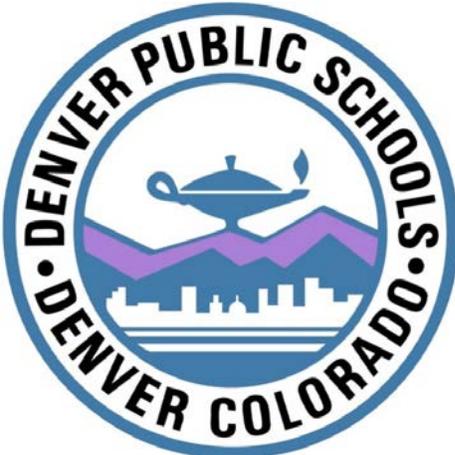


INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION



DCIS at Montbello
December
2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	Page 3
Introduction.....	Page 4
Innovation: Vision & Mission.....	Pages 4-5
Innovation: Education Plan.....	Page 5-13
Innovation: Assessments.....	Page 13-15
Innovation: Graduation and Promotion; Academic Achievement Goals and Gains.....	Page 16-18
Innovation: Time.....	Page 18-20
Innovation: Student Enrollment.....	Page 21
Innovation: Human Resource Management.....	Page 21-29
Innovation: School Governance and Parent Engagement.....	Page 29-32
Innovation: Budget.....	Page 32-34
Innovation: Other Programs, Policies, Operational Documents.....	Page 34
Waivers.....	Page 34
Administrative and Faculty Support.....	Page 34
Community Support.....	Page 34
Required & Additional Attachments List.....	Page 34-35
Appendix A: Request Waivers in Curricular Materials & Instructional Design.....	Page 36
Appendix B: Request Alternative Benchmark Assessment Program.....	Page 37
Appendix C: Request Alternative Graduation and Promotion Policies.....	Page 38-40
Appendix D: School Performance Framework Goal Setting Worksheet.....	Page 41-42
Appendix E: Waiver Request Template.....	Page 43

OVERVIEW

Colorado's Innovation Schools Act is intended to improve student achievement by granting schools a "high degree of autonomy in implementing curriculum, making personnel decisions, organizing the school day, determining the most office use of resources, and generally organizing the delivery of high-quality educational services, thereby empowering each public school to tailor its services most effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of the population of students it services."

That Act provides schools the opportunity for increased flexibility by providing a clear path to waive certain state statutes, district policies and union contract provisions that may otherwise inhibit a school's ability to implement strategies and tactics that may produce significant gains in academic performance. For more information on the Innovation Schools Act of 2008, please visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB130.htm>.

The following document is intended to serve two purposes. First, it is an application for schools to request innovation status from Denver Public School's ("DPS") Board of Education and the Colorado State Board of Education. Second, it is a planning guide to support the development of high-quality innovation school plans that will produce significant gains in academic achievement.

To facilitate the development of an organized, carefully planned, and comprehensive innovation application, schools should thoughtfully respond to each component of this application. Schools are also encouraged to be collaborative and transparent when creating their plans by providing staff and members of the broader community meaningful opportunities to engage in the development process.

Completed applications will be reviewed by the Office of School Reform and Innovation ("OSRI") and an Application Review Team ("ART"). An ART is comprised of 6-10 members, each with expertise in a specific area of school development and management (e.g., teaching and learning, special education, budget, human resources, etc.). The review by OSRI and ART is intended to provide feedback to improve the quality of a plan before conducting a staff vote and before requesting innovation status from DPS's Board of Education.

Schools that secure the necessary support from staff and their community can submit their innovation plan to DPS's Board of Education for review. Plans that are approved by DPS are then forwarded to Colorado's State Board of Education for final review.

Note that Appendix A of this application contains questions that must be answered by applicants who desire to secure district waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or graduation and promotion policies. Completed innovation school plans should be submitted to:

Denver Public Schools
Office of School Reform and Innovation
Attention: Peter Piccolo
Peter_Piccolo@dpsk12.org
750 Galapago St.
Denver, CO 80204

INTRODUCTION

School Name: Denver Center for International Studies at Montbello (DCISM)

School Leader: Suzanne Morey, Principal

Date of Application: December, 2013 (*Revision*)

Overview:

DCISM opened under different administrative leadership for its first two years. In year one DCISM achieved strong levels of student growth and achievement. However, from year one to year two there was an overall school performance framework drop from green to yellow status. Most of the grade level combined Median Growth Percentiles overall in Reading, Math, and Writing were in the 50th percentile range. Our highest growth was in English Language Proficiency with our high school students scoring in the 82nd percentile.

Innovation Plan Revision Team Members:

- Suzanne Morey, Principal
- Annashay Sutherland, Assistant Principal
- DCISM School Leadership Team (SLT)
- School Advisory Board (SAB)
- Ruben Morris, Principal Resident
- Kate Farmer, DCISM Communications Director
- DCISM faculty and staff

INNOVATION

Vision and Mission

VISION:

The Denver Center for International Studies at Montbello (DCISM) will be nationally recognized for our academic achievement, student empowerment, innovative international studies educational program, vital community partnerships, and students' global positive impact.

MISSION:

The Denver Center for International Studies at Montbello's mission is to create a diverse, respectful, and socially responsible community of learners where students and teachers are honored as globally competent individuals and are actively involved in improving our rapidly changing world. We are committed to inspiring and empowering students to make critical decisions about their futures with the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and beyond. We believe it is the combined responsibility of teachers, parents, students and community members to create a safe and stimulating school environment.

COMMITMENTS TO OUR KIDS AND OUR COMMUNITY:

- DCISM will provide a safe, innovative, and student—centered environment of excellence where all students develop the resilience and skills necessary to lead and succeed in our

rapidly changing world.

- Our students will be known as learners and as individuals and are connected to significant adults who are invested in their futures.
- Our educators will support positive youth development and purposefully cultivate a common culture of respect, professionalism, collaboration, and shared decision—making.
- Our rigorous international studies instruction and assessment cycle will honor student voice, affirm cultural identity, interconnect knowledge, integrate new media, and make learning personally meaningful.
- Our teachers and students will have access to and use New Media digital resources including 1:1 laptop computing and instructional tools including projection systems, document image cameras, and online resources.
- We will foster partnerships that expand learning beyond school walls through career exploration, college immersion, and international travel.
- We will ensure that our stakeholder’s thoughts, feelings, and interests are central to our educational environment.
- We will continually revisit our vision and mission to ensure that our current and future practice is reflected in what we currently believe and execute.

ALIGNMENT OF DPS AND DCISM:

The language, focus, and expectations for DCISM students align to DPS’ mission, vision and core beliefs articulated in the 2010 Denver Plan. DCISM’s use of new media and an internationally focused instructional and assessment design will develop students who are ready to lead and succeed in a rapidly changing world, which directly supports the DPS mission of ensuring all students are ready to thrive in 21st Century college and career environments. The DCISM mission and vision reflect a strategic vision and approach to our program which aligns with the Far Northeast network of schools.

EDUCATION PLAN

RESEARCH–BASED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

DCISM offers a student–driven, technology–rich, international studies instruction and assessment design that infuses exploration in digital media, the arts, and social sciences. Beyond the core curriculum, DCISM offers an additional strand of social studies electives and a robust world language program that includes Chinese, French, Spanish, and English (for non–native speakers). In addition, hands–on instruction in technology and new media literacy will be interwoven throughout our curriculum.

The DCISM educational program is modeled on the original DCIS campus in downtown Denver, where, since 2006, 100 percent of DCIS' graduating seniors have been accepted by at least two colleges.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

As described above, the norms and practices of standards based instruction through an international lens will drive school culture and provide options for personalization and for creating and presenting information in multiple venues. These elements of the school's culture carry over into the design of lessons, master schedules, professional development plans, and the physical plant. In each instance, learners are able and expected to vacillate between individual explorations and idea creation, to small group project teams, to whole class discussions, to international student coalitions.

The variety of interactions, collaboration, and venues creates a learning environment that is characteristic of college and career life. Innovation status supports this style of learning environment by allowing flexibility of schedules and time and ensuring that student experiences and student work produced outside of the school day counts.

DCISM believes that the relevance and variety of our learning opportunities creates an environment where students want to actively engage and present their new understandings and creations. DCISM expects the learning culture to have a significant and positive impact on student achievement, attendance, and college readiness.

Our Special Education team works with students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to ensure they are meeting the goals outlined in this document. In addition to "pull out" intervention classes, the special education team co-teaches with general education teachers so that students can access curriculum within the regular education classroom. The Affective Needs (AN) center classroom is for students with emotional disabilities and provides a strong emphasis on affective education and social skills programming in addition to academics.

