

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Great Mills High School

Great Mills High School is the oldest high school in southern Maryland opening our doors in 1929. The school's rich and proud tradition of serving a diverse school community that meets the academic, social, and emotional needs of its students is a source of pride and accomplishment. The school carries on that tradition of diversity, serving a student body that is 56% minority (36%-AA, 7% Hispanic, 7%- 2 or more races, 44%--white). The current student enrollment is 1533 students. We have a 40% FARMs rate and 9.5% of our students receive special education services. The four-year graduation rate has been over 91% for the past two years, which is a direct result of the dedication and continue efforts of our teachers and staff. Our current five-year graduation rate is 93.7%.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

Great Mills High School	Targeted Strategies
Graduation rate	The school goal for the graduation rate for sy16 will be 93% or higher for all students on time graduation (four year). Each instructional department will develop strategies to improve students success towards the graduation rate.
School Climate	The goal for the school is to increase the level of engagement of all stakeholders: students, staff, parents, and community members. Strategies to better engage all stakeholders would be the use of the Principal's Bulletin for staff, monthly PD faculty meetings, the principal's advisory committee, the incorporation of the SIP plan into the department goals and vision, and to conduct community info nights throughout the school year. Additionally, the school will communicate through the use of weekly phone outs, the electronic sign, and social media (twitter).
School attendance	The school goal during the sy16 school year for attendance will be 95% or higher for all students. Strategies to be used include bi-weekly meetings of the "Student Resource Team", regular attendance checks, home visits, and regular communication efforts.

OVERVIEW

Our Department: Career & Technology Education (CTE)

The CTE Department consists of many diverse subjects to meet GMHS mandatory and elective needs. Courses taught for 2015/2016 school year include: Foundations of Technology, Foundations of Computer Science, Pre-Engineering 1 and 2, Principle Business Administration Management, Business Administration 1 and 2, Child Development 1 and 2, Personal Living, Foods and Nutrition Science, Computer Applications in Finance and Data, CRD 1 and 2, Computer Science Principles, and NJROTC. All CTE teachers have earned a Master's Degree or Advanced Professional Certificate.

Our Focus Areas:

College and Career Ready assessments, course midterms and final exams, course pass rate and failure rate. Preparing students for the real world in education, business, and personal living. Focus on appropriate and acceptable behavior in classrooms, hallways, on the job, volunteer work, and internships. Increase CTE elective classes – Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and Business Law.

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<p>Many students do not have internet at home and have a hard time going to the library to use the internet.</p> <p>CTE Staff members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create lessons that can be completed during school time • Create lessons that promote problem solving skills • Create lessons that require higher level thinking skills • Provide complex, nonfiction reading materials to promote reading for information and to solve a problem • Create workshops, clubs, and tutoring during the one hour lunch • Electronic technology improvements • Promote CTE elective classes throughout the school year <p>CTE staff members will work with the GMHS counselors and CTE Supervisors to participate in vertical articulation with middle school staff (counselors) to promote programs and proper placement.</p>
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<p>CTE staff members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and use reliable methods of recording interventions • Contact parents relating to academic progress and school/class attendance • Assign department detention as appropriate • Continue to encourage CTE students to complete the free and reduced lunch application • Create workshops, clubs, and tutoring during the one hour lunch

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

- Monthly PLC and Department discussions
- Curriculum meetings with CTE Supervisor
- PD to develop department rubric to evaluate projects – presentation and written format

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

- Utilize the Universal Systems Model for project evaluations
- Utilize a common rubric for evaluating student projects
- Feedback from administrators throughout the school year
- Align pre-tests and post-tests with objectives

Our Projected Results:

- Improve reading, writing, problem solving, and presentation skills for students enrolled in all CTE classes
- All students will earn 70% or better on EOC
- Positive feedback from teachers
- Reduce discipline referrals
- Increase attendance

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

English Department:

The GMHS English Department currently has 12 teachers who teach required and elective courses in the content area. Additionally, 5 special education co-teachers provide instructional support for selected classes.

Courses offered this year are: English 9/90, English 9 Standard, English 9 CM, PreAP English 9, English 10 Standard, English 10 CM, PreAP English 10, English 11 Standard, English 11 CM, AP English Language and Composition, English 12 Standard, English 12 CM, AP English Literature and Composition, Mythology, Publications, and Yearbook.

