



**SCHOOLWIDE PLAN**  
**Section 1114, Every Student Succeeds Act**

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

<b>School Name:</b>	Galapagos Rockford Charter School		
<b>Address:</b>	2605 School St and 3051 Rotary Road		
<b>City, ZIP code:</b>	Rockford, IL 61101 and 61109		
<b>Telephone:</b>	815-708-7946		
<b>Email address:</b>	mlane@galapagoscharter.org		
	<b>Poverty Rate at Board Approval:</b>		
	90%+		

**Schoolwide Plan Components**

- Please include the names of the participants in the creation of this plan:

NAME	REPRESENTATION
Michael Lane	Admin
Stephanie Bartell	Admin
Rajan Sharma	Admin
Stacey Puckett	Admin
Mariam Alyousuf	Admin
Katie Hanrahan	Teacher
Katie Kennedy	Teacher
Jackie Nagel	Teacher
Elizabeth Mock	Teacher
Jamie Henke	Teacher
Rebecca Denzer	Board Member
Sheba Gardner	Parent
Other Staff members	Various



1. Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school.  
a. I

In our comprehensive needs assessment of the school we looked at the following:

Academic Data:

The primary data source here was NWEA MAP data with a focus on reading, math and science. We also looked to our ANET data and classroom assessment data.

Math-

At our primary grade levels a significant percentage of our scholars demonstrated growth greater than a year. (Based on Spring MAP data.) The percentages at the middle grades were not as high. The results have led us to conclude that individualized math instruction opportunities are needed for all of our scholars. The individualized strategies would include 1) expanding blended learning models to higher grade levels. 2) More rigorous curriculum and supplemental materials 3) increased training for instructional staff 4) increased tutoring support 5) the implementation of a summer support model that provides small group instruction to scholars at all grade levels.

Reading-

The reading achievement of scholars varied. This data led us to conclude that in addition to a rigorous reading program that is rich in authentic texts that allow for both instructors and scholars to engage in meaningful high-level thinking, we needed to continue to supplement the program with access to a wide range of texts through Accelerated Reader as well as additional supplementation with targeted, data-rich programs that would provide instructors with timely data. Finally, GRCS will utilize after school tutoring combined with higher levels of rigorous programming after school and during the summer months to improve reading performance. The summer programming will include seven weeks of targeted instruction to some of the most at-risk scholars.

Science-

The GRCS science program needs to continue to work towards providing rigorous, hands-on opportunities that support and are aligned to the NGSS. This would include supplemental dedicated science instructors, more rigorous in school instruction as well as an expansion of out of school opportunities to explore STEM. We will also add two dedicated science instructors at the elementary level. We continue to grow our relationship with Northern Illinois University and expect to partner with them by having an increasing number of scholars participate in their STEM programming over the summer.

Cultural/Climate Data

GRCS uses parent and staff surveys to identify needs in the climate and the culture of the school. From this data and prior years 5Es data we determined that:

- 1) Staff want a greater voice in instructional decision making and the development of a positive culture within the school
- 2) Parents want to be more actively involved with the school

Therefore, we will focus on providing staff with more opportunities to participate in the decision making process while equipping them with the skills and knowledge to be an active participant. This will include increased training in their content areas so that they can become true content experts. Additionally, we will provide opportunities for staff to visit and learn from exemplar schools through on-site visits. We will also work to continue to strengthen parent involvement. This will be achieved through improved communications, in person and electronically. Additionally, we will create more opportunities for parents to work with and engage with staff including providing workshops for parents throughout the year and expand opportunities for parents to work alongside instructors during the school year.

Professional Development Data

GRCS used instructor surveys as well as classroom observations and assessment analysis to determine professional support needs. From this data we learned that among some of the top areas that staff needed support in were a) questioning strategies, b) improving classroom environment c) small group assessments d) developing individual learning plans e) deescalating student behavior f) engagement strategies. From this data we concluded that we will focus on providing training in TLAC strategies and other trainings focusing on higher instruction such as engaging instruction.