Our TINLI program for second language learners provides access to native language instruction and support to our Spanish-speaking ELL students. All second language learners are provided specialized support in the development of English through a daily ELD class focused on developing English reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE:

The DCIS at Montbello Culture of Excellence focuses on four key areas:

- **Excellence in Academics**
- **Excellence in Attendance**
- **Excellence in Behavior**
- **Excellence in Presentation**

To help students to meet or exceed our academic, attendance, behavioral and presentation expectations, as a staff we will:

- Honor Diversity
- Build Positive Relationships and Communicate Peacefully
- Be Present and Listen
- Honor Our Time Together

In relation to academic and behavioral excellence–

1. **We craft exemplary units (modules) and lessons that are engaging, standards-based, as rigorous as AP tasks, and global in scope, *because our children's achievement is proportional to the quality of our lessons***
2. **We ensure that students read closely and write clearly, *because reading and writing are the primary gatekeepers to postsecondary success.***
3. **We purposefully develop respectful relationships, *because humans thrive when they are heard, known, respected, and connected***
4. **We expect and insist upon an orderly, professional, student-centered environment, *because innovative, high-quality work occurs when learners are engaged, supported, organized, and feel safe to be who they are.***
5. **We learn beyond school walls, *because the real world contains an infinite number of pathways to deep, transformational learning.***
6. **We know that without GREAT teachers, nothing else matters, *because teaching and learning is our core business.***
7. **We observe, gather data, diagnosis, plan, implement, and monitor students, *because we know that we must understand the student as an individual in order to differentiate to meet their learning needs.***

DCISM will achieve our culture of excellence when we effectively, efficiently, and consistently respond to students' academic and behavioral growth needs with proven interventions that are monitored and re-evaluated based on student progress. At DCISM we believe this is a team effort and everyone is part of the team.

Excellence in Academics

We will create the conditions for a culture of academic excellence through high expectations, student centered incentives, and academic interventions.

Excellence in Attendance

Our students will be deeply engaged in our school. We will use attendance incentives and tiered intervention systems to support an expectation of excellence in attendance.

Excellence in Presentation

DCISM students will demonstrate a level of excellence and respect for themselves and our school in their dress and presentation of self. This level of excellence will be supported by common expectations for dress unique to our middle school and specific to a different set of expectations for our high school students.

Excellence in Behavior

Students will be supported in achieving a high level of behavioral excellence reflective of our core values through a middle school and high school specific behavior accountability system. This system will incorporate common behavioral incentives and consequences. Behavior interventions will be supported by a restorative justice platform.

THE DCISM CORE VALUES:

The DCISM Core Values create the framework that guides how all adults and students behave as individuals, what we expect from one another, and how we reflect on our growth as an organization. Our RICH Core Values are:

- **Respect** – We respect ourselves, each other, our school, our community, and our world.
- **Integrity** – We are honest and do what we say we will do.
- **Creativity** – We use our fun and flexible minds to design innovative solutions to local and global challenges.
- **High Expectations** – We expect to work hard and expect to achieve.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PHILOSOPHY:

Restorative Justice at DCISM affords students and adults an opportunity to give their side of the story and participate in a mediation to repair harm and be restored to daily school activities. Dean/admin may ask a staff member, parent, or other students to participate in a restorative justice

conversation. (Restorative justice mediations can also be requested by faculty/staff to the Dean or administration.)

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN:

Our academic programming aligns with the Common Core and generally follows the DPS–developed course scope and sequence. We are currently using District approved curriculum across the content areas including SpringBoard, CMP, Edge and Inside ELL curriculum. As we continue to monitor the success of these district curricula in meeting the needs of our students we may choose to apply for curriculum waivers and would request an expedited district approval process in order to support innovation and materials that best meet the needs of our learners. Our current practice provides for standards–based instruction through an international lens. This lens is an instructional practice called the Graduation Performance System (GPS) that is a proficiency–based system aligned to the Common Core. GPS measures student achievement according to rubric–based performance outcomes.

Although still a work in progress, notable curriculum and instructional design characteristics include:

- French, Spanish and Chinese languages offered to all students in grades 6 – 12.
- Diverse elective offerings including Global Service–Learning, Digital Media, Chicano and African American Studies, and Passages (DCISM course).
- Student Advisory provides the forum to review individual student grades, establish school culture, create a motivating college–going environment, and provide for basic social/emotional needs. Our goal is that each student has at least one adult (advisor) in the building who is their advocate.
- College Prep is the forum for afterschool academic support and catching up on classwork and homework.
- Support for Special Education students is provided in our co–plan/co–teach “push–in” model as well as in “pull out” intervention classes. Special needs students can be clustered in regular education classes or given small group developmental instruction as needed.
- Academic intervention options provide daily high–dose math tutoring in key transition grades. Reading intervention classes as well as English Language Development (ELD) classes for second language learners are provided to those reading below grade level. Reading intervention is flexible and students may move out when they reach grade level goals.
- Middle School offers Honors level language arts sections as well as accelerated math options. Advanced placement classes such as AP Spanish, AP Psychology, and AP US History are available in High School. Concurrent College Enrollment Courses are available to those who qualify.

Middle School Curriculum

All students in middle school will be enrolled in a course of study that includes language arts, math, science, and social studies. Most students will be enrolled in a second language (Spanish, French or Chinese) as well as at least one elective and/or educational opportunity that deepens student learning. Enrichment options include: physical education/health, computer technology, and art. Some students will be enrolled in a reading or math intervention class or English Language Development (ELD) course as needed. All 6th grade students are currently enrolled in a math intervention/enrichment course taught by math fellows/tutors. Special education intervention classes, Honors level language arts classes, and accelerated math courses are provided for those students who qualify.

High School Curriculum

All students in high school are required to take 4 years of math, including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II as well as 4 years of a language arts course. Students must minimally take 3 years of social studies and science. We highly encourage all High School students to take 3 years of a foreign language (Spanish, French, or Chinese); this is a requirement if a student wants to be eligible for our international supplementary diploma. Co-curricular options include: physical education, digital graphic design, Passages/Cultural Studies, computer technology, Chicano–African American Studies, ROTC, and art. Some students will be enrolled in a reading or math intervention course, English language development class, or credit recovery class as needed. All 9th grade students are currently placed in a math intervention/enrichment course taught by math fellows/tutors. All 11th grade students are currently enrolled in an ACT Test Preparation Class. Special education intervention classes are provided for those students who qualify. Advanced Placement, College Concurrent Enrollment, and Honors courses are offered for students who qualify.

Extended Learning

DCISM coordinates with its community partners to provide access to a broad array of curricula for our extended learning time. Extended Learning Opportunities after school are based on what our community partners (Beacons and NULITES Center) are able to facilitate each school year in addition to regional athletics and clubs sponsored by our school personnel. Some of the current enrichment offerings include: the Dilemma Destroyers (a community service oriented club), the LGBT Club, Frisbee Club, and Math Club. We are hoping to expand these offerings in the near future to include Urban Debate and programming that enhances our international studies focus.

Student Travel Opportunities

As an international studies school, we are committed to offering opportunities for our students to travel both domestically and internationally to deepen student learning. The goal is for these travel experiences to be embedded within GPS learning frameworks with performance outcomes and rubric-based scoring for proficiency that ultimately directly impacts students' global competence. Traveling while attending DCISM is not a requirement but it is encouraged. We understand that

traveling can be expensive and so we do our best to allocate monies from our overall budget as well as find scholarships and other low-cost ways for students to see different parts of our city, state, country, and world. We are especially grateful to the DCIS Foundation for all they do to provide our students with travel scholarships.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS:

At DCISM we strive to prepare every student to graduate on time, ready to make the choice of either attending college without the need for remediation or pursuing military service, trade school, or the career of their choice. To achieve this, we are currently building our plan to offer three pathways grounded in an internationally focused college going culture. These pathways include:

- Advanced Placement Classes and Tutorial Labs
- Concurrent Enrollment Courses
- Career and Technical Education Classes

Our pathways are geared toward achieving and surpassing the Denver Public Schools Post-Secondary Readiness goals of:

- 90% students that take concurrent enrollment pass with a C or higher
- 80% seniors graduating without needing developmental education classes
- 70% graduation rate
- 60% of students score a 3,4, or 5 on the AP exams

The Post-Secondary Readiness pathways at DCISM function by implementing academic systems and reinforcing our college going culture, which includes:

- All students participating in the ACT preparation sequence (Explore, Plan, and ACT) from grades 9–11. AP exams and the ACT test along with CCSS set our bar for rigor and instruction in classes. Teachers look at what students need to know and be able to do on AP tests and the ACT in conjunction with the CCSS in order to backwards plan sequentially for each grade level. Teachers will also collaborate vertically and horizontally during common planning time to ensure curricular alignment.
- Implementation of the MyFoundations Lab to first diagnose which students are ready for college level CE classes and identify which students are in need of developmental courses. We will provide online coursework for those students who demonstrated a need for foundational supports to ensure success in CE courses the following year. Students will have the opportunity to enroll in an AAA109 course. This course will provide fundamental supports for building college level study habits and learning strategies. In order to properly place and enroll all seniors in either a CE course or a developmental course, DCISM will assess Juniors each Spring using the ACCUPLACER test. MyFoundations diagnostic information and ACCUPLACER scores will be shared with parents after each test.

