's small size, consistent block scheduling and collaborative planning approach, we will be more able to flexibly differentiate instruction. For example, a 7-year-old who has experienced developmental delays could be evaluated and then placed in a Kindergarten class if appropriate, while a 5-year-old with advanced conceptual development might be more wisely placed in 1st grade for the year. A group of 5th graders who need accelerated math instruction could spend the 30-minute foundational period each day with the 7th graders, while 6th graders who needed more numeracy practice could take their places in the 5th grade classroom during the Number Work period.

There is often a concern with small schools about their ability to support as rich a variety of clubs and other extracurricular activities as larger schools. GGPCS will take a two-pronged approach, offering choice and variety through our Wednesday Club and Intersession programming, while ensuring richness and depth through emphasizing some options during the school day. One example of this might be offering students an ongoing Wednesday Club orchestra opportunity to supplement instrumental music instruction focused on hand-drums and recorder during Workshop sessions. By offering one or two basic options consistently over time so that all children can experience growth and satisfaction in their developing skills, we provide equity and build community.

With regard to school organization and class composition, we anticipate little difficulty. Because we will draw from throughout Montgomery County, using a lottery system to fill the limited number of places available at GGPCS, challenges in

balancing class size should be minimized. Our designation of classroom clusters (K-2, 3-5, 6-8) and our extended common planning time for all teachers will ensure that although in Years 1-4 there is only one 4th grade teacher, that teacher will “never walk alone.”

Finally, in our letters, petitions and conversations with Montgomery County citizens we found that the idea of a smaller school, particularly at the elementary level, had strong, broad-based support. An intimate, welcoming, and responsive school community serves everyone’s interests.

b. Provide evidence of parental demand for the proposed school (letters of support, parent signatures, etc.).

Please see Governance Section 11 for a complete discussion of the scope of community support and interest in the Montgomery County community and among parents. Appendix G3 contains almost 100 personal letters of support and evidence of approximately 600 petition signatures, many of them with comments expressing the signer’s particular interest in GGPCS’s innovative school design.

c. Summarize the recruitment process and explain how the school and its program will be publicized throughout the community to a broad cross-section of prospective students, including families traditionally less informed about options.

Please see Operations Section 1 and 2 for a summary of our recruitment and publicity plans. Also see Governance Section 12 for copies of our communications in English, Spanish, French and Chinese.

d. Explain the school's planned enrollment process, including how the school will limit enrollment if demand exceeds capacity.

Please see Operations Section 1 and 2 for details of GGPCS’s enrollment and lottery process.

7. Provide details on service provisions to accommodate students with disabilities.

GGPCS students who have received general education interventions and have a defined disability may be eligible for a 504 Plan. A 504 plan is designed for students who need the support of accommodations to access grade level curriculum, but do not require specialized instruction. GGPCS will designate a 504 coordinator/ case manager (usually the counselor) who will be responsible for overseeing implementation and monitoring of the plan. GGPCS will use the MCPS procedures, process and forms, specifically, those outlined and provided in Handbook for Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 2006.

An evaluation for a 504 must include data from a variety of sources which may include:

- Standardized testing
- Report cards
- Teacher reports
- Observations
- Health records
- Medical and/or psychological evaluations
- Information from parents
- Other information such as Functional Behavioral Assessment, Behavioral Intervention Plan, data records.

The specific requirements are:

- Is there a physical or mental impairment?
- What major life activity is affected?
- Does the physical or mental impairment substantially limit a major life activity?

Once a student has been determined to require a 504 plan, his or her progress will be monitored regularly. If a student is able to access programs and activities without the accommodations of a 504 will be determined through a review process. Data is used to determine:

- Does the impairment still exist?
- Is the student using the accommodations?
- Does the impairment substantially limit a major life activity?
- Is the 504 still needed?

General education teachers implement 504 plans. GGPCS professional staff will review 504 plans annually to determine if services and accommodations continue to be required. (Please see Academic Design Section 4.e and Appendix AD3 for further details on our plans for serving students with special needs.)

HOW I LEARNED ENGLISH

It was in an empty lot
 Ringed by elms and fir and honeysuckle.
 Bill Corson was pitching in his buckskin jacket,
 Chuck Keller, fat even as a boy, was on first,
 His t-shirt riding up over his gut,
 Ron O'Neill, Jim, Dennis, were talking it up
 In the field, a blue sky above them
 Tipped with cirrus.

And there I was,
 Just off the plane and plopped in the middle
 Of Williamsport, Pa. and a neighborhood game,
 Unnatural and without any moves,
 My notions of baseball and America
 Growing fuzzier each time I whiffed.
 So it was not impossible that I,
 Banished to the outfield and daydreaming
 Of water, or a hotel in the mountains,
 Would suddenly find myself in the path
 Of a ball stung by Joe Barone.
 I watched it closing in
 Clean and untouched, transfixed
 By its easy arc before it hit
 My forehead with a thud.

I fell back,
 Dazed, clutching my brow,
 Groaning, "Oh my shin, oh my shin,"
 And everybody peeled away from me
 And dropped from laughter, and there we were,
 All of us writhing on the ground for one reason
 Or another.