Our administrative observations led us to conclude that additional support is needed to develop higher skills amongst staff in analyzing assessment data and their applications to instruction. These observations also supported and deepened the conclusion that instructional staff need increased support in questioning skills and content delivery specifically in reading, math and science. Therefore, GRCS will work closely with Uncommon Schools, Achievement Network and other providers to address academic, instructional and cultural needs. GRCS will also work with staff to explore equity of access to opportunity for all scholars.



2. Describe school-wide reform strategies in narrative form to include the following:
  - a. provide opportunities for all children, including each of the subgroups of students (as defined in section 1111(c)(2)) to meet the challenging State academic standards;
  - b. use methods and instructional strategies that strengthen the academic program in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education; and
  - c. address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of those at risk of not meeting the challenging State academic standards.

GRCS reform strategies include increasing the level of rigor and authenticity in the academic programming at the school. In reading, the school has moved to Ready Gen for the (k-2 grades) and Expeditionary Learning for (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade). Both programs provide a higher level of authentic reading while focusing on higher level thinking skills. The programs require a different level of training--as many instructors need to refine their skill sets to meet the demands of these programs. The ELA program is supplemented by the Lexia program which allows for scholars to develop at an independent pace through a blended learning model.

In math, GRCS has implemented a blended learning model combining the Engage New York curriculum with online supplementation through ZEARN. As part of this, GRCS is working towards being able to provide a one to one model of chrome books to scholars.

For the summer of 2018, GRCS has implemented a Summer Fellows program that provides small group support to scholars in math and reading. As of June 10, the program serves over seventy scholars for a seven week period between June and July.

Similarly, in science, GRCS is working to increase the rigor of the programming. This includes Stemsscopes as well as providing additional opportunities to scholars in STEM activities such as coding and summer opportunities to attend rigorous STEM classes through Northern Illinois University. In order to provide a more dedicated focus on science instruction, GRCS employs science instructors to exclusively service K-4<sup>th</sup> grade scholars. This allows the traditional classroom instructors to focus more reading and math instruction while ensuring that scholars receive a full year of science instruction on a daily basis.

In order to ensure that scholars are prepared to meet the demands of higher standards, GRCS will provide a variety of tutoring opportunities: traditional tutoring at the Lower Academy, FAR tutoring at the Upper Academy.

In order to ensure that instructors are capable of delivering high quality instruction, GRCS has created a suite of professional development opportunities through its Acuity system. Additionally, GRCS is working with third party contractors to improve instruction, the use of assessment data and the development of intervention/discipline systems and practices.

In order to ensure well-rounded scholars, GRCS increased elective and after school opportunities. This new programming includes STEM programs, athletics, fine arts, financial literacy and even horseback riding. Additionally, GRCS is expanding experiential opportunities that include academic excursions to Washington D.C. , Costa Rica and model United Nations training at Harvard University.

In order to address the needs of all scholars, GRCS is increasing the number of aides in the school as well as associate and support instructors to provide support to scholars in reading, math and science. This is being done both through direct hires and partnerships with Northern Illinois University.



3. Provide any activity information regarding counseling, school-based mental health programs, specialized instructional support services, mentoring services, and other strategies to improve students' skills outside the academic subject areas.

Counseling/ Mental Health Programs

- 1) On site social worker is available for all scholars.
- 2) Psychologist counseling is available based upon identified needs.
- 3) Informal counseling occurs through the Dean of Culture both during and after school.
- 4) GRCS works closely with groups such as SASS to provide support in more severe situations.

Specialized Instructional Support Services

- 1) FAR- (After school tutoring) allows scholars to opt into tutoring and earn the right to re-take an assessment. The goal of the program is to increase academic achievement while promoting growth mindset.
- 2) Summer Fellows- individualized and small group tutoring that takes place during June and July with the goal of providing at-risk scholars with small group instruction in math and reading.
- 3) After School tutoring provided by GRCS staff as well as college students.

