

School Growth Plan

May 2009

SCHOOL NAME: Glanford Middle School

GRADE CONFIGURATION: Grades 6 to 8

ENROLMENT NUMBERS: 394 students

School Context:

Glanford Middle School is one of ten Middle Schools in the Greater Victoria School District. After extensive renovation from an elementary school, GMS formally opened as a Middle School in September 2004 with 280 students. By September 2008, our fifth year of operation, student enrolment increased dramatically to nearly 400 students in 14 divisions. Glanford Middle School has an enviable reputation as a small, safe Middle School with a dynamic culture. Our academic, technology, and music programs have received high praise in the larger community. An ongoing goal is to accommodate the large number of requests from non-pathway students wishing to attend our school each year.

Summary of Progress 2008/09 Goals:

In its fifth year of operation, staff and administration at Glanford Middle School have continued to focus on two areas of importance and pride: (1) maximizing student involvement and leadership within our highly active culture; and (2) maintaining our academic excellence with a specific focus on raising achievement in student writing skills.

Glanford has created an enviably rich school culture during its formative years of operation. An in-school television station (Studio 85), monthly Retro assemblies, a unique student recognition program, our innovative Mini-X model, and an outstanding music and athletics program form the cornerstone of our culture. Ongoing innovation is seen as critical to the evolution of our culture as we strive to blend tradition with freshness and changing trends.

Glanford's second goal was a focus on writing skills, an area identified in FSA testing and in teacher discussions as a weaker link in our academic achievement. A two-year focus on Mathematics from 2006 to 2008 saw an appreciable improvement in student achievement during that time and it was hoped that a similar focus on writing could create demonstrable growth in this important component of the Language Arts curriculum. Several Professional-development opportunities were provided to staff and significant funds were directed towards the acquisition of new resources to support classroom programs. The results to date have been positive, but small. The staff at GMS are committed to focusing on literacy and writing again in the coming year.

Our Goals 2009/10:

- (1) To maximize student engagement and leadership in the highly successful culture established at GMS.
- (2) To raise achievement in student writing skills and instill a positive attitude towards the writing process in an increasingly technological culture.

GOAL #1

GOAL:

To maximize student engagement and leadership in the highly successful culture established at GMS.

RATIONALE: *(Briefly explain why you selected this goal – include evidence from Appendix 1)*

The Glanford community (staff, parents, feeder schools) have identified our vibrant school culture as the cornerstone of our success as a Middle School. GMS is a place where students want to be! This is reflected in several data sources: (1) GMS has the lowest absentee rate amongst District 61 Middle Schools in statistics compiled through GRIP (Grad Rate Improvement Program); (2) A consistently large number of students from non-pathway schools are requesting GMS as their school of choice – Sept. 2008 (117 requests), Sept. 2009 (83 requests); (3) Provincial Satisfaction surveys remain consistently high (88 – 92%) in the areas of safety and high behavioral standards; (4) a Grade 6 survey conducted in October 2008 indicates 94% of our new students enjoy GMS most or all of the time.

With one-third of our student population new each year, maintaining culture as a school focus was strongly supported by the staff. By melding existing practice with innovation and new initiatives, GMS plans to maximize student engagement and involvement for all students.

ACTIONS:

New or Ongoing Initiatives	How are you or will you monitor and evaluate success? What are your targets?
<p>To refine the opening week procedures for GMS which have proven inclusive, exciting, and a cornerstone to setting the school tone for the upcoming year. Students will work cooperatively in multi-age groups on a new theme yet to be identified. This will provide a welcoming, fun environment for new staff and students, will encourage student participation, and will establish the respectful tone and behavioral standards expected at GMS. The week will culminate in the traditional GMS Friday breakfast and video presentation created by the students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -100% of students will participate in the week. -100% of Grade 8 students will have some leadership role in the week's activities. -a Grade 6 satisfaction survey to be completed at the end of Sept. 2009 will continue to exceed 90% satisfaction in the areas of enjoying school & belonging. -3 new teachers will join the Opening Week planning Committee.
<p>To expand the opportunities for students to get involved and engaged at GMS beyond our exceptionally rich music and athletic programs. These opportunities will include: (1) regular staff/student challenges: Spell-a-thon, cribbage tournament, Warhammer challenge, staff/student noon hour sports.</p>	<p>-compile data from June 2009 year-end Recognition assembly to collect baseline data on citizenship awards (student involvement). Our goal is a 25% increase in recognition to Grade 6/7 students in 2009/10.</p>