Someone said "shin" again,
 There was a wild stamping of hands on the
 ground,
 A kicking of feet, and the fit
 Of laughter overtook me too,
 And that was important, as important
 As Joe Barone asking me how I was
 Through his tears, picking me up
 And dusting me off with hands like swatters,
 And though my head felt heavy,
 I played on till dusk
 Missing flies and pop-ups and grounders
 And calling out in desperation things like
 "Yours" and "take it," but doing all right,
 Tugging at my cap in just the right way,
 Crouching low, my feet set.
 "Hum baby" sweetly on my lips.

— — *Gregory Djanikian*

8. Provide details on service provisions to accommodate English Language Learners.

GGPCS will be a school of connection and belonging, a welcoming school that honors the individual strengths and talents of all children and families who enroll. In our view, one of the greatest strengths a person can have is the ability to communicate in more than one language — a strength that is commonplace in much of the world but still relatively rare in the US. In keeping with the GGPCS mission to develop active,

creative participants in the life of the local and global communities, we will strive to support our English language learners' acquisition of English while honoring and supporting the maintenance of their home languages.

The GGPCS ESOL curriculum will be based on state and district standards, aligned with IB interdisciplinary Units of Inquiry, and have an emphasis on the four language domains: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Research-based methodologies and strategies will be used to bolster both social and academic English language skills. GGPCS will use ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine English proficiency levels and to guide instruction.

Under the structure of the IB Primary Years Program, English for Speakers of other Languages – ESOL – will be the Language B for those whose first language is not English. We anticipate that the majority of ESOL students at GGPCS will be native speakers of Spanish, which has guided our decision to make Spanish the Language B of GGPCS's Primary Years Program of Inquiry. We also expect that our enrollment of ESOL students may be larger than the MCPS average of 12.5% because of the area we hope to locate in (see Facilities and Finance Section 1 and Operations Section 5 for details of GGPCS's planned location and transportation plan.

This offers us a unique opportunity to incorporate the culture and language skills of our Spanish-speaking students into everyday instruction at GGPCS. Following the PYP precept that students should be able to communicate effectively in more than one language, we see bilingualism and bi-literacy in English and Spanish as our ultimate goal. In our Spanish Language B classrooms, native speakers will be encouraged to make a unique contribution to the learning of their fellow students as they themselves learn to read and write Spanish. They constitute a valuable cultural resource, and the instructional emphasis will be on communicative activities that utilize their knowledge and experience of their home culture and language.

Similarly, in offering Arabic as Language B in the middle school for grades 6-8, any students who bring Arabic experience will be encouraged to contribute to the instruction of their fellow students by sharing their knowledge and experience of their home culture and language – as will children of any language background will be encouraged to exercise their skills and contribute to the school community's cultural awareness.

GGPCS will provide ESOL services in accordance with MSDE guidelines and federal law. ESOL students are identified through the use of a Home Language Survey and are placed in the appropriate level ESOL class based on their score on appropriate diagnostic assessments. NEP/LEP eligible students will be given individualized instructional support according to their English proficiency levels, as determined by ESOL assessment tools.

The GGPCS ESOL program will provide appropriate, high quality academic and language support programs that promote English language acquisition. GCPSS will determine the ESOL instructional model (plug-in/pull-out) based on the enrollment of English language learners (ELL) and the learning needs of ELL students. A brief description of ESOL instructional models is provided below.

Pull-out instruction – ESOL students are pulled out for a portion of the day for English language instruction, either individually or in small groups, based on instructional level.

Inclusion, or push-in – ESOL students are instructed in small groups or individually in the mainstream classroom, either using modifications of the mainstream lesson, or using parallel materials which are at the instructional level of the students.

In-class ESOL support – ESOL students are supported in the mainstream classroom by the ESOL teacher who assists them with the mainstream curriculum, modifying materials and methods as necessary.

GGPCS will offer an inclusion-based model for the delivery of ESOL services. ESOL services will be delivered by the ESOL teacher in the mainstream classroom in a variety of ways. These may include small group instruction of specific topics; leading a reading group with level-appropriate reading material; leading a writing group with the specific goal of improving written expression; and offering vocabulary support in all subject areas in an in-class support model.

Ideally, pullout services will only be used in cases where beginning students in the upper grades have no linguistic access to the curriculum without beginning language instruction. This instruction is often delivered during the reading block and students are in the mainstream class for all other subjects. We feel, however, that ESOL should not be a replacement for the mainstream curriculum but rather an enhancement, and

that ESOL services should be delivered within the mainstream classroom as soon as is practical. The goal is to deliver the bulk of the services within the mainstream classroom.

Classroom teachers at GGPCS will be trained in individualizing instruction and dealing with the academic needs of students with limited English proficiency. Each spring GGPCS will participate in the LAS Links Language Assessment System. Please see Academic Design Section 4.c for more information about how ESOL students will be supported along with other students in acquiring literacy skills in English.

9. Explain the school's proposed grading, promotion, and retention policies. (These must be aligned with MCPS policies and regulations, unless a waiver is submitted and approved.)

