

## Golden Door Charter School Expansion Plan

### **Synopsis of Proposed Educational Program(s):**

- *Creation of a new Middle School Program called "Golden Door Innovators".*

The new middle school *Innovators* program will be a separate program/curriculum within our current middle school. Students enrolled in this program will be sharing homerooms, specials, lunch, recess and extra curricular activities with the general education students. However, they will engage in a newly designed curriculum in English Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The advantages of the new *Innovators* program will be smaller class sizes (not exceeding 20 students) and a much more collaborative approach to learning. Although in our general education classes our teachers are facilitators whenever possible, the new *Innovators* program will take this to a much higher level. The teacher will facilitate the lessons while encouraging students to be engaged in the learning process by making significant contributions to the content of the lesson, activities and materials. Enrichment will go beyond the classroom, exposing students to not only the major content areas but also to culture, the arts and the outdoors through school outings and field trips.

Beginning in the 2018-19 school year and each school year after that, students enrolled in Golden Door's 6th grade before July 31st of each school year will be considered for the *Innovators* program for the upcoming school year. Up to 20 of the enrolled top performing 6th graders will be accepted into the program that will begin in the 6th grade. This will open up 20 seats in our general education program for new 6th grade students who reside in Jersey City.

The teaching staff will ultimately be comprised of four content area certified teachers. Each teacher will teach their assigned content area to three grade levels; 6th, 7th and 8th with 20 students in each grade level. GDCS would like to gradually transition into this program beginning in 2018. The school will recruit teacher candidates for the new program from within (currently employed GDCS teachers) as well as educational job fairs and the media. We will hire fully certified and experienced teachers within the specific content areas needed.

- *Increasing General Education Enrollment to Eliminate Enrollment Bubble*

Since GDCS's inception we have been faced with an annual challenge with staffing and facilities due to what we refer to as the (enrollment) "bubble". The bubble affects grades K - 8. Within our school (K - 8th grade) we have a maximum enrollment cap of 504 students. This is comprised of nine grades with 21 homerooms and 24 students in each homeroom. With this cap of students we have six grade levels with 48 students and three grade levels with 72 students. We refer to the three grade levels with 72 students as the "bubble". The bubble changes every year as students are promoted with it currently being in Kindergarten, Grades One and Two.

The increased enrollment to 648 students in kindergarten through 8th grade will eliminate the bubble in our enrollment. The expansion will take place over a five year period, adding additional students to our kindergarten each year for the next five years.

➤ *Expanding Preschool Program*

Our current preschool program provides full-day preschool instruction to 45 children who are at least four years of age. Three classrooms are designated for preschool instruction. The current Five-year Preschool Program Plan/Application was formally approved by the NJDOE in February of 2014. Golden Door Charter School has been working closely with the New Jersey Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood Education since our original preschool expansion in 2014.

Due to the ever growing need/demand for high quality preschool programs GDCS's request to increase its preschool program by 27 students was approved. The expansion will bring our maximum preschool enrollment from 45 students to 72 students. This expansion is planned to take place in September of 2018. Please see following table for the planned preschool expansion:

➤ *Expansion Enrollment Breakdown*

The following chart summarizes GDCS's projected maximum enrollment with all three expansions taking place and highlights our current bubble for this year with subsequent expansion increases in bold:

**Maximum Enrollment Chart with Increases to Maximum Enrollment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>2016-2017 (current maximum)</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019 (Start of Innovators Program)</b>	<b>2019-2020</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>
<b>Pre-K</b>	45	45	<b>72</b>	72	72	72
<b>K</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	72
<b>1</b>	<b>72</b>	72	72	72	72	72
<b>2</b>	<b>72</b>	72	72	72	72	72
<b>3</b>	48	72	72	72	72	72
<b>4</b>	48	48	72	72	72	72
<b>5</b>	48	48	48	72	72	72
<b>6</b>	48	48	<b>68</b>	68	72	72
<b>7</b>	48	48	48	68	68	<b>72</b>
<b>8</b>	48	48	48	48	68	<b>72</b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>549</u></b>	<b><u>573</u></b>	<b><u>644</u></b>	<b><u>688</u></b>	<b><u>712</u></b>	<b><u>720</u></b>

**Note:** With all three expansions GDCS's maximum enrollment will increase by 171 students bringing our maximum enrollment in grades Pre-k to 8 from 549 students currently to 720 students in 2022.

➤ *Preliminary Facilities Plan*

The overall expansion will require creating additional educational space. Phase I is expected to take place in the Administration Building only with the creation of one PK space by September 1, 2017. Additional space will be available in our Administrative Building by moving our staff offices to the currently vacant 3rd floor. This should allow enough space for the renovation(s) to provide new preschool classrooms. This renovation should be completed by September 1, 2018. Phase II for Accommodating the General Education Expansion (Grades K through 8) is currently in progress.