<p>(2) a noon hour intermurals program twice a year, organized by staff but run and refereed by students. At present, only spring Juggyball League exists.</p> <p>(3) a school-wide musical for Spring 2010</p> <p>(4) increased leadership opportunities for Grade 6 and 7 students: participation in District Leadership workshops such as Healthy Schools; creating and maintaining a program for garbage pick-up and pride in school; Destination Conservation club; organization of community-based or global fundraising initiatives.</p>	<p>-Provincial Satisfaction survey results will maintain or exceed current rates in two areas:</p> <p>a) "Do your teachers care about you? Most times-35%; Always- 41%</p> <p>b) "Do you participate in activities outside of class hours?" Most times -19%; Always- 31%</p>
<p>GMS will apply for a second micro-grant to target and assist the most vulnerable students in our school as identified by student services. This funding has been used to hire a dedicated EA to monitor student attendance, develop connectedness to their school community, and to promote participation in the GMS culture and its activities.</p>	<p>-GMS will receive a second grant, or if unsuccessful, will find a way to maintain the existing role created for supporting vulnerable students.</p> <p>-0% of identified vulnerable students will either leave GMS or receive "I" letter grades.</p> <p>-100% of identified vulnerable students will participate in at least one school club, activity or leadership opportunity in 2009/10.</p>
<p>GMS will organize another school-wide educational theme in the coming school year to promote cross-grade connectedness for teachers and learners. This year's Project FLOW (For the Love of Water) was extraordinarily successful in its educational value, positive public feedback, and community building within our school culture.</p>	<p>-a new theme will be identified prior to December 2009.</p> <p>-100% classroom & teacher participation will occur with the new theme.</p> <p>-the school-wide initiative will be published in local media to further promote image of GMS as a vibrant learning institute.</p>

GOAL #2

GOAL:

To raise achievement in student writing skills and instill a positive attitude towards the writing process in an increasingly technological culture.

RATIONALE: *(Briefly explain why you selected this goal – include evidence from Appendix 1)*

Both parents and staff view high academic achievement as an important component of Middle School. GMS has demonstrated ongoing success in FSA **reading comprehension** and **numeracy** results. In 2009, 22% of students were exceeding expectations in these two areas, with only 4% not yet meeting. The weaker area of student achievement continues to be **writing skills** where only 1% of students are exceeding expectations on FSA testing, and 11% are not yet meeting expectations. 2009 Performance Data also indicates writing is the weakest area of student achievement at GMS.

Staff and parents believe that the rapidly changing use of technology amongst students is impacting their perception and appreciation of writing skills. With text-messaging, e-mail, “cut and paste” research, spell-check, and alternative media for presenting information (Powerpoint, video), the relevance of “traditional” writing skills appears to be diminishing. Our goal is to strengthen writing skills at GMS within the context of a technological world. The traditional time allotment for writing is also decreasing due to a fuller curriculum (ie Advisory, DPA, Exploratory, FSL). A second focus in this goal is to make writing an important component of *all* subject areas.