GGPCS is committed to maintaining vigorous performance and achievement standards for all students, in keeping with MCPS Policy IKA, Grading and Reporting. Once our staff is in place we will work to refine the process outlined in Academic Design Section 12.b for evaluating and reporting student progress. Our grading, promotion and retention policies will reflect our commitment to the standards of the IB PYP as well providing clear information that is useful for families, students, professional decision-making and MCPS monitoring.

Although our PYP Program of Inquiry will not always align precisely in terms of timing with the MCPS curriculum, we will strive to maintain general consistency in our address of the Maryland Content Standards with other MCPS schools, assessing student achievement compared to developmentally appropriate grade level expectations.

Teachers will use the GGPCS Primary Years Program of Inquiry and Unit Planners to develop mastery objectives and a variety of tasks to determine student achievement of those objectives. We anticipate using a report card that varies somewhat from the one-page MCPS form in order to provide families and students with a more comprehensive picture of each child's progress and levels of achievement, including teacher commentary and student reflection. We will work with MCPS to ensure that GGPCS grades will have clear, consistent meaning throughout the school system.

For details of our plan for reporting assessment information, please see Academic Design Section 12.b.

10. Describe the compliance plan for local/state assessment programs.

Please see Academic Design Section 4.g for details of our compliance plan for local and state assessment programs.

a. Describe how Maryland State Department of Education mandates will be met, including Maryland Content Standards; voluntary state curriculum; graduation requirements, including high school assessments (HSAs), etc.

Applicants must base their standards on the Maryland Content Standards and may adopt additional standards that exceed these state standards. The standards should give reviewers a clear sense of what students will know and be able to do.

Please see Academic Design Section 4.c for details of how our International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program of Inquiry (Appendix AD1) aligns with the Maryland Content Standards, as well as Academic Design Section 4.a, 4.b and 4.g for an explanation of the additional standards adopted by GGPCS as part of its IB authorization process.

11. Provide a corrective action plan for students who are below achievement standards.

Describe how assessment information will be used to continuously improve instruction, student learning, and individual development; and how the school will engage students who are working above or below the school's performance standard.

GGPCS's entire school design is conceived to respond appropriately to each child's needs. Through the implementation of a common, rigorous curriculum within a small, supportive school that facilitates differentiation and cultivates joy, we intend to minimize the number of students who are working below our school's performance standard and meet the needs of those who are working substantially above.

That said, we recognize that there will always be some children whose needs fall outside the range of ordinary. Our exceptional staff will collaborate, as described in Academic Design Section 4.e to identify and evaluate those needs and then address them as early and as quickly as possible. Details of how GGPCS staff will use assessment data to improve instruction, student learning and individual development are in Academic Design Section 12.a.

12. Outline strategies to assess and analyze student interests and needs. Describe how student progress will be determined, measured, and reported through a detailed outline of the school's approach to accountability.

In this section we address assessment of student performance using internal measures, and external measures beyond the basic state and local testing requirements. Assessment of our overall educational program through state, local and IB assessment programs are addressed in Academic Design Section 4.g.

- a. **Describe the school's proposed plan to assess student performance. Explain any internal and external measures that will be used to monitor individual student progress beyond the basic state and local testing requirements. Explain why particular measures have been chosen, how baseline achievement data will be collected, in which subject or development areas such data will be collected, and which assessment tools will be used.**

GGPCS will, as all public schools must, be judged according to our ability to develop our students' proficiency in reading and math and will participate in the Maryland School Assessment as mandated by the state. However, we will also make it a priority to document success in meeting a broad range of goals that reflect all the ways we aim to educate our students. Everyone involved with an assessment – our teachers, administrators, families and students – will have a clear understanding of the reasons for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success, and the methods by which the assessment is made. The entire school community should also be concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the overall assessment program.

Overview

Our assessment approach will respond to three interrelated needs, in keeping with the IB PYP perspective on assessment.

- the need to discover and monitor what children know and can do
- the need to record and analyze data
- the need to summarize and communicate information
- The purposes of our assessments will be
 - to serve as a feedback system that guides teachers in planning for inquiry and individualizing instruction
 - to inform colleagues, families and students themselves about what and how each child is responding to the demands and opportunities of the curriculum
 - to support students in reflecting on their progress and strengths as well as their challenges and areas of need
 - to guide the school leadership in making decisions about the overall program of GGPCS

Assessment at GGPCS will incorporate data from four main sources:

- criterion-referenced measures
- value-added assessments
- ongoing assessment of classroom teaching and learning
- mission-driven evaluation

Additional accountability will be provided by the IBO's ongoing assessment of our success in meeting the requirements for IB authorization.

Value-Added Assessment

In addition to the annual MSA, GGPCS will administer the Stanford 10 twice each year to measure individual same-student learning gains. We believe strongly that measuring annual academic progress for each of our students is an important indicator of our school's success, an approach known as value-added assessment. "Value-added

assessment provides school leaders with rich diagnostic information, which they can use in many ways such as assigning personnel, allocating resources and identifying mentor teachers and coaches” (Operation Public Education, 2010).