- Engaging and empowering students and families to take a leadership role in owning their pathway to college and career readiness is our goal. We will offer opportunities for students and families to ask questions, offer suggestions, voice opinions, and gain information about the multiple pathways we offer to Post-Secondary Readiness. Students will engage in these discussions in various core academic courses along with academic advisement. Parents will also have an opportunity to engage in discussions about college and career readiness via our parent coffee platform each semester.
- Explicitly and intentionally modeling, discussing, and reinforcing collegial behaviors, attitudes, habits, and mindsets is a goal. Classrooms will have dedicated spaces for college and career readiness as an intentional part of the learning environment. Our college counselor will use core content classes periodically for Personal Education Plan discussions.

SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS:

DCISM is unique in that all students are second language learners and are enrolled in a foreign language course, so a culture of mutual respect [for our multi-lingual world](#) pervades student life. However, the imperative to develop our English Language Learner's (ELLs) social and academic English is of particular, urgent importance so they can meaningfully and equitably participate in post-secondary life.

Key details of the plan include:

- Instructional practice that includes clear content and language objectives; relevant and motivating contexts and curriculum; well-designed and appropriately paced instruction; active engagement and participation rituals; opportunities to practice and apply new knowledge; consistent feedback; frequent embedded assessments; and structured oral and written interactions.
- ELA-S sections in science, social studies and math.
- A daily English language development block that includes a balance of direct teaching (syntax, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, norms of usage, reading comprehension, etc.) and meaningful and motivating opportunities to communicate in English.
- Preview and review of academic vocabulary for science, math and social studies courses.
- Daily mathematics tutorials in key academic years with bilingual tutors for one hour daily.
- Homework and classwork academic support available after school.
- Extended school day and extended school year that includes additional instruction per day and additional days of instruction per year.

At DCISM, multilingualism is an explicit goal and as an educational program approaches languages other than English as assets, not barriers. DCISM believes that the combination of our global values, high expectations, and personalized support provides an environment where linguistically diverse students thrive.

During this past year, strategic budgeting has allowed us to hire an ELL consultant who provides additional coaching and support around English Language Acquisition best practices. Additionally, autonomy over our budget helps us to make decisions that best support our international mission and vision by prioritizing strategic professional development consultants and student/staff travel opportunities.

SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS:

DCISM teacher and administrator practice is grounded in coherent and predictable learning and behavioral supports that are articulated in the DCISM RtI and “Culture of Excellence” documents attached. These processes are explicitly designed to ensure due diligence in decision making by providing clarity about students’ actual learning and behavioral support needs, to maximize inclusion in the core academic program, and to minimize over-identification for Special Education. Typically it is only after tier one and tier two supports have proved insufficient that a student receive formal diagnostic testing or referral for a special education evaluation. Students who are placed in Special Education programming will receive accommodations and aids that are aligned to their interests, learning styles and learning needs in addition to being appropriately mainstreamed in regular education classes within an international program. Specific attention will be paid to differentiating the delivery of content and the presentation of new knowledge. Support for Special Education students is provided in our co-plan/co-teach “push-in” model as well as in pull-out intervention classes. Special needs students can be clustered or given one-on-one instruction as needed. A Special Education teacher will monitor the fidelity of implementation of each student’s IEP through classroom observations and weekly grade level planning sessions.

DCISM offers an on-site, special education Affective Needs classroom at the middle school as well as High School level for students who need a more structured, small class environment that includes daily affective and social-emotional support and skills development.

CLASS SIZE AND STRUCTURE:

Each class typically consists of 25–30 students and one teacher. Students placed in a daily math tutorial will engage in high dosage math tutoring (currently 2:1 student to tutor ratio each day for an hour.) All students will be a member of a Student Advisory that typically consists of 15–18 students. Teacher’s office hours are adjusted to accommodate “College Prep” which ensures that teachers across content areas are available for extra help afterschool. Lastly, each day concludes with afterschool learning opportunities offered through our school partners including Beacons and the NULITES Center, our regional athletic partners, and DCISM staff sponsors. DCISM believes that this integrated system of engagement and support structures creates the necessary conditions to nurture the holistic growth of all students while closing gaps between student groups.

ASSESSMENTS

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW:

DCISM believes that external evaluations are critical and will participate fully in the state TCAP/PARCC assessment for grades 6–~~10~~–12 each year as well as other critical assessments. DCISM students in grades 9–11 will participate in the ACT preparation sequence (Explore, Plan, and ACT). The 2013–2014 school year will serve as a baseline for ACT results and the Leadership Team will develop performance targets in subsequent years. In addition to these external assessments, all DCISM students will participate in baseline reading, math, and English proficiency (if necessary) assessments at the beginning, middle and end of each year. ACCESS will be the ~~benchmark~~ assessment that will be used to determine students' English proficiency. From there, instructors will use this data to determine appropriate next steps in the areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

Additional assessments we are currently using include:

- Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) for all grades 6–12 are utilized as benchmarks five times a year for both progress monitoring and intentional grouping. The SRI is also used as a guiding data point for students' individualized literacy plans.
- Teacher-created short cycle assessments (SCAN) in language arts and math– analyzed test results from these assessments are used to backwards plan instruction and guide re-teach planning.
- GPS (Graduate Portfolio System) assessment cycle (Still in initial training and implementation. See attachment).
- School-based expository writing assessments are part of our Literacy Design Collaborative initiative. Our science, social studies, and language arts teachers meet weekly to create shared writing rubrics and grade level writing expectations, analyze student-writing samples, and backwards plan toward rigorous writing standards.
- ACCUPLACER will be used to determine students' college readiness and remediation needs.

In order to gauge the overall health of the school, DCISM will participate in all elements of the DPS School Performance Framework (SPF). Additionally, as a member school of the International Studies Schools Network, DCISM will be assessed in its development according to the rubric of the ISSN school design framework. The assessment will be conducted by ISSN site visits in the spring of the first year and the spring of the third year. The framework will be used in a school self-evaluation every other year thereafter with the support of ISSN. Summary reports will be submitted to the Instructional Superintendent for DCISM and will contribute to revisions of the DCISM Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and the focuses of professional development for both school administration

and faculty. The goal for DCISM is to achieve proficiency in all 39 areas of the six categories of the school design (see attachment).

MEASURING AND EVALUATING ACADEMIC PROGRESS:

GRADING

DCISM is committed to creating a culture of high expectations for student success. Ongoing transparency of data allows teachers to learn from each other and the school to make efficient course corrections. It also ensures that our stakeholders, including parents and students, are able to have a substantial voice in monitoring our progress and providing feedback to the school and direct support to students. We display data results for parents and update this information throughout the year, and in some cases this may include teacher specific data. We use the DPS Parent Portal and online IC grading communication system and encourage our parents to use this tool to engage with their student's academic success.

Middle School Grading

Middle School will report out grades according to 4 proficiency levels:

Semester 1: students earn a number score 1, 2, 3, or 4

Semester 2: students earn a number score 1, 2, 3, or 4

End-of-Year: students earn an overall proficiency score:

–Advanced, Proficient, Partially Proficient, Unsatisfactory

Effort scores are listed under the heading “Characteristics of a Successful Learner.”

High School Grading – Traditional Reporting

Students at the high school level will receive traditional letter grades (including + and –), which align with Common Core Standards and Colorado Academic Standards. Letter grades include: A, B, C, D, F and Incomplete. In the future, DCISM may move towards a proficiency-based grading approach aligned to the GPS Performance Outcomes.

Assessing Special Education Students

Though students may be allowed different accommodations based on need (extra time, additional pull-out small group lessons/classes) standards are not adjusted based on the student. Therefore, all students are assessed on the same standard within a regular education course. Exception: A special education student will be assessed on their individualized IEP goals within the context of a **“pull out”separate** Intervention **classCourse**, which has a separate course code.

Assessing Second Language Learners

Though students may be allowed different accommodations based on need (e.g. material presented in Spanish, Spanish translated material) standards are not adjusted based on the student. In Science, Social Studies, and Math, an ELA-S student who is instructed in Spanish may demonstrate

proficiency in Spanish on the standards. However, even though students can access and use their Spanish to assist with understanding the content, proficiency in an English Language Arts Course must be assessed in English. Students assessed at a 1,2, or 3 ACCESS level may be assigned an alternate course of study in literacy.