ACTIONS:

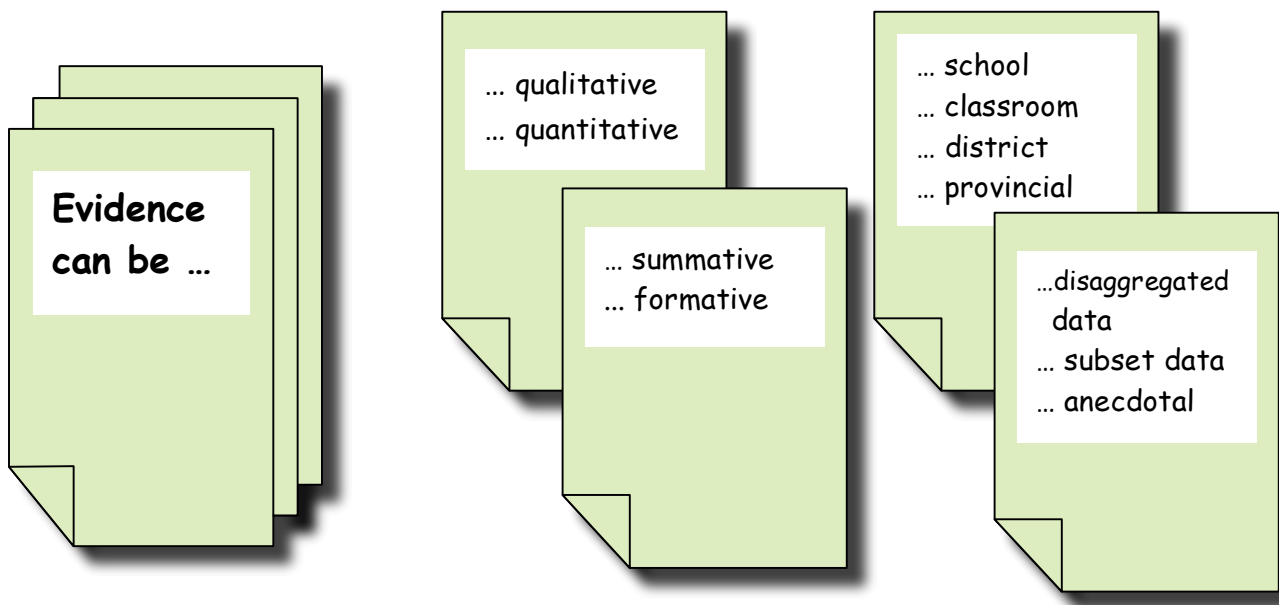
New or Ongoing Initiatives	How are you or will you monitor and evaluate success? What are your targets?
To create a writing rubric for each grade level that will be used in all subject areas of that grade. The intent is to create a sense of value and importance for writing skills across the curriculum, not just in Language Arts. The writing rubric is to form a part of student assessment in every subject area.	-a Grade 6, 7, and 8 writing rubric will be created by each team before October 15, 2009. -all core subjects, with the exception of mathematics and PE, will have an assessment component based on writing.
One Pro-D activity will be dedicated to the writing process to further teacher pedagogy & practice in this area. On May 16, 2008, GMS hosted the first of two presentations from Susan Augustyn. The second of these presentations (or an appropriate alternative) will be organized in 2009/10.	-100% of staff will attend the Pro-D activity on writing, even those in curricular areas other than English/Language Arts. -Staff will commit to employing at least one new strategy they have learned.
One GMS staff book club will be organized to	-one staff-wide book club will