We will test students in late September of each year, using the well-regarded Stanford 10 to provide baseline information for a variety of skills and knowledge in reading and math. This information will enable our teachers to focus early on the areas where each student needs the most help. Testing students again in late June of our extended school calendar will demonstrate what gains have been made through the course of the school year, and will provide specific data in addition to that provided by the once-a-year MSA assessments administered in March. We will be able to monitor closely how much each student has progressed, how our instructional strategies are working for different needs, and how much on average students in each class, grade, and the school as a whole have gained.

While some students who start the year far behind grade level may remain at NCLB Basic levels by the end of the year, our baseline testing will allow us to measure the effectiveness of our program by documenting significant progress for individual children – which is also a measure of GGPCS’s commitment to see every child succeed in school. Some students may start at GGPCS ahead of grade level. These students will likely score well on the MSA; the separate Stanford 10 assessment will allow us evaluate our program’s success by measuring how well we are meeting the needs of our advanced students over the course of a year.

The baseline levels of academic achievement established during the first academic year will be compared to academic achievement levels in prior years, when data are available, in order to assess rates of prior academic progress and the baseline rates of academic progress for GGPCS students. Continuing longitudinal examination of the levels of academic achievement will be performed to establish rates of academic improvement of the same students while attending GGPCS.

We will also compare rates of academic improvement of students in GGPCS with state and national progress rates. Using the available data from the previous year and the data from the first administration of the Stanford 10 at GGPCS, we will compute the gain for our students and use the results to determine the improvement rate based on the national gain. We will continue this process longitudinally in subsequent years.

Ongoing Classroom Assessment

Effective assessment is part of thoughtfully guiding students through the PYP's five essential elements of learning: the acquisition of knowledge, the understanding of concepts, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take action. It identifies what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in the learning process. Students and teachers will actively engage in reflecting the students' progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills.

First, to discover and monitor what children are learning, classroom assessments will be:

- **immediate and ongoing** – carried out as the learning is happening
- **defined** – either by the acquisition of a concept, the skill or process practiced, or the expression of a value or characteristic; occasionally on all three
- **individualized** – carried out with the specific learner in close focus
- **practical** – used to deepen student understanding and mastery and to inform instructional planning

GGPCS teachers will be mindful of the particular learning outcomes on which they intend to report, prior to selecting or designing the method of assessment. They will employ techniques for assessing students' work that take into account the diverse, complicated and sophisticated ways that individual students use to understand experience. Their choice of assessment will demonstrate their professional understanding that that a well-designed learning experience can provide data on students' knowledge, skills and conceptual development, and is consequently a vehicle for formative or summative assessment.

Formative assessment will provide information to plan the next stage in learning. It will help teachers and students to find out what students already know and can do. Formative assessment promotes learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. GGPCS will use formative assessment to help learners improve knowledge and understanding; foster enthusiasm for learning; engage in thoughtful reflection; develop the capacity for self-assessment; and recognize the criteria for success.

Summative assessment will give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. The culmination of the teaching and learning process, it gives students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. GGPCS will use summative assessment to assess component elements of learning simultaneously; inform and improve student learning and the teaching process; measure understanding of the central idea; and prompt students towards action.

Second, to record and analyze data about what children know and can do GGPCS will use a variety of strategies, tools and instruments that are appropriate to an inquiry-based approach. These will range from the subjective and intuitive to the objective and scientific in order to obtain a comprehensive view of student performance. Here are the strategies and tools that GGPCS will employ, in addition to those mentioned elsewhere in this document, for assessing children's progress through the curriculum.

Assessment Strategies

Observations: All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (for example, focusing on the whole class) to close up (for example, focusing on one student or one activity), and from nonparticipant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).

Performance assessments: The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.

Process-focused assessments: Students are observed often and regularly, and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviors, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting observations.

Selected responses: Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.

Open-ended tasks: Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.

Assessment Tools

Rubrics: An established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as by teachers.

Exemplars: Samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and usable within their particular school context.

Checklists: These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.

Anecdotal records: Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.

Continuums: These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

Student portfolios: A record of students' involvement in learning which is designed to demonstrate success, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection.

We recognize the importance of assessing the process of inquiry as well as the products of inquiry, and aim to integrate and support both. Teachers will be expected to record the detail of inquiries initiated by students in order to look for an increase in the substance and depth of the inquiry. Teachers will consider:

- If the nature of students' inquiry develops over time – if they are asking questions of more depth, that are likely to enhance their learning substantially
- If students are becoming aware that real problems require solutions based on the integration of knowledge that spans and connects many areas

- If students are demonstrating mastery of skills
- If students are accumulating a comprehensive knowledge base and can apply their understanding to further their inquiries successfully
- If students are demonstrating both independence and an ability to work collaboratively

3) To report and communicate the results of GGPCS's assessments, perhaps the most public aspect of a school's assessment policy, requires careful consideration in order to provide clear information that is useful to students, parents, MCPS and the general public. Reporting at GGPCS will take many forms including conferences and written reports.