Digital Portfolio

DCISM will be developing a digital portfolio system to maintain a body of evidence that follows students throughout their time at DCISM. A presentation of the learning portfolio in the senior year will eventually be a requirement to earn a supplementary DCISM International Studies Diploma.

ANALYZING DATA:

A primary focus of DCISM instructional practice is ensuring that students demonstrate mastery before moving on to new content. Thus, collecting diagnostic and formative data occurs on a daily basis. Each discipline has common planning time, which can be used for data analysis.

Formative assessments data is collected and analyzed on the current DPS cycle. DCISM'S comprehensive approach to assessment provides a thorough analysis of students' strengths and needs to determine the best tools to show mastery of learning and close learning gaps.

GRADUATION AND PROMOTION; Academic Achievement Goals and Gains

PROMOTION:

Promotion is based on Common Core Standards, Colorado Academic Standards, as well as GPS mastery required for the DCIS International Studies Diploma. Our promotion standards align with Colorado State Law and DPS policy and practice. In order to matriculate into 9th grade students must meet minimum proficiency in literacy and math based on a body of evidence including grades, standardized test scores, and quarterly assessments. ~~Students who are one or more years behind in both math and literacy do not meet these minimum requirements~~ may be retained in ~~8th~~^{8th} Grade within our "Future Freshman Academy" ~~for an 8.5~~ preparation year prior to being promoted to 9th grade. ~~If a particular student is a candidate for this program, parents will be notified no later than February of their 8th grade year, with final decisions made in April or early May. Future Freshman Academy~~ ~~These students will participate in a year long skills based program with a focus on math and literacy. The program will have dedicated math and literacy teachers but all other courses will be offered to students from the regular 8th Grade teachers. Students may~~ ~~This will~~ include English Language Learners who have been in school in the United States for at least 3 years. This will also include Special Education Students on a case-by-case basis with parent support and Special

Formatted: Superscript

Formatted: Superscript

Formatted: Superscript

Education Department guidance— Middle School intervention classes in math and reading as well as daily math tutoring in 6th grade will hopefully assist students in overcoming academic challenges, eliminating the need for placement in our Future Freshman Academy. Students not demonstrating minimum proficiency each year in middle school will receive targeted interventions in Math and Literacy in order to build the necessary skills in literacy and math.

Formatted: Superscript

GRADUATION:

DCISM graduates will receive a DPS high school diploma that is issued to all students satisfying the graduation requirements for Denver Public Schools. Students completing additional requirements prescribed by DCISM will receive a supplementary DCISM International Studies Diploma. Additional requirements include: completing the Passages class, successful completion of at least three years of the same foreign language, and service learning hours. A digital portfolio will eventually be required as part of a final end of year presentation.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR AT RISK DROP OUTS OR NOT MEETING GRADUATING CRITERIA:

The DCISM School Leadership Team and the School Advisory Board are responsible for shaping instructional programming, directing resources, and adjusting the educational program as necessary in order to ensure that ALL students are able to make critical decisions about their futures with the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and beyond. Doing so requires integrated systems of support that ensure students are connected to significant adults and peer groups, engaged in academic work that is personally fulfilling, and are on track to graduate. At DCISM, the Student Advisory program serves as the primary point of departure for these systems. Advisors serve as first responders for absenteeism, course failure, and social-emotional complications. Advisories meet weekly to discuss positive and negative data trends and to develop action plans and provide follow-up.

When the first tier interventions are insufficient, autonomies requested in this proposal allow us to adjust time and resources as necessary in order to support our at-risk students. When tier two interventions such as credit recovery courses, repeating failed courses, and summer school options prove insufficient, the appropriate DCISM faculty and administrators will work with the student and parents to determine educational options such as placement in alternative multiple pathway schools in order to meet their specific needs. Students attempting to enroll in DCISM after their second year of high school (enrollment into Junior Year) who are off track to graduate by a semester or more of credit will be directed to an alternative multiple pathway school and will not be able to matriculate into DCISM.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND GAINS:

Student Achievement

We will know that we are successful when our MGP is consistently above the 60th percentile across all contents and grade levels.

Our 3 year goals are as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Metrics (i.e., % proficient)</i>	<i>Current Performance</i>	<i>2013-14 Goal</i>	<i>2014-15 Goal</i>	<i>2015-16 Goal</i>
MS TCAP/PARCC Math Growth	MGP	51%	60%	65%	65%
MS TCAP/PARCC Reading Growth	MGP	47%	60%	65%	65%
HS TCAP/PARCC Math Growth	MGP	54%	60%	65%	65%
HS TCAP/PARCC Reading Growth	MGP	52%	60%	65%	65%
On Track to Graduate	%	49%	60%	75%	85%
ACT Average Composite Score	Average score of each area	N/A	19	20	21

Graduation Rate

We will reduce our rate of students off track to graduate from 51% to 10% in three years.

Teacher Turnover Rate

We want to retain all of our effective teachers. We also recognize that teaching in a turnaround high needs environment can be stressful and requires a specialized set of skills and commitments. We believe that if we have a staff turnover rate of 20% or less that we would be achieving success.

Positive Global Impact: We want to see evidence of our global mission in every class. This impact should also be evident in students “taking action” (fourth domain of the GPS Global Leadership Outcomes) on issues and concerns locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. Our success depends on us graduating prepared and equipped global citizens.

TIME

TIME:

DCISM believes that providing additional time for student exploration, remediation and teacher professional development is critical to creating a learning-centered culture that is ritually focused on increased achievement and student and teacher growth. DCISM has an extended daily schedule in order to provide robust opportunities for teacher collaboration, professional development, and planning to occur within the school day. The extended school day also provides opportunities for rigorous student intervention and additional learning opportunities such as required foreign language, intervention courses, high dosage tutoring, ACT preparation and college level remediation opportunities. ~~(Current DPS and DCTA policy do not allow sufficient flexibility in the schedule to allow us to simultaneously offer the DCISM curriculum and these critical structures and supports.)~~

Autonomy for our calendar, and subsequently our professional development time, allows us to offer additional teacher training and support related to the common core and our international studies focus. The longer school year also provides additional time for intervention and acceleration of learning in order to assist students who are behind to get to grade level.

We anticipate an adjustment to our master calendar and schedule for the 2014–15 school year. A master calendar is being developed by the Far Northeast schools in order to align schedules and calendars across the various schools. ~~Once this work is completed, our calendar will be submitted~~ no later than 60 days from the end of the school year. The calendar will meet or exceed the district number of student contact days and provide time for additional professional development throughout the year.

FOCUS ON CORE INSTRUCTION:

The current DCISM schedule offers five days of instruction for all core subjects (language arts, math, sciences, social studies) and world languages. An additional afterschool tutorial period is added to the end of the regular school day. The 5-day academic schedule provides continuity of instruction and focus, which allows for both grade level work and additional intervention. All teachers have team planning time each day as well as individual planning each day, which is designed to drive continual improvement in GPS task development, instruction, and assessment, and the tiered intervention work and data analysis described below. DCISM believes that the combination of a focus on daily academic coursework, intervention options, and ample teacher planning time creates the necessary culture for sustaining student growth. We plan on making some adjustments to our daily

schedule going into the 2014–15 school year [which will be decided no later than 60 days before the end of the school year](#).

SERVICES PROVIDED OUTSIDE OF CORE CURRICULAR INSTRUCTION:

Services provided outside of core instruction are designed explicitly to personalize student supports while creating engaging exploratory opportunities where students can apply their learning and “try-on” identities within different fields. We currently offer daily tutorials in mathematics in key transition years and plan to offer different career and interest exploration to be facilitated by both teachers and community-based partners. Co-curricular student learning activities include: art, digital media, keyboarding and technology skills, physical education, yearbook, journalism, and math club. Intervention options in math, reading, ELD coursework, Special Education classes and ACT preparation classes round out the academic day. The system is designed to honor the realities of adolescent development as our students are grappling with their autonomy and identity formation.

LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY:

The DCISM current academic school day for students lasts 8 hours. Breakfast is served in the classroom free of charge to all students. DCISM partners with local organizations including Beacons and the NULITES Center to offer afterschool options including academic support, regional athletics, and club options. DCISM would like to [maintain](#) district support to implement an early out one day a week in conjunction with other schools in the Far Northeast. This student early out will be used for teachers to receive additional professional development and/or extended planning time dedicated to cross content collaboration and improved instruction.

SCHEDULE:

Our schedule provides a World Language (Spanish, French, or Chinese) to every student in grades 6 – 12 and a possible block schedule starting in 2014–15 extends the literacy and math instructional time each day. Students’ daily schedule is differentiated based on their instructional level and need. For example, second language learners receive an English Language Development (ELD) class, students behind in reading have the opportunity for a reading intervention class and advanced students can enroll in an accelerated AP courses. Although the content within the day is differentiated, the length of each school day for each student remains the same. Our extended school day and year continues to be dependent upon final district and school funding and budget allocations. At both middle and high school, teachers currently have common planning either in grade level or content teams as well as personal planning time each day.

