

VISION 2018



WORLD CLASS ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Our Vision: Every student is inspired to learn and empowered to excel.

Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation, begins a new era in teaching and learning in Howard County schools. It defines an educational program that inspires and engages students and nurtures the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the whole child.

A new HCPSS model for elementary education brings the principles of Vision 2018 to life for students in Pre-K through Grade 5. The new elementary model will be introduced at five schools during the 2014-2015 school year, where it will be refined and expanded, based on the success of the program. In its initial phase, the new model comprises several exciting components that are rigorous, globally-relevant, and engaging.

Expanding Prekindergarten

Research shows that high quality early learning experiences provide long-term benefits. These experiences happen at home, in the community, and in educational settings. The new elementary education model incorporates full-day prekindergarten for eligible students who may not otherwise have access to these experiences. The curriculum prepares students with the social and intellectual skills they need to be ready for learning in kindergarten, and sets the stage for success that continues through school and later in life.

World Language

Research shows that learning a second language in the early grades gives young children a boost in intellectual growth and academic achievement. Students learn to think more flexibly, sharpen their listening and memory skills, and appreciate other cultures as they gain fluency in a world language.



How parents can help nurture learning engagement

Students thrive when they are held to high expectations in a supportive environment. Parents can nurture their child's engagement in learning by regularly praising effort and progress, and asking questions such as:

- How did your teacher encourage you to ask questions today?
- How does your teacher make you feel important?
- How did your teacher show you she/he cared for you today?
- What did your teacher do to encourage you to do your best work?

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HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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World Language, continued

The new elementary education model includes world language instruction for all students beginning in prekindergarten. Children will receive 20-30 minutes of Spanish language instruction each day, leading to intermediate level language proficiency by the end of Grade 5.

Strengths Development

The new elementary school model incorporates strengths development into the student's academic experience. Gallup research has identified 10 specific behaviors, or strengths, that are linked directly to a child's cognitive ability and academic achievement: achieving, discoverer, caring, future thinker, competing, organizer, confidence, presence, dependability, and relating.

One or more of these attributes come naturally to every child. Each child experiences success by using their strengths during daily class activities, and come to view hard work, motivation, and persistence as the means to achievement and growth.

Departmentalization

We envision schools in which every student experiences an appropriate level of challenge through engaging, authentic, and hands-on learning. The departmentalized model reduces the number of content areas assigned to each classroom teacher from four to two. In this model, teachers no longer have to be experts in everything. They can develop deeper, more enriching instruction across their two focus content areas, enhancing the student learning experience.

The new elementary education model incorporates departmentalization into two daily blocks for English language/social studies and mathematics/science/health, with segments for fine arts, physical education, world language, and media/technology rounding out the instructional week.

Telehealth

Offered in partnership with Howard County Health Department, school based Telehealth complements and expands existing school health services through technology that connects a child in school to a health care provider in another location. Telehealth allows children who need health services to be treated in school, so they miss less class time.

Learn more about the
Vision 2018
elementary school
model initiative at
[www.hcpss.org/academics/
elementary-model/](http://www.hcpss.org/academics/elementary-model/)