GGPCS's reporting will:

- Involve parents, students and teachers as partners
- Reflect what the school community values
- Be comprehensive, honest, fair and credible
- Be clear and understandable to all parties
- Allow teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future teaching and assessment practice

It is not appropriate to grade or score the attributes of the Learner Profile.

Opportunities will be provided for students to consider their progress in relation to the attributes listed in the IB learner profile in the context of student learning.

Observations and anecdotal records of their own performance will be included in each student's portfolio of selected work. Students may also contribute to reporting to parents, through their reflection on the report card, described below and/or student-led conferences.

GGPCS parents need to know about the learner profile and that the school community attaches the utmost importance to it, such that it influences the valued practices and cultural norms within GGPCS.

Conferences

The purpose of conferences is to share information between teachers, students and parents. GGPCS will use the following formats.

Teacher-student

These are designed to give students feedback so they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills. These individual conferences will occur frequently and usually informally, in the context of the school day, in order to support and encourage the student's learning and teacher planning.

Family-Teacher

These are designed to give the family information about the student's progress, development and needs, and about the school's Program. Teachers will gather background information, answer the parents' questions, address their concerns, and help define their role in the learning process. Parents will be encouraged to take the opportunity to provide the teacher with information from their perspective and the cultural context of the student's learning.

This will be the format for our thrice-yearly formal report card conferences, but these should also take place on an ad hoc basis, especially if a child demonstrates special needs for support.

Student-led

In the middle school, student-led conferences will involve the student and the parent. The students are responsible for leading the conference, and also take responsibility for their learning by sharing the process with their parents. It may involve students demonstrating their understanding through a variety of different learning situations.

The conference will involve the students discussing and reflecting upon samples of work that they have previously chosen to share with their parents. These samples will have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher, and could be from the student's portfolio. The student identifies strengths and areas for improvement. It enables parents to gain a clear insight into the kind of work their child is doing and offers an opportunity for them to discuss it with their child. The conferences must be carefully prepared, and time must be set aside for the students

to practice their presentations. The format of this conference will depend on the age of the student and all of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.

Triangular

Appropriate for both elementary and middle school, triangular conferences involve the student, the family and the teacher. Students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents and teacher, who are responsible for supporting the student through this process. Students are responsible for reflecting upon work samples they have chosen to share, that have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher and could be from the student's portfolio. The student, parents and the teacher collaborate to establish and identify the student's strengths and areas for improvement. This may lead to the setting of new goals, with all determining how they can support the achievement of the goals. The teacher is an integral part of the process and takes notes of the discussion. These notes may then be used in the written report. All of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.

Written reports

Written reports are summative records for students, parents and the school itself of a student's progress. Reports will clearly indicate areas of strengths, areas for improvement, and where students are involved in providing input (through self-assessment), are helpful aids to a student's development. Written reports will also reinforce the underlying values of the GGPCS and the PYP.

- The learner profile is addressed.
- The interdisciplinary units and the subject-specific teaching are included.
- All teachers involved in the student's progress have an opportunity to comment.
- All the essential elements of the Program are included.

The PYP exhibition

In the final year of the PYP (5th grade), students participate in a culminating project, the PYP exhibition. This requires that each student demonstrates engagement with

the five essential elements of the Program: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action. It is an interdisciplinary inquiry conducted in the spirit of personal and shared responsibility, as well as a summative assessment activity that is a celebration as students move from the PYP into the middle years of schooling.

The exhibition represents a significant event in the life of a PYP school and student, synthesizing the essential elements of the PYP, and sharing them with the whole school community. It is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the learner profile that have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP.

In the students' final year of the PYP, there are five units of inquiry and the exhibition. (At GGPCS, 8th graders will also participate in an exhibition similar to that required by the PYP.) The exhibition unit takes place under any interdisciplinary theme at the discretion of GGPCS. Students are required to engage in a collaborative, interdisciplinary inquiry process that involves them in identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems. The central idea selected must be of sufficient scope and significance to warrant a detailed investigation by all students.

The PYP exhibition has a number of key purposes including the following:

- For students to engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- To provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives
- For students to synthesize and apply their learning of previous years, and to reflect on their journey through the PYP
- To provide an authentic process for assessing student understanding
- To demonstrate how students can take action as a result of their learning
- To unite the students, teachers, parents and other members of the school community in a collaborative experience that incorporates the essential elements of the PYP
- To celebrate the transition of learners from primary to middle/secondary education

As the culminating PYP experience, it is required that the exhibition reflects all the major features of the Program. Therefore, it must include regular and carefully planned assessment. This assessment should take two forms: firstly, ongoing assessment of each individual student's contribution to and understanding of the exhibition; secondly, a summative assessment and reflection on the event itself. Assessment of the exhibition is rigorous and takes place throughout the whole process of the exhibition.

- b. Include a plan for reporting assessment information and indicate which audiences will receive this information, as well as the frequency of reporting.**

As a public school, GGPCS will have a responsibility to report to a number of audiences on the overall success of our educational program as well as on the individual progress and achievements of our students. In addition to families, and to the appropriate extent, students themselves, GGPCS will also need to report assessment information to MCPS and to the general public of Montgomery County, to the Maryland State Department of Education, and to appropriate US federal departments that oversee school compliance with federal regulations.