This year, we are in the first full year of implementing new curricula for PreAP English 9 and 10. We also are piloting new curricula for English 11 Standard and English 12 Standard.

English Department Teachers:

- Jeanette Offenbacher, Department Chair
- Erik Dionne
- Marjorie Foley
- Christine Halloran
- Barry Hendricks
- Julie Metz
- Daniel Morris
- Shelby Mullennix
- Rebecca Persad
- Sarah Stephenson
- Will Stevens
- Maria Weber

Special Education Co-Teachers:

- Fred Anthony
- Amy Day
- Paula Harris
- Emily Matthews
- Carl VanDunk

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	School-wide Goal: Foster a climate of academic honesty. Specific strategies:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement the Academic Honor Code for students to sign at the beginning of the school year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduce Academic Honor Code to Grade 9 students in English classes. ○ Review and reinforce the Academic Honor Code in English classes as students progress through Grade 10, 11, and 12. ○ Promote the Academic Honor Code across all disciplines. ● The Media Specialist will implement a program with 10th graders on academic dishonesty, to attain statistics on students' prior knowledge of plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and to make them aware of SMCPs and college consequences. ● As part of the implementation of new Pre-AP English curriculum, the Media Specialist will be working with the English teachers to examine the extent to which using Turnitin has impacted student plagiarism behavior. The Media Specialist also will determine the extent to which students' understanding of the concepts of plagiarism and academic dishonesty has been impacted by the use of Turnitin as part of their overall school learning experiences. <p>English Language Arts School Improvement Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase student achievement on reading complex texts through continuing emphasis on close reading strategies and vocabulary development. ● Foster student perseverance and independence through the use of independent reading of challenging texts, vocabulary development programs (like Membean), as well as strategies for organization, metacognition, and self-advocacy. ● Increase student achievement on writing through continuing emphasis on best practices, use of common rubrics, and technology that facilitates peer and instructor feedback.
<p>Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions</p>	<p>Use bibliotherapy strategies (study of selected poetry, short fiction, novels, and plays) designed to develop social and emotional behaviors and foster a climate of mutual understanding, inclusion, and respect.</p> <p>As part of the ELA curriculum, foster active listening skills and appropriate use of language (i.e., diction, tone) when communicating.</p> <p>Actively practice positive behavior strategies for classroom management, including using more inclusive language and respect when interacting with students.</p> <p>Refer students to the peer mediation program, when appropriate, to help them use peer-to-peer resources to de-escalate situations and resolve conflicts.</p>

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

- Continue grade-level PLC to focus on sharing best practices, collaborative scoring of student work using rubrics, and identifying strategies/interventions to promote increased student achievement
- Continue Pre-AP-AP PLC to focus on implementation of new curriculum for Pre-AP courses in English 9 and English 10
- Monthly department meetings will include sharing best practices, with a focus on instructional technologies and Common Core.

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

- PLC and Department Meeting Minutes
- Quarterly examination of student performance assessments (close reading, writing) that are aligned with Common Core and PARCC expectations in both PLC meetings and meetings with Instructional Supervisor

Our Projected Results:

- Increased student achievement on critical reading and writing tasks

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department: Fine Arts Department

The GMHS Fine Arts Department has eight teachers; four in the performing arts and 4 in visual arts. The department also sponsors a National Arts Honor Society with approximately 30 members that meets weekly after school. For SY16, the department is offering two AP courses; AP Studio and AP Art History.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Choose and employ vocabulary and diction appropriately for enhancing written, auditory and visual literacy. (MCCR Literacy)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. apply appropriate domain-specific vocabulary when communicating about specific content - music, theater and visual artsb. Implementation of CARS (Close Analytical Reading Strategies)2. Interpret and communicate information from technology to answer complex questions:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. evaluate and integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats (MCCR STEM)b. communicate effectively and precisely with others3. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences as students create art (NCAS-CN10.1)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Proficient - Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideasb. Accomplished - Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art makingc. Advanced - Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design4. Identify, analyze and synthesize appropriate fine art concepts as a means of formative assessments referring to art criticism (visual arts) and individual and group performance assessments (performing arts)
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Set consistent policies for parent communication, electronic device usage, and attendance/tardiness policies and classroom expectations2. Explore extra safe schools training including de-escalation strategies3. Be familiar and implement J-Regs and COMAR to provide safety