Teachers supervise and support after school academic intervention opportunities each week. At DCISM we believe that each student is capable of high levels of academic achievement. We also believe that students should receive the individual supports and attention necessary for them to succeed. After-school academic interventions will help to serve that function by providing daily

academic support for all grade levels and all content areas, structured teacher supported quiet environment for work completion and studying, and a designated time and place for completing make up work and extended learning.

DCISM Advisory Program

Students will be assigned to a teacher advisor and will attend an advisory class during the week. Advisory time is used for students and teachers to review student academic progress and any necessary attendance or behavior concerns. It will also be a time for advisors to develop rapport and relationships with their advisees in the hopes that each student has at least one adult in the building who knows them holistically and is an advocate on their behalf. Advisory time once a week will be dedicated to a Middle School and High School Assembly.

Math Lab Program

As a DSSN school we are fortunate to be able to offer an extra period of math tutoring each day in key transition years. Students are paired/grouped with 2–4 students maximum who are at a similar level, and a Math “Fellow” guides them each day in the development of their math skills. This level of differentiation and small ratio of Fellows to students has proven to be successful at helping students reach proficiency at their grade level.

Learning Outside the Classroom Walls

Innovation status allows DCISM the flexibility to formalize and recognize learning that occurs outside of regular school hours, such as scheduled internships and student travel. DCISM expects these innovations around flexibility of student learning time to have a positive impact on course passing, attendance, and engagement.

Professional Development

Our calendar also allows us to expand our professional development opportunities for DCISM staff, in the past this has included a summer staff retreat and additional green days for data driven reflection and planning. DCISM will participate in required district–provided professional development; DSSN Network required training, and school–based offerings. Additional capacity guidance and support will be provided through the International Studies Schools Network (ISSN) for developing instructional and assessment expertise specific to DCISM as an international studies school.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Procedures and Practices:

DCISM will follow the District School Choice enrollment procedures. In addition, we will require an entrance interview for all 6th and new to DCISM students. [DCIS Montbello will work with the District transition liaisons to determine a different if there is a better placement for students enrolling after 10th grade who are more than a semester off track from graduating on time. In the event that an alternative placement is not available DCISM will enroll these students. ~~Students enrolling after their 10th grade year must be no more than a semester off track from graduating on time in order to be accepted into DCISM starting their junior year.~~](#)

During this interview we will review each student's required enrollment application. Our application process will allow us to collect diagnostic data and to get to know all of our new students.

Students and parents also must sign our Parent/Student Enrollment Letter of Agreement with the agreement that not meeting these expectations will result in a school transition. This pledge outlines all of our agreements around the following:

- Student Attendance
- Student Behavior and Consequences
- Academic Expectations
- Teacher Instructional Commitments
- Parent Engagement Commitments

Attached to this application is the DCISM Enrollment Agreement that clearly articulates a commitment pledge signed by DCISM students and parents/guardians to ensure excellence.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HIRING AND STAFFING:

The comprehensive nature of the DCISM mission and vision requires a unique community of educators who are committed to the academic and social-emotional well-being of every student and to making meaningful connections with parents and community. We also require educators with 21st century mindsets and skills, to effectively implement our educational model that includes extensive use of new media and facilitating and supporting learning across a variety of modalities and venues. In order to maintain the integrity of the level of services and supports we expect to provide, we require the autonomy to hire outside of the established district cycles and processes.

The selection process follows basic District guidelines. The only change is that DCISM can start hiring earlier and can hire as staff is needed. In order to ensure that every staff member is reflective of our vision and mission, DCISM requests to be exempted from direct placements. Due to the unique structure of our school model we may choose to designate specialized duties or roles for teachers related to facilitating the development of GPS, coordinating student travel with school

academics, the use of new media and/or extended learning opportunities. Staff will be expected to participate in travel with students. Professional development will be provided to better support teachers' expertise in relating student travel experiences to classroom learning.

DCISM requests continued autonomy to grant elective credit for non-core courses taught by non-licensed professionals (pending background check through CBI). Note that these professionals will assign grades and will be teachers of record in elective and PE courses. Core classes will be taught by teachers who meet NCLB highly qualified criteria.

Core teachers must follow all district hiring requirements. DCISM wants to continue the right to hire non-core teachers based on the needs of the school. (Our expectation is that non-core teachers have demonstrated experience, career-related expertise in the content and understanding of global competencies are preferred.) All teachers will be hired based on their commitment to developing the necessary international studies instruction expertise, and to developing their understanding of that expertise in direct connection to LEAP indicators for effective teaching. All teachers must show some level of cultural competence related to our student demographics and be able to work with ELL and special needs students. All teachers must be willing to accept targeted, differentiated professional development, attend all required District ELL courses, and be receptive to feedback.

Cultivating future leadership capacity

The driver of DCISM's leadership development strategy is to provide a menu of ways that faculty can take on leadership roles that are critical to the school's mission and vision. Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Serving on the School Leadership Team or School Advisory Board and guiding key decisions around budget, instruction and policy
- Facilitating staff professional development sessions and/or team meetings during departmental and grade-level planning time
- Coordination and design of the advisory program and curriculum
- Teacher Leader responsibilities in a particular content area
- Instructional Coach to support GPS expertise development in collaboration with the ISSN school consultant
- LEAP in-school Peer Observer (designated by Principal)
- Serving as a model classroom for new or developing teachers
- Co-chairing the RtI team with the social worker and AP
- Co-facilitating parent outreach and communications efforts, etc.
- Participation in the DPS Richie Leadership Cadre
- Participation in the Learn to Lead District Cadre
- Attending Aspire, DPSL, and other District sponsored leadership workshops
- Attending Local and National Professional Development Conferences and Forums (including ISSN yearly conferences)

DCISM will leverage budget autonomies in order to incentivize faculty who are emerging in their leadership abilities and will direct professional development resources to support their continued growth.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS AND CAPACITY:

The District’s School Quality Framework section on leadership clearly supports the vision and mission of our school. The Framework for Effective School Leadership includes rubrics for cultural and equity leadership and instruction that are aligned with our international and cross-cultural focus. This resource from the District will expand leadership capacity and sets high expectations. Among these ~~latter~~ is the commitment to personal professional development specific to the unique instructional leadership required of the school.

The teacher, non-teaching staff, and assistant principal screening and hiring process will be conducted by school-based personnel with assistance from DPS Human Resources. The interview team for each new position will consist of DCISM school administration and teacher(s)/staff. Final hiring authority and decisions will be made by the principal after considering input from the interview team and obtaining proper reference checks.

The School Advisory Board and School Leadership Team will be consulted regarding identification of key characteristics and interview selection committee membership when hiring a new principal. In accordance with current DPS protocol, a finalist(s) will present at a community forum in order to provide input to the Superintendent of Schools who has final decision-making authority when hiring a new principal. It should be noted that the DPS Superintendent of Schools has the right to appoint a principal if that is deemed in the best interest of the school. In this event, the Superintendent is asked to clearly articulate why and how this decision was made at a public forum to which staff and parents are invited.

PERSONNEL POLICIES:

The following represents the employee procedures that will be implemented by DCISM.

- *DCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Article 7 – Grievance Provisions

DCISM will follow the District’s Basic Fairness and Due Process Guidelines in issuing formal corrective action.

Article 10 – Evaluations and Performance Improvement Plans

DCISM will continue to use the content of the LEAP Framework as the primary teacher performance and feedback tool but reserves the right to customize the LEAP evaluation process as follows. The school will not use prior LEAP scores earned at other schools as a basis for employment at DCISM. DCISM recognizes the value of multiple avenues of feedback and all teachers who are in their first

year at DCISM will have both building administrator as well as a peer observer LEAP observations during their first year (subject to district peer observer availability.) Teachers who are in their second or higher year at DCISM will have the opportunity to opt out of a peer observer LEAP observation if assigned one by the district. Teachers will not earn non-probationary status based on LEAP scores or any other measure. Ultimate decisions regarding continuation of employment at DCISM lies solely with the principal.

DCISM and the Denver Public Schools have the right to terminate employment from DCISM at any time in accordance with personnel policies in the DCISM Innovation Plan and Staff Handbook. However, it should be noted that if a teacher is not meeting performance expectations, the school leader may place the teacher on a Plan of Improvement. The Plan of Improvement will be written and will clearly articulate areas of improvement, supports provided, as well as a specified timeline of completion.

Plan for Improvement

When the school leader determines that a teacher is not meeting performance expectations, the Principal or Assistant Principal may choose to place the teacher on a Plan of Improvement. The duration of the plan of improvement will typically be thirty (30) days, but may be extended beyond the (30) days as determined by the Principal and/or Assistant Principal. The teacher will be required to show improvement under the Principal and/or Assistant Principal's supervision within the designated period of time. The plan of improvement will list the areas that the teacher will be required to improve on to the satisfaction of the Principal and/or Assistant Principal within a specified time frame.