Reporting to parents

We consider our first reporting responsibility to be to each family who enrolls a child at GGPCS; they are the clients who come to us for service, entrusting their precious children to us, as well as being the taxpayers whose hard work funds our operation. Our reporting must take place in a culture of ongoing, genuine two-way communication and partnership with families, an approach advocated in a recent report of MCPS's Minority Achievement Advisory Council. Ensuring engagement with every family and clarity about the mission of GGPCS and our shared role in achieving it for each child is always important, but will have the greatest impact in supporting minority student achievement and closing the achievement gap.

We believe that keeping GGPCS a small and intimate school community will provide more opportunities to develop relationships of trust, clarity and mutual engagement, and our structure for formal reporting to families will be part of that culture.

In addition to the standardized MSA testing and reporting procedures of MCPS, in which GGPCS will participate, and to Stanford 10 testing and reporting procedures, GGPCS will emphasize two-way communication with families through many means, among them a plan for more regular and comprehensive reporting to parents on their children's progress at school.

In accordance with our school calendar of three roughly 12-week terms, GGPCS will hold formal parent conferences, coinciding with the issue of report cards, three times each year. In addition, families will receive a less formal one-page summary report at the end of each half-term, with the opportunity for a face-to-face conference if desired.

Session	Dates	Reporting Day	Report Cards Issued Conference Day
Fall I	September 1 - October 14	Thursday, October 13	X
Fall II	October 24 - December 16	x	Wednesday, December 14
Winter I	January 2 - February 17	Thursday, February 16	x
Spring I	February 27 - April 6	x	Wednesday, April 4
Spring II	April 23 - June 8	Thursday, June 7	x
Summer I	June 18 - July 20	x	Wednesday, July 18
	39 weeks	11 holidays	190

The GGPCS report card will include:

- for all grades a summary of the six Units of Inquiry carried out over the year
- an appropriate form for self- and teacher evaluation of the student's acquisition of IB Learner Profile characteristics plus the learning skills identified on the MCPS report card
- a section for recording grades of Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory, Needs Support on
 - the Units of Inquiry, encompassing Social Studies and Science, with extra lines for entering specific concepts and skills addressed in the Unit
 - reflections on Unit learning
 - specific objectives for Math, English Language and Literature (reading), Spanish, art, music, PE and ICT
- three representative work samples pertinent to any big issues
- teacher commentary on specifics of the student's engagement, motivation and success.
- The GGPCS informal report, issued at the half-term break three times a year, is a one-page document with sections for
 - Unit of Inquiry assessment as on the Report Card plus the MCPS learning skills
 - grades for math and English language and literature (including reading)
 - brief teacher commentary
 - one representative work sample and student reflection

For a discussion of other methods of establishing and maintaining authentic, two-way communication with families, please see Academic Design Section 14.

13. Describe procedures for compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local student requirements.

Describe how the school will meet the needs of students with special needs, including English language learners, students with an Individualized Education Program or Section 504 plan, as well as students covered under the Americans

with Disabilities Act. Include how services such as screening, evaluation, diagnostic and psychological testing, and health-related support to students would be provided.

For information about how GGPCS will meet the needs of students with special needs including IEPs, please see Academic Design 4.e and Appendix AD3.

For provision for English language learners, please see Academic Design 8.

For provision for students covered under the ADA, please see Academic Design 7.

14. Student services

Describe the school culture. Explain the strategies the school will employ to develop a positive culture that is supportive of students, faculty, and families.

Describe the school culture.

The mission of GGPCS is summarized in our motto, which carries a commitment to shared responsibility and the right to a high-quality education in four simple words: Dig In and Grow!

To equip children with the emotional, social, intellectual and physical resources to follow that motto, GGPCS is committed to creating and maintaining a positive school culture as one of its most important goals. Research shows that a positive school culture positively impacts student achievement, school attendance, student behavior, attachment to school, and high teacher morale (Centers for Disease Control, 2010; see Appendix AD7).

In the PYP, Personal and Social Education (PSPE) is concerned with the ongoing development and growth of the individual in respect to feelings, beliefs and behaviors, and how they interrelate. It also considers the interaction of the individual within the family, school, community, society and the world at large. The PSE component of the curriculum provides a framework and vocabulary with which

students can build relationships with peers and adults, make connections, and develop values and beliefs.

PSE is included in the curriculum in order to help students develop an understanding of how to manage and communicate their feelings; understand how their choices and practices can promote and maintain their health and safety; develop an awareness of social norms and perspectives; build relationships and develop an appreciation of commonalities and differences; develop strategies to resolve conflicts; recognize their rights and responsibilities towards others and the environment; and develop self-management strategies to become a successful learner. PSE learning takes place to ensure that cultural contexts can be appreciated, and wider perspectives can be embraced.

PSE is always interdisciplinary in nature; it is pervasive in every subject area, and has a special role to play in students' development. PSE is not a subject as such, because only certain aspects of it can be taught in lessons. It is concerned with pupils' general development as individuals in society, and is important as the foundation for learning in the widest sense.