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

Meet monthly in PLC and Department meetings to discuss lesson planning, units and strategies
Technology PD in both performing and visual arts

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

PLC and Department Meetings
Quarterly examination of student progress on vocabulary and Art assessments

Our Projected Results:

Increased passing rate for students enrolled in Fine Arts classes
Increase the number of students enrolling in upper level Art classes (Chorus 2; Theater 2, 3, & 4,
Photography and all AP Fine Art classes

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department: This Department offers 22 math courses to meet the needs of every GMHS student. Six courses are offered for potential college credit: three (Algebra 3, PreCalculus, and Calculus CM) through dual enrollment with CSM, and three (Calculus AB, Calculus BC, and Statistics) through AP exams. Additionally, we offer 4 options for Algebra 1: one year, 45 minutes per day; one year, 45 minutes per day with an additional 45 minutes per day of math seminar; one year, 90 minutes per day; and 2 years, 45 minutes per day. For Geometry, Algebra 2 and PreCalculus, we offer both CM and Honors levels. There are 13 math teachers in the department, and 2 special education teachers who support math classes. All teachers in the department are highly qualified.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas: PARCC assessments, College and Career Ready assessments, SAT/ACT scores, course midterms and finals, course pass rate and failure rate, senior failures that impact graduation, behavior in the classrooms and hallways.

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align end-of-course and unit assessments with college board standards (objectives)• IXL for skill mastery to close the gap between the higher and lower achieving students• 21st Century Grant to provide free math tutoring for students after school.• Reassign quarterly duty: math teachers spend duty assisting students with math curriculum in APEX.• Peer tutoring program: volunteers to tutor math during lunch on scheduled basis. Volunteers earn student service hours.• Technology improvements: revise calculator rental agreement; install TI-84 software on laptops; encourage installation of free TI-84 apps on mobile devices.
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math department policies and procedures:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Develop and use an easy, reliable method of recording interventions.○ Develop and support a classroom pass policy that requires all students to sign out from class and back in, with times noted.• Math classrooms will keep some closed packs of snacks for students who indicate that hunger is affecting their performance/behavior.• Math teachers will notify counselors and PPWs of students with more than 10 absences in one marking period.

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

- Review College Board standards & objectives within PLC
- Training and strategies for effective use of IXL data to support instruction and remediation
- Identify school that currently has a peer tutoring program and solicit information for startup and development
- Research available software and apps to make the TI-84 more readily accessible.

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

- Align pre-tests and post-tests with objectives
- Built in IXL reports
- Feedback from math teachers throughout the school year.
- Feedback from administrators throughout the school year.

Our Projected Results:

- All students will earn 70% or better on EOC
- Reductions of achievement gap; increase post-test scores
- Increased calculator proficiency
- Positive feedback from math teachers
- Increased student interest in participating in the program in 2016-2017
- Increased number of students passing all math classes.
- Reduction in discipline referrals
- Reduction in number of incidents in and around math classrooms
- Increased attendance

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department:

Our physical education department of four includes instructors for coursework in physical education, health, team sports, athletic conditioning 1 and athletic conditioning II.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will demonstrate the ability to use motor skill principles to learn and develop proficiency through frequent practice opportunities in which skills are repeatedly performed correctly in a variety of situations.• Students will demonstrate the ability to use scientific principles to design and participate in a regular, moderate to vigorous physical activity program that contributes to personal health and enhances cognitive and physical performance on a variety of academic, recreational, and life tasks.• Students will demonstrate the ability to enhance their performance of a variety of physical skills by developing fundamental movement skills, creating original skill combinations, combining skills effectively in skill themes, and applying skills.
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students who fall in the poverty level will not fail due to their inability to have clothes to change into as long as they are physically active in the unit.• Continue to allow students who are tardy to participate in class.• Make up work for excused absences will be allowed in all Physical Education/Health classes.

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

- Analyze how force is effectively applied to projectiles
- Evaluate the components of the FITT guidelines to adjust levels of physical activity.
- Develop and critique creative skill combinations in a variety of physical activities.

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

- Distinguish and demonstrate how projection speed and projection angle are related to accuracy such as: striking a soccer ball or throwing a football.
- Justify activities chosen to improve or maintain specific skill-related fitness components agility, balance, coordination, reaction time, speed, and power as part of a personal fitness plan.
- Justify and use different concepts and strategies for each category of strategic games (net/wall, invasion, striking/fielding, and target activities) such as: offensive and defensive strategies or on and off the ball movements.

