

GOETHE INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

Educational Model Interface

Using the analogy of a **sailing vessel**...

- ☒ The **foreign-language immersion** model represents the **ship** itself, the vehicle by which the conceptual knowledge is transferred to the students.
- ☒ The **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme** represents the **main sail**—the impetus of power or thrust to drive the development of meaningful and relevant curriculum.
- ☒ The **California State Standards** become the **landmarks** for navigating the sea of complex education expectations.
- ☒ Our diverse **student population** becomes the **passengers** that are all given equal opportunity to arrive at the destination of academic excellence.



S.S. GOETHE

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES COMPONENTS

Component 1. California State Standards and Frameworks

GICS embraces the California State Standards (including the ELD standards) as a comprehensive roadmap of measurable standards that are critical to the development of a comprehensive instructional program. Content standards were designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. Further we acknowledge the wisdom of referencing the California State Curriculum Frameworks as a blueprint for implementing the content standards. The Standards become the linchpin to which all curricular development is grounded (See Appendix I).

Component 2. Foreign-Language (German) Immersion

GISC will adopt a German/English foreign-language immersion model that will embody the following characteristics and expected outcomes:

- ☒ A unique learning environment will be created that fosters global awareness and understanding by bringing minority language speakers (German speakers) and majority language speakers (English language speakers) together.
- ☒ Children from both language groups will learn from and with each other in an integrated setting.
- ☒ Beginning in Kindergarten 50% of the instruction will occur in the minority language (German) and 50 % in the majority language (English).
- ☒ All subject content will be taught in both languages using a rotating model with one week English immersion, one week German immersion (see sample PYP Planner).
- ☒ Each teacher will teach in either English or German—not both languages.
- ☒ To assure continuity of conceptual connections a portion of daily instruction will be delivered in the home language, i.e. students

who are learning through German during their German immersion week will spend 30-45 minutes each day, with their English language teacher as a “check-in” period (Language Exchange Period) to provide a continuum of vocabulary and language development and verification of understanding, and vice versa, English immersion students will participate in a German language check-in period as well.

- Instruction in the minority language is viewed as an enrichment experience for all, not as remedial or compensatory education for the language minority students in the program.
- To further enrich the student’s language learning experience and foster an understanding and awareness of other cultures, Spanish will be introduced as a foreign language in third grade, and will be taught several hours each week.
- Students will attain a high level of proficiency in German by the end of elementary school.
- Compared with their monolingual, non-immersion peers, GICS students will show equal or better academic performance by 3rd grade when tested in English.

Component 3. Spanish Language Instruction

In addition to a German immersion program, GICS will require its students to participate in a Spanish language program starting in third grade. For Spanish Heritage Speakers, the Spanish language program will be designed to build on the literacy skills they have mastered in English and German and will quickly and easily transfer into a grade level equivalent reading ability in Spanish. For non-Spanish speakers, the Spanish language curriculum will provide Spanish as a second language methodology and focus. Depending on the GICS linguistic demographics, students will be grouped heterogeneously by Spanish language proficiency, or a modified “immersion” approach may be utilized focused on the development of basic Spanish literary for all students.

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Standards requires that the school “attach importance to language learning through the development of each student’s mother tongue and the acquisition of other languages”. The core premise of the need to support the student’s mother tongue is accomplished through the development of a language policy and instructional programs and parental involvement activities and outreach that engage parents, administrators and teachers in defining support mechanisms for students who speak any language other than English.

Component 4. International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

The overarching umbrella that shapes our educational program into a cohesive, viable model is the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP). The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) states it clearly with the following summary: “The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) is designed for students aged 3 to 12. It focuses on the total growth of the developing child, touching hearts as well as minds and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development. The PYP draws on research and best practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create a relevant, engaging, challenging and significant educational framework for all children.”

Its premise is based on thematic, inquiry-based units of instruction which focus on structured questioning methods that promote higher-level questioning and global mindedness encouraging and enhancing a child's natural curiosity.