The goal of GGPCS will be to establish a school culture in which all members of the school community feel valued and intellectually, physically, emotionally safe, and in which they all experience joy. We will strive to implement a balanced and complementary integration of both academic and social curriculum. We aim to establish a school culture in which good working relationships among the adults set the tone and model interactions and behavior that demonstrate respect, collaboration, and appreciation of multiple perspectives.

Explain the strategies the school will employ to develop a positive culture that is supportive of students, faculty, and families.

We will employ multiple strategies for creating a positive culture and promoting school connectedness for everyone. These are listed below.

Creating decision-making processes that include collaboration and engagement among students, staff, parents and community members. This will include:

- Soliciting input from teachers and staff in efforts to improve a sense of connectedness
- Engaging all school community members in developing policies and planning school-wide activities
- Assigning students developmentally appropriate levels of responsibility both within the classroom, in the wider school, and in the community.
- Engaging community partners to provide a range of services at the school that students and families may need

Providing education and opportunities to enable families to be actively involved in their children's academic and school life. This may include:

- Implementing workshops that provide parents with skills to better manage their children's behavior as well as teaching academic support skills.
- Creating multiple volunteer opportunities for parents to be involved in school and classroom activities that fit diverse schedules, skills, and abilities.
- Reducing barriers to parent involvement by providing services such as babysitting, transportation, and alternate meeting locations
- Translating materials into different languages of our parents.

Providing students with the academic, social, and emotional skills necessary to be active participants in school. This may include:

- Offering tutoring programs
- Extended learning opportunities
- Providing opportunities for students to improve interpersonal skills by utilizing the counseling curriculum and incorporating that into the regular classroom
- Fostering pro-social behavior by engaging students in helping activities within the classroom, in the school as a whole, and in the community using activities such as peer tutoring, classroom/school chores. And community service learning opportunities

Using effective classroom management and teaching methods. This may include:

- Incorporate strategies from the Responsive Classroom approach (see Appendix AD7) including the use of morning and class meetings

Providing significant professional development and support for teachers and staff to enable them to meet diverse cognitive, social, and emotional needs of children. This may include:

- Employing teachers with experience and training in child development who can demonstrate a variety of classroom management skills
- Educating staff on effectively involving parents, communication strategies.
- Employing an experienced professional school counselor who can consult on the social, emotional, and cognitive developmental needs of children.

Creating trusting and caring relationships which promote open communication. This may include:

- Structuring the school so that teachers maintain relationships with students for more than one year
- Provide opportunities for students of all achievement levels and ages to interact with one another, including regular school-wide “town meetings.”

- Describe the school’s philosophy regarding student behavior and discipline for both the general student population and special needs students. Summarize the school’s discipline policy or code of conduct :**

Our philosophy regarding student behavior and discipline is based on our understanding of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). Social-Emotional Learning is the process through which children develop social and emotional skills that they need in order to succeed in their classrooms and in life. To help students become responsible, caring, and ethical people living in a global society, GGPCS will focus not only on their academic and intellectual needs, but also on their social, emotional, and ethical development. This will be done in an inclusive, caring, respectful and engaging environment that is both physically and emotionally safe. SEL skills such as working together, showing compassion, respect, and leadership all contribute to a positive school culture and lead to academic achievement.

SEL is closely related to the PYP's concept of Personal and Social Education, which also includes physical and health education. Having addressed PE in Academic Design Section 4.c, we focus here on aspects of how PSE and SEL affect the overall school culture, student behavior and discipline.

We will teach Social-Emotional skills by:

- Devoting time to developing positive relationships with students to improve academic achievement and classroom management
- Providing a safe environment in which students are able to perform
- When students, staff, and families feel part of a strong community, trust and engagement develops and everyone becomes a more active participant
- When people feel as if they are treated fairly, they are more receptive to learning
- We perform better when we feel acknowledged and cared about
- We learn from people that we respect and care about (Camilleri, 2006)

A commitment to SEL instruction is linked to a positive school culture, improved academic achievement, improved attendance and behavior, increased attachment and commitment to school, and high teacher morale and retention (Payton, et al. 2008).

GGPCS is committed to incorporating Social/Emotional Learning into all aspects of our routine educational practice. This is expressed in our school design in elements ranging from the use of Responsive Classroom techniques (see Appendix AD7) to the deliberate and comprehensive involvement of families in the school program to the building of partnerships in the local community to support GGPCS's mission and beyond.

Our discipline policy is another important piece of this commitment. The GGPCS Code of Conduct will be written by members of the GGPCS faculty and staff once they are hired. Our Code of Conduct will be aligned with our mission. It is expected that every member of the GGPCS community will treat others with mutual respect, and that it will be expected that the adults in the community are models of the kind of behavior we expect of our students. Teachers and staff will adapt these disciplinary procedures to fit their individual needs and will work with their students in developing a set of

classroom rules and expectations. While it is expected that the majority of students will strive to meet the expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct, a series of tiered interventions will be designed for those students who do not. The focus will be positive, and students will be expected to reflect on their behavior, and to make amends or restitution. Parents will be notified of their child's behavior and restitution requirement.