Resources and supports may be made available to the teacher in an effort to assist the teacher in correcting the performance concerns by the Principal and/or Assistant principal. The teacher may be provided written feedback of observation and status meetings conducted during the plan of improvement timeframe. If, at the end of the plan, the principal deems, in his/her sole discretion, that the teacher has failed to make sufficient improvement, then the teacher may be dismissed from employment.

An improvement plan is not an entitlement or employment right. As stated in this plan and elsewhere, teachers at DCISM are at-will employees and can be terminated for any lawful reason, with or without an improvement plan.

Article 13 – Transfers/Reductions in Building

DCISM waives Article 13 to permit “real time hiring of teachers” – i.e. post positions and hire as vacancies become known. Hiring processes will be conducted by DCISM with assistance from the Human Resources Department. DCISM will not receive direct placement of teachers unless DCISM makes a reduction in building staff resulting in a teacher placed in the unassigned teacher pool. If DCISM needs to conduct a reduction in-building after the school year has begun, the principal has the authority to determine which positions and which individuals will be reduced from the building.

The principal can make this determination for any lawful reason, including performance and/or professionalism.

STATE STATUTES

22-63-202 - Contracts in Writing

DCISM teachers will be employed on an at will basis and not according to a contract. Any teacher who works at DCISM who intends to resign must give written notice to the school of his/her intention to resign at least 30 days prior to the last day the teacher intends to work. Failure to give proper notice may result in a reduction of pay.

22-63-302 - Procedures for Dismissal of Teachers and Judicial Review

All employees at DCISM are at-will employees. Whenever a teacher is dismissed during the school year, that teacher will be afforded the process outlined in DPS Policy GDQD/r for classified employees. However, GDQD/r does not apply to the school leader's decision at the end of a school year regarding which teachers will return to the school for the following school year.

GBEBA Staff Dress Code

In accordance with DCISM expectations, during the work day and any time employees attend work-related activities, employees shall appear in appropriate, professional dress. Examples of professional attire include, but are not limited to, collared shirts, dress slacks, dress coordinates, suits, dresses, ties, and sport coats. The following clothing items are not considered professional attire:

- Jeans, (unless it is "jeans day" for faculty on Fridays)
- Beach-style flip-flops
- Athletic shorts and t-shirts (except PE teacher or for afterschool clubs)
- Leggings, (unless your shirt or dress falls to mid-thigh)
- Short skirts or shorts
- Visible undergarments or excessive bare skin

Calendar Waiver (including Holidays/Breaks)

Refer to the DPS DSSN School Calendar for designated observed holidays and scheduled breaks. *Teachers may not take personal leave to extend a period of school intermission or used in conjunction with the observance of a Federal Holiday or Vacation Day.* The principal has the right to grant a Leave Without Pay Day (in exchange for a personal day) for extenuating circumstances. If a teacher takes a sick day attached to a holiday or vacation day, he/she may be required to provide a doctor's note. If a doctor's note is not provided, employee may be docked pay for the time they are absent from their professional responsibilities.

EVALUATION OF STAFF:

DCISM uses the LEAP evaluation system framework and observation tools for the school's performance management system. Each teacher is responsible for fully participating in school-wide

professional development units of study in pedagogy and content. Each year, individual teachers are additionally responsible for completing a professional learning plan linked to the school improvement goals and the LEAP Framework. Teachers meet with an assigned administrator and/or teacher leader to refine goals, review related LEAP rubrics and determine criteria for success. Building walkthroughs as well as partial observations form the basis of evaluation in addition to formal LEAP observations. Professional development, such as weekly staff meetings, 1:1 job-embedded coaching, data teams, book studies, learning walks, professional reading, feedback from administration and outside consultants, and online tools, support teachers in reaching their goals. Implementation of new practices will be monitored against student work and achievement results. This link is key to ensuring that the professional learning is implemented with fidelity and that teacher assessment and evaluation is clearly connected to student achievement results.

DCISM administrators use the DPS LEAP content for evaluating staff. Formal classroom observations are unannounced and feedback is provided during follow-up conferences and in writing. Additional data is collected and feedback provided during ongoing informal classroom observations, data team observations, team planning observations, professional development meeting observations, parent conference observations, etc. The teacher evaluation body of evidence also includes student perception data, professionalism standards, and student outcomes. A final summative evaluation measure is determined by the principal or principal designee (i.e. assistant principal). The evaluation schedule includes, at a minimum, one "formal" administrator observation with written feedback and if assigned by the district, two "formal" peer observations with feedback. (See evaluation of teacher above.)

Coaching, feedback from administration and other recommended supports help teachers grow and improve towards specific goals; however, it is ultimately the teacher's responsibility to show growth with the supports provided. Continued employment is contingent upon adequate growth in student achievement and instructional pedagogy as well as professionalism and implementation of the innovation plan. DCISM retains the right to dismiss employees for unsatisfactory performance for any reason at any time. Dismissal decisions will be in accordance with the school's at-will employment policy.

EVALUATION OF NON-TEACHING STAFF:

Non-teaching Staff will be evaluated using the DPS standard evaluation procedures and timelines. All DCISM educators are expected to be active participants in professional learning communities that are charged with fostering a strong, evolving clarity about the DCISM vision and mission. DCISM non-teaching staff plays a critical role in contributing to a school-wide consistency of the basic international studies learning frameworks and school atmosphere for students, and for ensuring continuity of service and support as well as in providing extended and student-driven learning opportunities. Non-teaching staff includes:

- The Office Manager, secretarial staff, administrative assistants, and Communications Director play a critical role in providing exemplary customer service and providing a check and balance to ensure the integrity and consistency of attendance and course progress data.
- The school social worker and other mental health professionals will play a critical role in ensuring the high quality implementation of tier two and three behavior interventions in the DCISM Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system. They will serve as mental health advocates for students, staff and families.
- The school advisor/Dean will provide proactive and reactive response to student behavior incidents and needs. This position will also provide teachers and staff with ongoing support in effective management and discipline practices.
- School paraprofessionals will provide both instructional and management support and supervision.
- Technology specialists will assist in both the maintenance and ordering of technology as well as overall development and integration of technology into the instructional programming.
- Math Fellows and a Math Fellows Coordinator will provide instructional support to supplement the core academic program.
- DCISM will continue to utilize independent contracts to expand and target student services and support as well as professional development for staff.
- DCISM has relationships with multiple community-based organizations who will be co-facilitating career and interest explorations that will provide students with concrete examples for how their unique skills and interests translate into adult work in the real world.

DCISM will continue to broaden school staffing to potentially include youth development specialists, instructional coaches, virtual mentors, etc. based on student and/or staff need. All DCISM non-teaching staff will have opportunities to collaborate with faculty in order to provide a coherent, personalized standard of service and support for all students. DCISM believes that by fully integrating the non-teaching staff in providing academic and social emotional supports, ALL students' likelihood of success will increase. Innovation status provides the necessary flexibility to think creatively about non-teaching staff roles and responsibilities and to direct their energies to specific student needs.

IDENTIFYING AND RECRUITING TOP TALENT:

DCISM's primary identification strategy involves leveraging our District resources as well as national and international networks with schools and organizations that share our mission and vision. These networks include ISSN, Peace Corps, Teach for America, BluePrint, and the Partnership for 21st Century Learning. Once identified, candidates are provided with a verbal overview of our mission, vision, approach to teaching and learning, and robust professional development system. The DCISM website (www.dcismontbello.org) provides additional information for candidates in need of additional information. All postings will include desired characteristics and qualifications specific to

positions at DCISM as an international studies school.

It is important for teachers and Math Fellows to have some level of cultural competency related to our student demographics and to be comfortable working with English Language Learners and special needs students. Teachers should have global competencies and experiences that support and extend our international focus. Education or career related expertise in the content is preferred.

Like all critical decision—making at DCISM, the faculty selection process is shared. Interview teams include administration, teacher(s) and/or non-teaching staff. Final decisions for hiring will be made by the principal.

SELECTION CRITERIA

DCISM is committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty, staff, and administration. In order to realize the DCISM mission and vision, all educators will be identified based on their proven track record.

INCENTIVE AND REWARDS SYSTEM

As a primary incentive for all educators in the school, the DCISM administration is committed to providing a respectful, high—functioning, collegial climate and culture that includes powerful relationships with students and families. Additionally, we are committed to leveraging innovation status in order to create the systems and structures to maximize efficiency through embedded planning structures, which will allow for our faculty and staff to maintain a healthy life/work balance.