Mentoring Services-

- 1) Scholar Ambassadors is a program in which GRCS scholars receiving training on leadership and life skills.
- 2) Girls on the Run and Let Them Run- After school programs which embed running and training into life skills development.
- 3) Horseback riding- in which scholars learn life skills by learning how to care for horse while also learning how to ride.
- 4) GRCS is piloting a counseling program with a outside group.



4. Include any activity information regarding the preparation for and awareness of opportunities for postsecondary education and the workforce, which may include career and technical education programs and broadening secondary school students' access to coursework to earn postsecondary credit while still in high school (such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual or concurrent enrollment, or early college high schools).

GRCS actively promotes post-secondary opportunities to scholars through the College 101 program. Each year scholars in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade visit one college campus. On the trip, they interact with college students, professors and staff. Each college visit also provides a unique focus in a field of study at the school. For example, 5<sup>th</sup> grade scholars visit Northern Illinois University and focus on engineering. This includes conducting experiments at the NIU engineering lab.

GRCS also promotes higher-level academic opportunities for scholars embedded in college experiences. For example, GRCS works with both Northwestern University and Northern Illinois University to enroll scholars in gifted programs over the summer that focus on rigorous literature study, math or other STEM pursuits. Scholars live on the college campus during this time.

During the school year, GRCS works with universities to provide school year opportunities such as online learning in advanced areas that earn the scholars high school credits. Additionally, scholars are provided the opportunity to test on the ACT as young as 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This allows scholars the opportunity to become acquainted with the test as well as to be identified for advanced opportunities.

Galapagos is working with scholars and staff to provide additional real world opportunities. For example, ~~during the summer of 2018, some scholars and staff members will receive instruction on skills related to a~~ model United Nations programming where the focus is on research, public speaking, negotiation on international relations subject matter.



5. Specify any activity information regarding the implementation of a schoolwide tiered model to prevent and address problem behavior, and early intervening services, coordinated with similar activities and services carried out under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).

GRCS believes in a least invasive approach to classroom management and in dealing with disruptive behaviors. GRCS provides extensive in-house and off-site support in the implementation of Teach Like a Champion. As part of the least invasive approach, Galapagos works at creating a positive culture in which strong relationships can be developed. Galapagos uses a variety of approaches to reach this goal; this includes Morning Meetings/Pathway, community circles, Calm Classroom curriculum.

Morning Meeting provides a powerful leverage point with which to enforce/reinforce school culture. Every opportunity, through discussions and activities, should be given for scholars to demonstrate and “walk out” our values (drive, grit, growth mindset), rules, (Respect for self, Respect for others, and Respect for environment), and our on-going character values. Pathway is a place where instructors help scholars set long and short term goals and to discuss school wide initiatives. Pathway is a place to build scholar character, and have scholars reflect on choices they have made.

Additionally, GRCS uses a robust tracking system, Kickboard, to monitor discipline concerns in real time with the goal of intervening before behaviors escalate. GRCS uses a variety of incentives to create a culture of strong relationships, this includes incentive nights and scholar auctions.

If behaviors are persistent, GRCS implements a PASS plan meeting to bring in relevant staff and family members to work together to develop specific goals, strategies and follow-up support for the scholar. Galapagos has a social worker on site who is also available to support the two Deans of School Culture. The team works closely with the special education team to ensure that all scholars receive the least invasive support while still ensuring that all needs are met.



6. Include any activity information regarding professional development and other activities for teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel to improve instruction and use of data from academic assessments, and to recruit and retain effective teachers, particularly in high need subjects.

GRCS provides a variety of supports and professional developments with staff to improve instruction and the use of data from academic assessments. In the month of August and throughout the school year, GRCS sets aside days to focus on data analysis and integration into instruction. These data days are used to analyze NWEA MAP Data, ANET data and benchmark assessments. Administrators provide trainings to staff on how to optimize this data to improve instruction. Additionally, GRCS contracts with The Achievement Network to provide consulting and coaching to administrators and instructional staff on how to use assessments to drive instruction. Similarly, GRCS works with Expeditionary Learning to focus on using classroom data to improve instruction primarily in the area of literacy. GRCS works with Stemsopes to provide similar training for science instruction.