<p>further focus on writing development. The 2008 book club title was <i>How the Brain Learns to Read</i> by David A. Sousa. Free books will be supplied to all teachers who participate in this activity.</p>	<p>be sponsored for 2009/10.</p>
<p>GMS prides itself on innovation, with our Studio 85 television studio as our best known most popular initiative. Staff will develop at least three new strategies for promoting writing at GMS. Sample ideas include (1) a daily edit to be written by students and shown on Studio 85 - completed during Advisory or silent reading; (2) the introduction of Cornell Notes at Grade 7 and 8 as used in the AVID program; (3) writing events such as the Project FLOW "Letter to the Editor" contest or Poetry Slam (Grade 8); (4) A literacy/writing theme instead of Science theme for school-wide Spring event.</p>	<p>-one new school-wide writing event/activity will be successfully introduced in the 2009/10 year. -FSA results and Performance Standards data will reflect the positive attitude developing towards writing at GMS. Targets: FSA – Number of students exceeding expectations – 10%; number of students not yet meeting expectations – 5%. Performance Standards – number of students not yet within expectations (35 students) will be reduced to 15 students in line with reading comprehension.</p>
<p>Team funds will be used to purchase relevant resources to enhance writing instruction. Two programs were purchased in 2008: Nelson <i>Literacy</i> (Grade 6) and Pearson <i>Literature in Action</i> and <i>Writing Box Kits</i> (Grade 7).</p>	<p>-at least one new resource will be purchased at each grade level from Team Funds that relates to the teaching of writing.</p>

Appendix 1

EVIDENCE

In this section, please include data/evidence you used to determine your goals. This evidence will support your rationale.



Appendix 1 evidence includes:

- (1) 2009 FSA results for GMS – preliminary
- (2) 2208 FSA results for GMS and comparison to District 61 and Province
- (3) 2009 GMS Performance Standards data – March 2009 report card data
- (4) GMS Gr. 6 Student Survey – October 2008
- (5) Provincial Satisfaction Survey results – 2007/08. Current 2008/09 data not currently available.

1. Strategies to support the success of each student

GMS has expanded its Learning Assistance program to support lower achieving students. Two learning assistance programs are run concurrently during the morning; one for Gr. 6/7 students in Language Arts and Mathematics and one exclusively for Grade 8 students whose timetabling and social needs are quite different as they prepare for high school. As well, EA support is provided as extensively as possible within each grade level to provide teaching support for students within the classroom.

This year, Glanford received a \$20,000 micro-grant to support vulnerable students as identified by GRIP research (chronic absences, failing English and/or Math, behavior). A designated EA was appointed to provide daily morning check-in with approximately 20 students. As well, student attendance, school involvement, homework completion, and behavior were monitored and tracked. No identified at-risk students transferred out of GMS or left school, and one "I" was recorded on Grade 8 second-term reports, down from 8 in March 2008.

GMS also identifies Gifted students within our school community. These students are grouped with their counterparts at each Grade level and also receive weekly Gifted instruction.

2. Strategies to enhance the success of aboriginal learners

At this time, GMS has 12 aboriginal students who all fall well within grade expectation. To further promote a sense of connectedness, a number of Aboriginal cultural opportunities have been provided to all students at GMS. These have included: Mini-X opportunities, classroom visits, an aboriginal component to a school-wide Science Week on water in May 2009, and professional support for teachers to incorporate aboriginal perspectives into their educational programs.

3. Communication: *How are you communicating your goals and progress to parents and the wider community?*

The School Planning Council was delighted to welcome one new parent to the SPC team this year. The Glanford PAC was asked for input at their March 2, 2009 meeting attended by the Principal. On March 27, 2009, the SPC committee (2 of 3 parents, Principal, Vice-Principal) met for a half-day to create this document. A teacher rep was not in attendance as directed by the BCTF and the GVTA. The GMS staff were provided time at the April 8, 2009 staff meeting to review the preliminary document and provide input. The final 2009/10 School Growth Plan will be shared with the GMS teaching staff and PAC in May/June 2009. As always, the School Growth Plan will be posted on the GMS school web page.

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL:

Mr. Louis Scigliano	X
PRINCIPAL	
Mrs. Elaine Wooster, Vice-Principal	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
Mrs. Audrey Smith, parent	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
Mrs. Bonnie McCallum, parent	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
Mr. Jeff Adams, parent	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
April 20, 2009	
DATE	

APPROVAL OF PLAN:

Tom Ferris	X
BOARD CHAIR	
John Gaipman	X
SUPERINTENDENT	
	X
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT	
DATE	