

# GPPSS Gravity School Concept Outline

3/7/19

*The purpose of this document is not to define the focus of a potential gravity school(s) for GPPSS. Instead, this document is intended to provide clarity regarding some of the mechanics that would need to be addressed if a gravity school concept were implemented in GPPSS for a future school year.*

**Assumptions:** This document assumes the following regarding gravity schools(s) in GPPSS. Please note that these assumptions could be altered as the work of the Blue Ribbon Committee continues.

- GPPSS will only be implementing one gravity school (GS). In the event that multiple gravity schools would be implemented the concepts in this document could be duplicated and/or adjusted.
- The gravity school implemented will be for grades 3 - 8 with an equal number of students in each grade.
- The gravity school will follow the current school calendar for all GPPSS schools.

**Core Beliefs:** The following are core beliefs that GPPSS believes the gravity school concept should adhere to:

- The GS will not use a preferential system with respect to admissions. At no time shall the GS become or be designed as a place for 'elite' or 'unique' students.
- Access to the GS will be open to all students eligible to enroll in GPPSS.
- The GS shall not be provided resources greater than the resources provided to other schools in GPPSS.
- The GS shall have a focus area that all GS students shall engage in.
- Certain traditional aspects of both the ES and MS program will not be available at the GS to allow for the implementation of the focus area.
- Students with special needs are welcome at the GS. Enrollment at the GS through the registration and lottery processes is intended for those students for whom a Free Appropriate Public Education ("FAPE") can be provided in a general education setting, with necessary supports. The students Individualized Education Plan will determine the level of programs and services needed. Students identified as needing a county funded program in a self-contained categorical program are not eligible for the lottery, as locations of categorical program classrooms vary across the district.
- The GS shall use an admissions system that attempts to provide equity.
- All students that matriculate from the GS to our HS shall be prepared to be successful within the traditional high school structure.

**Student Admissions:** The following is the process that will be used to place students at the GS on an annual basis.

1. In an effort to focus on equity, students will be offered the opportunity to attend the GS on a weighted percentage basis based on the student's home elementary school.

2. Annually in January, GPPSS shall determine how many open student slots are anticipated for each grade level at the GS in the following year.
3. These slots at each grade level shall be divided into lanes that will be named after the current elementary schools in GPPSS and shall be weighted in a manner corresponding with the percentage of students that are eligible to attend that ES as of January 15th of that current school year.
4. On or about January 15th an electronic application for the GS shall be made available to all parents of a future 3rd through 8th grader. The application period shall be open for 3 weeks. To be eligible to apply, a family must have demonstrated that they meet the residency and enrollment requirements to enroll their child in GPPSS for the following year. Current families that meet these requirements, but do not currently have a student in GPPSS will be eligible to submit an application for their child.
5. Prior to mid-winter break, a local clergy member or public safety official shall conduct a lottery drawing creating a rank ordered list of students for each grade level by ES lane who are interested in attending the GS for the following year. No sibling preference or any other type of preference shall be used as a consideration during the creation of this list. The lottery shall be open to observation by the public. Within 24 hours of the lottery being completed, a rank ordered list (using unique, non-identifying codes) shall be made public noting each child's rank order as a result of the lottery.
6. Within 1 week of the lottery, GPPSS shall contact each family of a child that was selected for the GS.
7. Once contacted by GPPSS with an offer to attend the GS a family will have 2 weeks to accept or decline the invitation.
8. As additional slots become available at the school families will be contacted as their child becomes eligible via their position on the rank ordered list by lane.
9. If a lane has additional openings that are not filled due to the waiting list for that lane being exhausted, additional openings will be filled by the next students with the overall highest rank order number being offered the opening.
10. Additional students will be placed at the GS through September 15th of the school year. No new students will be placed at the GS after September 15th through the remainder of the school year.

**The following is a hypothetical example of the student admission process:**

- On January 10th GPPSS determines that there will be 81 student slots at the GS per grade level.
- On January 15th GPPSS notes a total ES enrollment of 2216 students as follows based on home attendance area (percentages note the % of total ES population):
  - ES 1 - 350 - 16%
  - ES 2 - 314 - 14%
  - ES 3 - 523 - 24%

- ES 4 - 387 - 17%
- ES 5 - 297 - 13%
- ES 6 - 345 - 16%
- The open slots at the GS are apportioned as follows using the information above:
  - ES 1 - 13 slots
  - ES 2 - 11 slots
  - ES 3 - 19 slots
  - ES 4 - 14 slots
  - ES 5 - 11 slots
  - ES 6 - 13 slots
- Families apply for their child to attend the GS noting their home ES on their application (verified by GPPSS.)
- The lottery drawing is conducted by a local clergy member in mid-February. The lottery involves a blind rank ordering of each student via lane. Each student is assigned both a number for their lane as well as an overall number.
- Students are offered positions in the GS by rank order within their lane. If a family declines a spot at the GS the now open spot is offered to the next highest ranked student in the lane that now has the opening.

**Staff Selection:** As with the students, the intent of the GS is not to place a certain quality of a teacher at the GS. Instead, from a staffing perspective the goal of the GS is to create a well rounded faculty. The following will be the procedure used to staff the GS the year prior to the inaugural year of the GS:

1. Currently working at the building that will house the GS will not be used as a factor when considering placing staff at the GS.
2. During the fall prior to the year of the GS opening GPPSS shall conduct an open process to select the first principal of the GS. This process shall be similar to the process that has been used to select administrators for the past seven years in GPPSS and will include teacher, administrator and parent participation in the process.
3. At approximately the start of the second semester in the year prior to the GS initially opening GPPSS shall post all full time teaching positions at the GS. These positions will first be posted internally. Any current member of the GPPSS faculty who meets the posting requirements is encouraged to apply for these positions.
4. The principal working with a team of stakeholders and the human resources department will make staffing decisions regarding initial placement of faculty at the GS.
5. When making staffing decisions, a priority shall be placed on identifying a staff that comprised of staff members from various buildings within GPPSS and at various career points.