Our Projected Results:

- Demonstrate how changing the projection angle influences throwing distance achieved.
- Defend orally, or in writing, a personal fitness plan based on a fitness assessment and fitness goals.
- Complete a speaking or writing assignment on activities that improve health-related fitness.

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department:

The Science Department currently has 13 teachers. The class sizes within our department range from 20-27 students per class. The general courses offered within are department consist of Biology 1, Biology 2, Chemistry 1, Earth/ Space Science, Environmental Science, Explorations in Science, Physics 1, Geology and Astronomy. The Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered include Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics 1, Physics 2 and Physics C. Our department also includes the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program. These students are required to take Chemistry, Biology, and Physics 1 with engineering as well as 2 AP science classes.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<p>Examine the use of Next Generation Science Standard resources in science and modify curriculum materials and assessments in Biology, Chemistry and Earth/Space Science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● During PLC's share Close Analytical Reading strategies with text and lessons using the Science and Engineering Practices of developing and using models.● Regularly implement MD CCR Disciplinary Literacy Text with questions using both SMCPs, NGSS and MSDE resources● Implement the analytical reading response rubrics with the information text readings and writings in all science classes
	<p>Implement the use of a common performance rubric to assess student laboratory skill growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The department will create a common rubric that will serve as a tool to analyze student growth of laboratory skills and technical writing enhancement.
	<p>Continue developing instructional strategies that support the STEM Standards of Practice to incorporate the 21 st Century Skills needed for students to be college and career ready.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Continue using performance tasks that incorporate the STEM Standards of Practice and prepare students with the skills needed to be 21 st century learners.● PD focusing on knowledge, alignment and implementation of the NGSS and integration of STEM FOR ALL.● Science teachers will continue to develop and implement inquiry and model based lessons and activities aimed at developing critical thinking of global issues, challenges, and real world problems.
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<p>Create a Department wide behavior management plan that teachers can implement to address level 1 and 2 behaviors within the classroom.</p>

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

PD aligning curriculum with NGSS

PD for developing Model based activities

Become more familiar with the resources available through SMCPs, NGSS and MSDE

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

PM data for Pre/ Post assessments and Performance based tasks

Formative and summative assessment data shared in PLC's

Our Projected Results:

To become more familiar with NGSS performance expectations and their alignment with the current curriculum in Biology, Chemistry and Earth/Space Science. Also for students to become more proficient with common laboratory practices used in all science classes.

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department:

The Social Studies Department offers a wide variety of academic courses including five AP courses. Graduation required courses are offered in multiple levels of US History, Government, and World History. Electives include Psychology, Global Diplomacy, Economics, AP American History, AP US Government and Politics, AP Comparative Government, AP World History, and AP Psychology. These courses are split between ten highly qualified educators.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

Social Studies	Targeted Strategies
Graduation rate	Goal 1: Teachers will maintain TAC updating it regularly and accurately. Teachers will do bi-weekly checks of TAC and speak with under-performing students, continuing to encourage them. Teachers will continue to inform students and parents about HAC and encourage regular monitoring of their students' grades. Students will be given the opportunity to review their grade with the teacher if they do not have internet access.
School Climate	Goal 2: Social Studies teachers will continue to enforce school rules inside the areas of instruction to promote a safe and secure learning environment. Strategies for dealing with level one and level two infractions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy #1: Parent contact and documentation • Strategy #2: Teachers will help facilitate the learning of appropriate emotional responses through proximity control: preferential seating, teacher-selected groups • Strategy #3: Teachers will show consistent respect to students while redirecting: using non-verbal cues, verbal cues
School attendance	Goal 3: Teachers will continue to reinforce the importance of class attendance and its correlation to academic success. Teachers will continue to stand outside their classrooms to welcome students into a positive learning environment. Teachers will enter accurate student attendance daily.
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	Initiative #1 Close reading of primary sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: contextualization and corroboration Initiative #2 Expand on content-specific vocabulary through higher order questioning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: Daily review through warm-ups and word-of-the-day Initiative #3 Developing our reading comprehension skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy: Annotation, sourcing, point of view

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

Social Studies teachers will:

- *Strategy #1: Actively participate in SMCPS provided professional development on PD days.
- * Strategy #2: Teachers will meet regularly in PLCs to collaboratively plan and share successful strategies and analyze assessment data.
- *Strategy #3: Re-evaluate future needs at department meetings.