The Code of Conduct will clearly state all school-wide behavioral expectations and rules as well as consequences for breaking the rules. Consequences will be fair and consistent and delivered calmly. The Code of Conduct will be developed into a Compact that both students and parents are expected to read together and sign.

GGPCS recognizes (MCPS Regulation JFA) that "Certain major infractions are recognized as requiring consistent countywide actions from and direction for all schools." In this regard, we will follow the MCPS regulation and direction. As a Montgomery County Public Charter School, GGPCS will also follow related regulations to major infractions found in Regulations:

- a. Regulation ACF-RA: *Sexual Harassment*
- b. Regulation CFA-RA: *Site-based Participatory Management*
- c. Regulation COC-RA: *Trespassing or Willful Disturbances on MCPS Property*
- d. Regulation COE-RA: *Weapons on MCPS Property*
- e. Regulation COF-RA: *Intoxicants on MCPS Property*
- f. Regulation COG-RA: *Portable Communication Devices*
- g. Regulation ECC-RA: *Loss of MCPS Property*
- h. Regulation GDB-RA: *Protection of Employees, Students, and Property*
- i. Regulation IGT-RA: *Appropriate Use of Computer Networks*
- j. Regulation JGA-RA: *Maintenance of Classroom Control and Discipline*
- k. Regulation JGA-RB: *Suspension or Expulsion of an MCPS Student*
- l. Regulation JGB-RA: *Search and Seizure*

Discipline for students with special needs will follow the same philosophy and mission for the general population. Special needs that make it difficult for a student to comply with behavioral expectations will be taken into account, and faculty and staff will work with that student and family to move towards an acceptable level of behavior. For more severe infractions for students identified as having a disability, GGPCS will follow, when necessary, Regulation JGA-RA, VIII. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION IF THE STUDENT HAS A DISABILITY (SPECIAL EDUCATION) and all other applicable laws.

- b. Provide details regarding the school's plans to build and maintain appropriate home-school partnerships that focus on strengthening support for student learning, improving communication, and encouraging home involvement in school operations:**

Parent and family involvement in school is the cornerstone of creating a successful school community. Developing authentic, meaningful partnerships with families is an important piece of the GGPCS mission. We aim to build these relationships by focusing on:

- Fostering an atmosphere which encourages families' input and ideas in decision-making and planning, including forming a Family-School Organization (see Governance Section 7)
- Clear and regular communication regarding goals and expectations
- The use of interpreters when needed
- Welcoming parents into the school and classroom as volunteers
- Asking families to sign Creating a Parent Policy Manual
- Engaging hard-to-reach parents by offering transportation and child care for school events, or offering to hold parent-teacher conferences in community settings or in homes
- Partnering with community agencies to offer services through the school
- Offering Parenting workshops and classes to help parents support the educational program at home as well as the social, emotional, and academic development of their children

- Ensuring regular communication between the classroom and home and detailing home learning suggestions that take advantage of what families are already doing to care for their children or earn their living rather than requiring additional expenditures of time or money

c. Describe how parent surveys regarding school environment will be implemented and results reported:

Parent surveys will be used to obtain feedback on and assess school climate, parental involvement in both volunteer and decision-making capacities, and for measuring success. The Family Advisory Committee will help develop both the survey and a plan for dissemination. They will be reviewed by the Board and the Board will also be responsible for reporting the results each year. Information obtained from the surveys will be incorporated in any school improvement plans, and they will also be one measure of our school's success (see Academic Design Section 3 for details.)

d. Provide examples of how community partners will play an integral part in the school.

Please see Governance Section 2 for details of our community partnerships.

We close this section with a vision for all the “brown and white/and black and pale-lemon color” children who may attend GGPCS – may they grow and grow brightly, write and read and play and work, all the time okay.

OKAY, BROWN GIRL, OKAY

Josie, Josie, I am okay
 being brown. I remember,
 every day dusk and dawn get born
 from the loving of night and light
 who work together, like married.
 And they would like to say to you:
 Be at school on and on, brown Josie
 like thousands and thousands and
 thousands
 of children, who are brown and white
 and black and pale-lemon color.
 All the time, brown girl Josie is okay.
 Josie, Josie, I am okay
 being brown. I remember,
 every minute sun in the sky
 and ground of the earth work together
 like married.
 And they would like to say to you:
 Ride on up a going escalator
 like thousands and thousands and
 thousands

of people, who are brown and white
 and black and pale-lemon color.
 All the time, brown girl Josie is okay.
 Josie, Josie, I am okay
 being brown. I remember,
 all the time bright-sky and brown-earth
 work together, like married
 making forests and food and flowers
 and rain.
 And they would like to say to you:
 Grow and grow brightly, brown girl.
 Write and read and play and work.
 Ride bus or train or boat or airplane
 like thousands and thousands and
 thousands
 of people, who are brown and white
 and black and pale-lemon color.
 All the time, brown girl Josie is okay.

—James Berry