

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

Goal 1. ACADEMICS

All students will obtain, understand, analyze, communicate, and apply knowledge and skills to achieve success in school and in life.

Reasonable Interpretation

Students will integrate academic knowledge and twenty-first century skills, allowing them to succeed in personal, community and workplace environments and to understand and participate in the global economy.

Students will demonstrate mastery of the core subjects as well as foreign languages and the fine and practical arts through both traditional and non-traditional achievement measures. Through a variety of instructional and assessment activities that integrate technology and include student products and performances as well as more traditional assignments and tests, students will prove their ability to access and communicate information, manage complexity, structure solutions, think critically and apply their knowledge to real-world situations.

To engage students in their learning and help them discover and develop their strengths, each student will develop a learning plan over time in collaboration with their families and school staff members. Beginning in elementary school, learning plans will be used to identify strengths and interests, and to monitor complex thinking and other academic and life skills. Middle school students' learning plans will continue to explore talents, make career connections, and identify strengths and interests as students set goals for high school and beyond. High school plans will emphasize career connections and post-secondary goals, again building on individual strengths and interests.

Further, FCPS will define expected performance at transitional times during the elementary, middle and high school years. Measures used at these transitions will serve as system-wide indicators of student achievement. These collective measures will reflect high expectations for each student, and can provide a point of reference against which to assess individual achievement.

Goal 1. ACADEMICS

1.1. Students will achieve their full academic potential in the core disciplines.

Reasonable Interpretation

The core disciplines are English/language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. Mastery of the content in these disciplines will be demonstrated in a variety of ways, including test scores, grades, completion of advanced and specialized courses, as well as other assessments that require complex thinking, such as student products or performances.

Each student will meet or exceed the benchmark standards designated by the Virginia *Standards of Learning* and Fairfax County *Program of Studies* as assessed through classroom performance and grades as well as through *Standards of Learning* tests. Proficiency in the core subjects will assure that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their academic goals.

In addition to achieving proficiency, it is also expected that students reach their full potential in the core disciplines. To measure full potential, students will be helped to identify their strengths and to use this information to develop learning goals that capitalize on individual talents, strengths and interests. In the core disciplines, an emphasis on student strengths means that students acquire, explore, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills in ways that allow them to capitalize on their strengths and be self-directed in their learning. Further, by identifying their strengths, students will be guided to enroll in courses and to participate in co-curricular activities that nurture their talents and expand their interests.

1.2. Students will communicate in at least two languages.

Reasonable Interpretation

Effective communication in more than one language is an important component of preparing students with the twenty-first century skills needed for success in the global economy. Students in FCPS will be proficient communicators in both in English and in at least one other language.

Communication means that students can use oral and written language to convey and receive information. FCPS will phase in language instruction in all elementary schools, through Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs, and will continue to offer partial immersion, dual language immersion, and ESOL services, as well as credit-earning language courses at the middle and high school levels. In this way, FCPS will meet the varied needs of students to become communicatively competent in one or more languages in addition to English by graduation.

Determination of proficiency will be matched to language experience and instruction and will initially include the use of established assessment tools for students in FLES, partial immersion and secondary foreign language classes. FCPS will develop a common assessment that all programs can use to determine levels of language proficiency. English language learners (ELL) will develop their English skills through ESOL services and additional instructional support and will demonstrate proficiency using state approved assessment measures for the acquisition of English. Many ELL students will also be able to demonstrate their existing communicative competency in their home languages by passing the FCPS foreign language credit exam in their respective languages.

1.3. Students will explore, understand and value the fine and practical arts.

Reasonable Interpretation

The K-12 fine arts program includes music, visual arts, theatre and dance. In the twenty-first century fine arts students will use the arts and humanities as a creative and universal means of communication. Through participation in high quality fine arts music and visual arts programs, with exposure to global arts of the past and the present, students will explore, understand and apply the basic concepts of design, music, literature, art, dance, and drama, demonstrating creative expressions, unique solutions, and informed judgments when responding to their own work and to the creative works of others. They will develop valuable skills that may be applied to their personal interests as well to future educational and career goals.

The practical arts are Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses that are offered in middle and high schools. In the twenty-first century practical arts students will combine academics and workplace knowledge and skills to create a world class workforce. As middle school students and through entry level high school CTE courses, students will have opportunities to explore career interests. To develop deeper understandings and skills, FCPS will increase opportunities for students to access training in advanced career and technical courses as well as specialized high school courses. High school students will be able to expand their skills and training through partnerships with colleges and universities through dual enrollment and articulation agreements. They will demonstrate their skill levels by meeting industry standards.

The fine and practical arts programs at the elementary and middle school levels will emphasize exploration and will cultivate students' talents and interests. As students mature, beginning at the middle school level, coursework and co-curricular activities will be available to all students so that they can further develop their knowledge and skills. The continued participation of FCPS students in advanced and specialized fine arts and CTE programs will reflect the extent to which these arts are valued by students.

1.4. Students will understand the interrelationship and interdependence of the countries and cultures of the world.

Reasonable Interpretation

A strong historical background is a necessary foundation to understand many of the complexities in the world today. In world history, grades 5, 9, and 10, FCPS students will learn about early civilizations and cultures. In the early years of world history, they learn about how civilizations developed into nations and the world divided. In subsequent years, students learn about interactions among nations, modernization and conflicts that arose. They see how industrialization and technology brought the world together and made it smaller in many ways.

Understanding of these complexities results from inquiry, discussion, and reflection. Students will be able to explain concepts thoroughly and support them with evidence and to interpret documents, events, images, anecdotes and models. They will apply knowledge gained in a variety of contexts and consider multiple perspectives before reaching a conclusion. When considering the interrelationship and interdependence of the countries and cultures of the world, students will show their understanding of the thinking, motivations, and actions of different cultures as well as global economic factors.

The Fairfax County social studies program includes world history at grade 5 and two years of world history in high school, which exceeds state requirements. This program will require students to explain concepts, support their ideas with evidence, interpret historical resources and apply their knowledge through a variety of assignments and assessment activities. FCPS will also develop system-wide assessments that show that students have met this goal. Students will also demonstrate knowledge and understanding by passing required SOL tests in social studies.

1.5. Students will effectively use technology to access, communicate, and apply knowledge and to foster creativity.

Reasonable Interpretation

Throughout students' careers in FCPS students will acquire and demonstrate skills and proficiency in the use of technology to access, communicate, and apply knowledge and foster creativity. Technology will be integrated throughout the curriculum to provide students with many opportunities to use technology as a tool to do work that requires creativity, critical thinking, information analysis, communications, collaboration, problem solving, and decision making. In addition, students will acquire and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to access and navigate relevant technology resources for research, communicate electronically with a variety of information sources, and utilize spreadsheet, word processing, data analysis, and presentation software and tools to analyze and present research and findings. By the time they graduate, students will be prepared with the necessary information and technology literacy skills to succeed in a technology-infused workplace and society.