In partnership with the DCIS Foundation and other partners, DCISM faculty may have opportunities to travel abroad both with and without students during their tenure at the school. During these excursions, faculty will be asked to design standards-based units of study that incorporate travel experiences, global perspectives, and resources to expand the student learning experience.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:

Job-embedded staff development is an expectation at DCISM. All classroom teachers are expected to participate in one grade-level or content meeting per day and to work collaboratively with colleagues to plan for weekly instruction, including integrated units of study framed by the GPS cycle (See attachment for a schematic of the GPS cycle). Daily common team planning time is to be used for this purpose. Additionally, many teachers are involved in individual or group coaching based on teacher leader and administrator schedules. Professional Development focuses on the development of teacher understandings and practice that will impact student achievement.

Ongoing professional development is provided during summer retreats, weekly staff meetings afterschool, common daily plan times, and on designated “Green Days” and early outs. Professional

Development areas of focus may include: ISSN Modules, Short Cycle Assessments (SCAN), Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), ELL best practices, Content specific topics, Culture of Excellence best practices, and Integrated Units of Study.

DCISM's professional culture is driven by the belief that adults must develop common understandings for consistency across the school and also have personalized learning experiences. DCISM administration is committed to directing professional development to specific teacher needs as much as possible. DCISM administration will minimize confusion and increase productivity through consistent implementation of embedded time for planning, peer observations, analyzing student data, developing student interventions, celebrating victories, and keeping one another accountable for our commitments. Lastly, DCISM will maintain a growth orientation towards all learners that is honest about the data, but non—judgmental and solution focused. DCISM expects for our personalized and professional adult culture to have a direct and positive impact on sustained student growth. Professional Development focuses on using data to inform instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Administrators and teachers determine the high—yield instructional strategies that will lead to increased proficiency. To support ELL learners, teachers will discuss how to modify these high—yield strategies to make them more comprehensible for ELL learners (i.e. graphic organizers, sentence starters, oral rehearsal, modified content text, cooperative learning).

The administrative team meets frequently (currently weekly) with both District and Blueprint leadership. The Blueprint consultant team currently visits our building once every six weeks to monitor progress on prescribed next steps, meet with teachers and students for building climate level feedback, and provide tiered building level suggestions. Lead in Denver provides one—on—one leadership coaching for the principal and the principal resident. In addition to coaching, District level department partners from DSSN Assessment Support, Human Resources, Budget, and Legal provide high quality support. [Additional support requested from the district includes: building level instructional coaching support \(TECs\) as well as an expedited curriculum waiver process.](#)

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT

GOVERNANCE:

As stated in the DCISM mission statement, we believe it is the combined responsibility of teachers, parents, students and community members to create a safe and stimulating school environment. Supporting this mission requires a focused, participatory, and streamlined governance structure.

The original innovation plan indicates one combined school advisory board and leadership team. However, our current practice and our plan for this innovation plan renewal is two separate groups. Our School Leadership Team (SLT) is comprised of

teachers and administrators who meet weekly to make school-based decisions related to curriculum, instruction, and professional development, including the creation and monitoring of the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). Our School Advisory Board (SAB) is comprised of parents, community members, teachers, administrators, and staff members. This SAB serves to advise school administration as it relates to the innovation plan, implementation of our vision and mission, budgeting, staffing, and our UIP. As we see opportunities to utilize our innovation status to maximize student achievement and progress toward our mission and vision, we go to these teams for support. For example, we recently went to our SAB with a proposed calendar change that would allow for more professional development days to support teacher learning around the implementation of our international mission and vision. The School Advisory Board meets monthly (and as needed); the School Leadership Team meets weekly.

School Leadership Team

Our SLT currently includes teachers across all grade levels and content areas and administrators. The SLT will be involved in the implementation of the innovation plan as well as the renewal and revision of this plan.

Key responsibilities of the SLT include:

- Monitoring growth of the school instructionally/academically along its intended international studies vision, mission, and design
- Distributing leadership opportunities beyond administration
- Analyzing student achievement data
- Planning and facilitating professional development
- Monitoring and revising unified improvement plan and innovation plan
- Monitoring the effective and efficient use of staff time
- Making instructional decisions for the DCISM staff and students

School Advisory Board

The SAB serves as a representative voice to provide school leadership with multiple perspectives when making decisions related specifically to the implementation of our vision, budget and staffing as well as the innovation plan. Terms for all elected and appointed candidates will be one (1) year. In the event that there is not a significant number of candidates, those candidates who did express an interest and have met the requirements, will automatically be appointed to the Board. If additional representation is needed, we will reach out to parents and recruit members to serve on School Advisory Board. In the event that we receive extensive interest in this committee, and in accordance with Colorado State Law, we will hold a vote as follows: Teachers will be elected by teachers. Non-teaching staff member will be elected by non-teaching staff. Students will be elected by students. Parents will be elected by parents.

The membership includes:

The school principal, assistant principal, at least 2 middle school parent representatives, at least 2 high school parent representatives, 1 community leader/business owner, at least 1 middle school level teacher representative, at least 1 high school level teacher representative, at least 1 non-teaching staff member, 1 middle school student representative, and 1 high school student representative.

The SAB is strongly committed to reaching decisions by consensus; if consensus cannot be reached decisions will be made by a simple majority vote. All SAB members agree to work together, understand and respect many points of view, and come to acceptable agreement on issues.

Please see attached School Advisory Board By-Laws.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT:

The DCISM learning model is one that is founded on strong collaboration and communication at all levels and with all stakeholders. To this end DCISM has hired a full-time Director of Communications who has administrative authority and accountability for implementing the DCISM communications strategy. It is important to us that our family engagement strategy a) recognizes that there are often extended family members who are significant adult caretakers of our students, b) that it is co-designed and co-created by parents, family members, students, and school staff; c) it embodies the school's core values and global leadership outcomes, and d) that it is built on a foundation of accessibility, accountability, and inclusivity (three tenets of our overall communications work.) As a team, parents, family members, and DCISM staff will work together to provide the following opportunities for parents to be engaged with their child's academic success:

- Parent Action Teams (teacher and staff appreciation, fundraising, office help, parent education, school advisory board, DSSN parent ambassador program)
- Post Secondary Readiness informational events
- Informal meetings with the DCISM leadership team (e.g. breakfast with the Principal)
- Celebrations of Learning
- Parent Appreciation Days
- Classroom Project Open House sessions
- Fun events for parents and teachers to interact (e.g. ice cream social)
- Parent Portal

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

Key to our success as a college and career prep international studies school are the community-based organizations (CBOs) partnering with DCISM to support the innovative and dynamic education model espoused by the school.

We will continue to seek partners who can support DCISM and its students in the following key areas:

- Post Secondary Readiness
- International and intercultural awareness and competence
- Technology competence
- Life skills
- Travel opportunities
- Social and emotional well-being

Current partners include:

- Denver Center for International Studies Foundation
- International Studies Schools Network (ISSN)
- Denver Scholarship Foundation
- Denver Kids
- Beacons
- NULITES
- Global Explorers
- World Strides
- World Denver
- PEAK Resources
- Walmart Mi Futuro Program
- CompuGirls
- Prologis

BUDGET

BUDGET:

DCISM will continue to follow all DPS financial policies with the goal of maintaining a sustainable school model that integrates international studies and new media. In order to ensure success for students and staff, funding for technology refreshment and professional development in technology integration and internationalizing curriculum is critical. DCISM works alongside the DCIS Foundation, the International Studies Schools Network, and multiple community-based organizations in order to develop grants and business partnerships. Moving forward, DCISM will continue to work with teachers, students, and community members to develop innovative business partnerships that will provide revenue for DCISM programming. DCISM wants to continue to have autonomy to form direct Memoranda of Understandings with community and/or business organizations subject to DPS oversight.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES:

The budget is allocated from per pupil funding (SBB), Title I, Title II and Mill Levy dollars. Revenue that is not represented in the five—year model includes in—kind and fiscal contributions from community—based partners who are collaborating with DCISM to provide the extended learning opportunities.

ADDITIONAL OPERATING COSTS:

The District is partnering with Blueprint Schools Network to implement five tenets at DCISM that constitute a comprehensive strategy for school reform. DCISM believes that these tenets will produce significant gains in student achievement. Included in this budget are three tenets: An extended school year, an extended school day, and an intensive tutoring program.

The School is prepared to modify the above three tenets to respond to unforeseen budget restrictions. For example, the tutoring program may target a subset of the student population, student to tutor ratios may increase or the weekly calendar may include fewer days that are extended by an hour.

COST SAVINGS AND INCREASED EFFICIENCIES:

Budgeting on actuals allows DCISM to target funds potentially saved on salaries/benefits to more effectively meet the overall budgetary needs of the school including: hiring additional staff, purchasing support curriculum such as classroom libraries, enhancing technology hardware and software, and providing travel opportunities for students and staff.