The curriculum framework consists of five essential elements: concepts, knowledge, skills, attitude and action. The knowledge component is developed through inquiries into six trans-disciplinary themes of global significance (outlined below), supported and balanced by six subject areas as outlined in the following visual representation.

Inquiry: Learning to Ask Conceptual Questions

At the heart of the program's philosophy is a commitment to structured, purposeful inquiry as the leading vehicle for learning. Inquiry is the leading pedagogical approach of the PYP and "is the process initiated by the learner in which the teacher moves the learner from his or her current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding.



Form: What is it like?

Function: How does it work?

Causation: Why is it like it is?

Change: How is it changing?

Connection: How is it connected to other things?

Perspective: What are the points of view?

Responsibility: What is our responsibility?

Reflection: How do we know?

Sample Program of Inquiry

	Who We Are	Where We Are in Time and Place	How We Express Ourselves	How We Organize Ourselves	How The World Works	Sharing The Planet
	<i>An exploration of the nature of the self; of our beliefs and values; of personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; of our families, friends, communities and cultures; of our rights and responsibilities; of what it means to be human.</i>	<i>An exploration of our orientation in place and time; of our personal histories; of history and geography from local and global perspectives; of our homes and journeys; of the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; of the contributions of individuals and civilizations.</i>	<i>An exploration of the ways in which we discover and express our nature, ideas, feelings, beliefs and values through language and the arts.</i>	<i>An exploration of human systems and communities; of the world of work, its nature and its value; of employment and unemployment and their impact on us and the world around us.</i>	<i>An explorations of the physical and material world; of natural and human-made phenomena; of the world of science and technology</i>	<i>An exploration of our rights and responsibilities as we strive to share finite resources with other people and living things; of communities and of the relationships within and between them.</i>
K	Everyday I can learn about who I am and my responsibilities as a human.	Living, learning, and playing have changed for children over time.	Non-verbal communication allows us to send messages to each other without saying a word.	We use different systems at home, school, and in our communities to help keep us organized.	Caring for plants helps other living things.	Animals depend upon the Earth's land, water, and air.
1	Learning about similarities amongst diverse communities and cultures promotes peace.	Places in the community serve a purpose.	Throughout time people have told and written stories.	People around the world exchange money and valuables for goods and services.	Animals have needs and physical characteristics that are specific to their environment.	Water is essential to life.
2	Heroes make a difference in our lives.	We learn about our world and ourselves by studying our family history.	Cultures around the world express themselves through art and music.	Producers and consumers depend upon each other.	Simple physics keeps our world in motion.	Living things change over time.
3	Decisions based on an understanding of healthy habits build our bodies for today and tomorrow.	Present day societies have features common to those of indigenous cultures.	We learn about characters through dialogue and action.	Societies have developed different methods to help people connect to their communities and countries.	Objects in the sky move in regular and predictable patterns.	Human choices and actions affect the environment.
4	We learn about ourselves and the world around us through the written word.	All places on Earth have special features that distinguish them from other places.	Everyone is talented and this creativity can be expressed in a variety of ways.	In an attempt to meet human needs, societies have determined human rights and responsibilities.	The Earth's structure is altered by many factors.	Living organisms depend on one another and their environment for survival.
5	The human body consists of interrelated systems that allow us to survive and function in the environment.	Differences in religion, political beliefs, and social values can cause conflict.	Historically, individuals and groups have used song and the arts to express their beliefs, concerns and values.	Mathematics is a universal language that is organized using symbols and operations.	Changes in temperature and wind affect weather patterns around the world.	Inventions have made cultures throughout the world more accessible.

Student Character Development: Learner Profile

GICS will promote a culture of academic responsibility that is a vital component of the PYP philosophy. The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. This culture will emerge at the earliest ages as children begin to understand and act upon the following attributes of the learner profile. IB learners strive to be: **reflective, inquirers, communicators, caring, risk-takers, thinkers, balanced, open-minded, knowledgeable, and principled.** The vitality and energy of this educational model erupts from within the children as they identify within themselves these expectations of a “Learner.”