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

- Sharing HAC check data in PLC meetings
- PBA/PBT, pre, mid, and post assessments
- Correlation between academic achievement and attendance
- SLO student growth

Our Projected Results:

- Improve attendance rates
- Higher graduation rate
- Improved school climate
- SLO goals met

School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our Department: The Special Education Department has a total of 16 special education teachers and 11 para educators supporting students with IEPs in all content areas. Currently, the department supports 175 students with IEPs with 20 assigned to the Learning Adjustment Program, 18 assigned to the SAIL program and 11 to the COMPASS program. With the exception of students earning a certification of completion, all students will participate in PARCC and HSA testing. Other students will participate in ALT and NCSC assessments.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas: Increase the number of credits earned and the promotion rate for students with IEPs.

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<p>Increase student passing rates in all courses using Study Skills classes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete regular HAC checks• complete missing assignments• complete recovery assignments• learn and practice self-advocacy, time management and organization skills per each students IEP goal• complete and share IRI data with assigned teachers (per IEP goals)• implement the use of Kurzweil for all special education students in academic areas
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement Behavior Intervention Plans• Increase presence in hallways during the change of classes and be at the door ways to greet students as they enter class• Practice de-escalation and positive interaction with all students• Continue to implement the LAP, COMPASS and SAIL incentive program

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

Purchase agenda books for all students enrolled in a Study Skills class
Share and implement BIPs with General Education Teachers
Plan and Implement social skills lesson during Study Skills Class
Track and share student data during department and PLC meetings.
PD for general education teachers on how to access and utilize Kurzweil.

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

Performance Matters and HAC

Monthly IEP Goal Tracking Documents

Our Projected Results:

The Special Education Department will work with all students enrolled in Study Skills classes to increase the total number of credits earned for the year.

World Language School Improvement Plan 2015-2016

OVERVIEW

Our World Language Department:

Great Mills High School World Language Department offers studies of Spanish, French, German, American Sign Language and English as a Second Language. These courses are split between seven highly qualified teachers.

Our focus this year is to become aware of poverty in our student population and to become familiar and implement the new discipline interventions.

ACTIONS

Our Focus Areas:

	Targeted Strategies
Content, Challenge, and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate the World Language Standards needed to be a 21st Century learner. Standards include: technology, communication, connection, community, comparison and culture.• Incorporate Poverty Awareness as part of our daily classroom instructions and in our PLC meetings.• Develop IPA's aligned with the ACTFL standards• ELL students who had interrupted schooling in their Spanish speaking countries of origin will be incorporated in Level 3 Spanish. This will help their literacy in their native language, thus helping with their English.• Develop Kinesthetic Arts, creative projects and charades to develop critical thinking about global issues, challenges, and real world problems that affect our students
Climate, Safety, and Behavioral Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus monthly department meetings to include discussion on discipline interventions• Continue calling parents or guardians after behavior interventions and include these challenges in our monthly PLC meetings.• Evidence of behavioral interventions via HAC Student comments or communication logs.

SUSTAINABILITY

Our Professional Learning:

- Meet quarterly with WL Supervisor and participate in county planned professional development
- Focus daily instruction and monthly PLC discussions on implementation of: Book Study of "Enrique's Journey" and "The Distance Between Us" dealing with student poverty for faculty awareness; Blogs about best practices
- PD on technology ACTFL websites - www.P21.org
- IPA's in our common core writing with ACTFL - Can Do statements.

- Parent Teacher Night for the ELL Community (parents, students, guardians) in October

Our Process for Monitoring Progress:

World Language Teachers will develop standards skills needed in the 21st century (Life and Career, Learning and Innovation Skills, PLC Meetings, Department Chairs and World Language Supervisors will include meetings to share strategies and developments for implementation of poverty awareness, technology skills and training of students in 21st century skills.

Our Projected Results:

- World Language teachers will provide all students access to our Spanish Language eBooks
- Departments will create a common rubric that will analyze student achievement in the world target language. Will include Student self-assessment data.
- World Language teachers will incorporate evidence of cross-disciplinary initiatives in daily classroom instructions