The primary driver for increased efficiency in the DCISM model are the expanded learning structures and practices that happen within the school. DCISM’s robust relationships with community partners including Blueprint Schools and Beacons creates a mutually beneficial and sustainable model for expanded student learning opportunities as well as collaborative opportunities for securing additional outside funding.

DCISM retains the flexibility in current and future years to “opt—out” of certain District—provided services using the District OSRI opt out menu to ensure that the school receives the highest quality of service for the lowest cost, maximizing the impact of resources.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:

The DCISM principal will directly manage and oversee the school’s budget. Ongoing financial support is provided by District financial partners who meet regularly with DCISM administration and the Office Manager, who oversees the technical aspects of the budget. Both administration and the Office Manager attend annual budget training on the current DPS financial systems and procedures. At least once a year the DCISM SLT and SAB will provide feedback on the developing staffing and budget plan for the school in order to provide accountability mechanisms necessary

to implement our financial plan with fidelity to the school design and its priorities. When necessary, the SAB will advise in determining appropriate mid—course corrections.

OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICIES, OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS

DCISM does not have any other further innovations to explain at this time.

WAIVERS

As stated in Appendix E, the Innovation School Act (22-32.5-108(4)) states that “each district of innovation that receives a waiver ... shall specify the manner in which the innovation school ... shall comply with the intent of the waived statute or rules and shall be accountable to the state for such compliance.” For each state waiver, specify how the school intends to comply with intent of the statutes being waived.

Formatted: Right

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACULTY SUPPORT

Please see attached letters of support.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Please see attached letters of support.

REQUIRED AND ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Required Attachments:

- ✓ 2013-2014 Calendar
- ✓ Teacher Schedule
- ✓ Student Schedule
- ✓ Student Enrollment Agreement
 - ✓ Parent/Student Handbook
- ✓ Staff Handbook
- ✓ Organizational Chart
- ✓ Committee Descriptions and By Laws
- ✓ Five-Year Budget
- ✓ Evidence of Administrative Support
- ✓ Evidence of Faculty Support (forthcoming in the form of a vote)
- ✓ Letter of Support from School Advisory Board

- ✓ Letter of Support from Leadership Team
- ✓ Letters of Support from Community Based Organizations

Additional Attachments:

- ✓ ISSN School Design Matrix Summary
- ✓ DCISM Culture of Excellence
- ✓ GPS Cycle Overview

APPENDIX A
Request Waivers in Curricular Materials & Instructional Design
Not Applicable.

APPENDIX B
Request Alternative Benchmark Assessment Program
Not Applicable.

APPENDIX C
Request Alternative Graduation & Promotion Standards

Schools requesting waivers from DPS's graduation and promotion standards are required to complete the questions in Appendix C.

Waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or promotion and graduation policies are granted by the Chief Academic Office, the Instructional Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. Requests for waivers in this application will be forwarded to the CAO and appropriate IS for review.

1. Explain the school's policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Describe how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.

DCISM students will be promoted from one grade to the next after having earned an overall Proficient rating or passing grade and required High School credit for each of their courses. DCISM will be coordinating with ISSN and DSSN in order to develop the systems and processes required for calibrating teacher scoring of student work and ensuring the rigor of students' performance assessments.

DCISM will also implement an acceleration and intervention system to ensure that students matriculate with their cohort and are on-track to graduate. For students progressing more quickly DCISM plans to offer APEX end of course exams where- in a student achieving 80% mastery or better will be awarded course credit and accelerated to the next stage in that subject area's course sequence. Advanced placement classes and college concurrent enrollment courses will also be offered.

Reading, math, ELD, and special education intervention classes will be offered to students in need of remediation or acceleration. APEX and other credit recovery options as well as college credited remediation classes will also be available for high school students who fail required high school level courses. Parents and students will be notified immediately if there is need for remediation or acceleration.

The DCISM promotion and graduation requirements will be available for parents and students to consider on the DCISM website at www.dcismontbello.org. New families who are considering DCISM as an option for their student(s) will have opportunities to discuss the graduation and promotion criteria with DCISM faculty and administration during a series of community open houses to be held from November through February each year.

2. Provide the school's exit standards for graduating students. Exit standards should clearly set forth what students in the last grade you anticipate serving will know and be able to do.

DCISM will receive a DPS high school diploma that is issued to all students satisfying the high school graduation requirements for Denver Public Schools.

DCISM high school students who also wish to obtain the DCISM International Studies Diploma School (in addition to the DPS high school diploma) will be expected to compile a Graduate Portfolio that includes portfolio-worthy performance tasks from each high school level course. All students are expected to take a world language course every year. All students are expected to complete a graduate level Passages project, which is an extensive, student-driven project spanning each of the core disciplines and lasting an entire semester and a panel of peers and adult professionals evaluates the Passages projects. Students completing all requirements of the school at the end of high school will be awarded the Diploma of International Studies, which is already established at the current DCIS.

3. Explain how graduation and/or promotion requirements will ensure student readiness for college and other postsecondary opportunities.

DCISM graduation and promotion requirements equip all DCISM graduates with the social and academic skills to succeed in the postsecondary option of their choice. In addition, the expectation for portfolio-worthy work in each class provides students with evidence of how they have embraced and transformed their learning in a way that is personally meaningful, and that demonstrates their global competency in the Four Domains across disciplines. In addition, experiential learning, travel, new media study, and multilingualism provides DCISM graduates with the competitive edge necessary for securing competitive positions in their chosen college or career.

4. If it differs from DPS, explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed those required by DPS Policy IKF, explain any additional requirements.

DCISM will utilize current processes in order to calculate grade-point averages and create transcripts. DCISM would hope to be part of any district-supported pilots in the area of proficiency-based grading at both the middle school and high school level.

All DCISM graduates earning the DCISM International Studies Diploma are expected to:

- Take science, social studies, and a world language every year.
- Demonstrate mastery in their Passages projects.
- Compile and present a comprehensive, web-based Graduate Portfolio.

The DCISM SAB will engage in a process in order to determine whether or not additional criteria such as travel, and/or concurrent enrollment will be added to the DCISM international diploma graduation policy.

APPENDIX D
DCISM School Performance Framework Goal Setting Worksheet

DPS School Performance Framework Indicators	Innovation School Annual Achievement Goals and Measures
Academic Performance & Success	
<p>Student Growth Over Time Toward State Standards, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> CSA and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act 	<p>DCISM expects Individual student growth of more than 1.5 years in all content areas in addition to school-wide growth and increased academic achievement in all content areas, every year. DCISM expects that by its third year of this innovation plan renewal to earn an overall designation of “exceeding” on SPF.</p>
<p>Student Achievement Level/Status, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> TCAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, Special Education, and ethnic subgroups) 	<p>DCISM will increase status scores on State Assessments by 6-10% points per year. DCISM will achieve an overall MGP of 60% or higher in each subject and grade each year.</p>
<p>Post-Secondary Readiness (for high schools), including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado ACT scores <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation rate <input type="checkbox"/> College acceptance rate 	<p>DCISM expects that 100% of every graduating class will have a) earned college credit hours, b) will meet or exceed State ACT averages, c) will be accepted to more than one college, d) will matriculate to a postsecondary option after graduation.</p>
<p>Student Engagement, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance rate • Student satisfaction 	<p>DCISM expects to sustain a 92% attendance rate or greater and to rate in the top 5% in the state for student satisfaction.</p>

Comment [MC1]: These appear to be your original goals from the innovation plan. Do you want to drop in updated goals?

School-Specific Educational Objectives (must be based on valid, reliable measures)	DCIS expects to achieve proficiency in all 39 areas of the six categories of the International Studies school design rubric by the third year of this innovation plan renewal.
Organizational & Financial Viability	
School Demand, including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment rate Re-enrollment rate Continuous enrollment rate 	As an option in the far northeast choice process, DCIS will have a 100% enrollment rate. DCIS expects to maintain a 90% or better re-enrollment rate and continuous enrollment rate.
Financial Fundraising goals Reserves Other	DCIS expects to maintain a \$300,000-\$500,000 funding stream in addition to SBB to support one-to-one technology, student travel, extended day learning, and professional services. This will include funding from partner organizations.
Leadership & Governance Quality	As a turnaround school, DCIS is subject to leadership evaluations by DPS and Blueprint Schools Network.
Parent & Community Engagement, including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent satisfaction Parent response rate on DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey 	DCIS expects to be the flagship school on parent and community engagement metrics with high levels of satisfaction in DPS.
School-Specific Organizational Objectives	DCIS will use ISSN metrics around multiple organizational objectives including program implementation, student empowerment, quality management, and data integrity.

Appendix E
Waiver Requests

Please see attached Board Policy, State Statutory, and DCTA Waivers for DCISM.