GRCS works to recruit and retain effective teachers in all areas but specifically in high need areas such as math and science. In the past year, GRCS focused on upgrading supplemental materials in the areas of math (i.e. Zearn and science Stemsopes). Similarly, GRCS is worked to acquire supplemental materials to further support and align to C3 in social studies. Additionally, GRCS acquired need technology to ensure proper access to supplemental programming. The increase of high quality curriculum, supplemental materials and targeted professional development in these areas should lead to better success in recruitment and retention.

In order to ensure all students are taught by effective, experienced teachers who are licensed in the areas for which they are teaching GRCS recruits throughout the region. Additionally, GRCS is working with all staff to increase their participation in the decision making process in regards to instruction, discipline and policy. Such planning takes place during the summer and is followed up throughout the year during scheduled follow-ups.

7. Describe any activity information regarding strategies for assisting preschool children in the transition from early childhood education programs to local elementary school programs.

GRCS uses a full day kindergarten to help in the transition of preschool children in the transition from early childhood education programs to the elementary level. GRCS uses the NWEA MAP K-2 assessment to provide early benchmarks in the areas of reading and math. Additionally, GRCS uses in-house created K-1 eight week assessments to monitor progress and course correct as needed. GRCS uses data from the above to ensure that instructional needs are met. By using supplemental programs as Zearn with the Engage New York math curriculum, GRCS is able to create a blended learning environment in which instructors are able to work with small groups while others in the class are working on targeted math instruction on-line.

Additionally, GRCS has a full time social worker who works with scholars and parents in the transition to school. The K-4 classrooms use the Step-Up program to engage scholars in developing socio-emotional skills. Galapagos is working on bringing in additional socio-emotional resources.



8. Describe any activities and/or approaches to support homeless children and youth.

GRCS abides by the McKinney-Vento guidelines. All GRCS staff are trained on identifying scholars who may be in a transitional living situation. The GRCS Social Worker serves as the Scholars in Living Transitions (Homeless) Liaison. GRCS works with such families and scholars to ensure full access to the school which would include but not be limited to waivers of all fees, but also providing basic needs such as uniform clothes and school supplies. Scholars in transitional situations are also provided access to all support services including tutoring.

9. Describe any activities and/or approaches to engage parents in their child's education and school.

Galapagos engages parents in a variety of manners

- 1) School nights- include back to school, literacy and STEM nights.
- 2) Consistent communication- weekly update phone calls, weekly communication folders, parental access to behavior and academic information through Kickboard.
- 3) Regularly scheduled meetings- parents meet with instructors quarterly for twenty-minute academic meetings during report card conferences.
- 4) Policies- Open Door Policy in which parents are permitted to observe class instruction. One Business Day policy in which staff respond to parent communications within a business day.
- 5) Parent workshops focusing not just on the academic development of their child and the school to home connection but also workshops on developing adult life skills (e.g. Financial Literacy).
- 6) Parent volunteer opportunities.

10. Describe any activities and/or approaches to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the development of your school's Title I Plan.

GRCS provided multiple opportunities for stakeholders especially teaching staff to be involved in the identification of school successes and areas for improvement. This input was used to help develop the school's Title 1 Plan. During a GRCS retreat staff came together and identified needs in a variety of areas such as academics/instruction, culture, policies and evaluation. All staff choose a policy group in which they and the group reviewed data related to their topic and identified needs and possible solutions. As solutions were developed, the smaller policy groups presented finding and suggestions to the group at large. At which time, the whole group provided feedback which was then taken back to the policy group for refinement and a follow up presentation.

Additionally, GRCS provides staff with a bi-annual survey to assess successes and areas of follow-up. Parents were provided with a similar survey.



