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OUR CURRICULUM

Shepherd Elementary is an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) school.

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Our goal is to nurture internationally minded students who demonstrate the attributes of the IB learner profile. **IB learners** strive to be:

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In doing so, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and to the environment.

Open-Minded They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Courageous (Also Known As Risk-Taker)

They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced

They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective

They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

An aim of the PYP is to create a transdisciplinary curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for children age four through twelve. The IB believes that:

- All students should be supported to participate in the programme to the fullest extent possible
- The school's curriculum includes all those student activities, academic and non-academic, for which the school takes responsibility, since they all have an impact on student learning.

Knowledge	Significant, relevant content that we wish the students to explore and know about, taking into consideration their prior knowledge
Concepts	Powerful ideas that have relevance within the subject areas but also transcend them and that students must explore and re-explore in order to develop a coherent, in-depth understanding
Skills	Those capabilities that the students need to demonstrate to succeed in a changing, challenging world
Attitudes	Dispositions that are expressions of fundamental values, beliefs and feelings about learning, the environment and people
Action	Demonstrations of deeper learning in responsible behavior through responsible action

Each year, from Kindergarten through grade 5, each student will be involved in one of six units of inquiry, based on the universal organizing themes:

- Who We Are
- Where We Are
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- How We Organize Ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

Early childhood students are engaged in four units throughout the year.

The PYP provides the framework for the curriculum, including key concepts as one of the essential elements. These concepts, as expressed as questions, help teachers and students consider ways of thinking and learning about the world, and act to extend and deepen student inquiries.

Form	What is it like?
Function	How does it work?
Causation	Why is it like it is?
Change	How is it changing?
Connection	How is it connected to other things?
Perspective	What are the points of view?

The PYP curriculum is based on sound knowledge and understanding about how children learn and how the brain works. It allows us to have considerable flexibility in the choice of content and topics that our children will study as appropriate to our school. Students at Shepherd are engaged in the kind of learning that they will continue throughout their lives. The PYP connects our school to a wider international school network by way of an internationally respected educational organization that stimulates and facilitates continuous school improvement. Additionally, this program allows for easier transfer of students to and from the ever-increasing number of schools offering PYP, including Alice Deal Middle School.

Language Program

Our language program includes instruction in Spanish and French. Students in Pre-Kindergarten through second grade receive three days of instruction and our intermediate students receive two days of instruction in their target language weekly.

OUR SCHOOL

Attendance

The administration, teachers, and staff of Shepherd Elementary take daily attendance very seriously. Regular school attendance is required by DC law for children ages 5 to 18. Although not required by law, it is just as important for children ages 3 and 4 to have regular attendance as well. Attending school every day and on time is critically important and has a huge impact on learning from kindergarten through high school. Even as children grow older and become more independent, families play a key role in making sure regular attendance is a priority.

If your child received a seat through the out-of-boundary lottery (excluding PreK3 and, PreK4 and students who receive special education services) and has 10 unexcused absences or 20 unexcused tardies, they may be asked to return to their neighborhood school at the end of the school year.

Excused absences are when school-aged students are absent from school with a valid/legal excuse and parental approval.

Lawful reasons for absence are articulated in DCMR Chapter 21 (<http://bit.ly/1q3sBOL>) include, but are not limited to the following:

- Illness of the student or medical cause (a doctor's note is required for a student absent five or more days);
- Medical or dental appointment for the student;
- Death in the student's immediate family;
- Exclusion due to quarantine, contagious disease, etc.;
- Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding as a plaintiff, defendant, witness or juror;
- Observance of a religious holiday;
- Lawful exclusion or expulsion by school authorities;
- Temporary facility closings due to weather, unsafe conditions or other emergencies;
- Failure of D.C. to provide transportation where legally responsible;
- To visit their parent/legal guardian, who is in the military immediately before, during or after deployment; and
- Emergency or circumstances approved by the school district.

When your child returns to school after an absence, you must submit a note to the front office or designated attendance staff. The note must include your child's name, date(s) of the absence, reason for absence and a parent/guardian's signature. A doctor's note is required after the fifth consecutive day due to illness.

Absences without notes or those deemed not valid will be marked "unexcused."

If absences are due to chronic health issues, such as asthma, families should contact the school nurse to ensure the appropriate health plan is developed.

Please see the table below regarding the number of student absences and the corresponding action:

Number of Total Absences	Action
1-2	Phone Call
3	Letter home
5 (unexcused)	Attendance Conference (via phone or in-person) A home visit is conducted if the parent does not attend the Attendance conference An attendance plan is created
7 (unexcused)	Refer to the attendance plan MPD letter is generated
10 (in total)	CFSA referral
10 (unexcused)	Education Neglect Referral
15(unexcused)	Truancy Court referral
20 (consecutive absences)	The student can be withdrawn for attendance reasons

If you have additional questions about attendance, go to dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/attendance.

Birthday Parties

Arrangements must be made in advanced with the classroom teacher to recognize a child's birthday. (Please see the list of recommended healthy snacks.)

Bringing Up Grades (BUG)

Bringing Up Grades, or BUG, is a program designed to provide recognition to students who raise their grades into an acceptable range and maintain or continue to raise them from one grading period to the next. Recognition includes presentation of BUG certificates and buttons for students in grades 3-5.

Bullying

One of the most proactive measures families can take to shield their children from bullying is to talk to them early and openly about what it means to be bullied or to bully. Doing so not only ensures that you and your child maintain open lines of communication, but also reinforces the importance of speaking up about problems at school.

DCPS has a Bullying Prevention Policy that is as proactive and comprehensive as possible when dealing with any and all reports of bullying.

- If you suspect your child may be bullied at school, don't be afraid to ask them about it. • Make sure to tell them that you are there to help and you believe what he or she has to say.
- Please report, or have your child report, bullying to the school's Bullying Prevention Point of Contact or the principal.

- If you think your child is bullying others, discuss the behavior and make it clear that bullying is taken very seriously at school. At the same time, you may want to work with your child to understand some of the reasons behind the bullying.
- If you witness or become aware of cyber-bullying (use of the Internet and related technologies to bully) that includes threats of violence, child pornography or sexually explicit materials, stalking or hate crimes, please consider reporting the incident to law enforcement. Cyber-bullying can also create classroom disruptions and lead to in-person bullying.

Calendar Overview – No School for Students

Labor Day - September 7
 Professional Development – October 9
 Columbus Day – October 12
 Veterans Day – November 11
 Thanksgiving Break – November 26 & 27
 Professional Development – December 4
 Winter Break - December 21 thru January 3
 MLK Day – January 18
 Professional Development – February 12
 President’s Day – February 15
 Spring Break – March 28 thru April 1
 Emancipation Day – April 15
 Professional Development – May 6
 Memorial Day – May 30

Cell Phones

Students should not bring cell phones to school. The telephone in the main office is always available to students in the event of an emergency. The school is not responsible for phones that are lost or damaged. Likewise, if a child is found with a cell phone, it will be taken by a member of the staff and returned to a parent or guardian. Should a parent need to contact a student in case of an emergency during school hours, please call the main office and the child will be called to the office.

Change of Information

Please notify our registrar, Mrs. Brooks, if any of your information changes, especially phone numbers and emergency contact information.

Code of Conduct

Shepherd operates under a set of essential agreements in all settings.

Essential Agreements:

- Be respectful
- Be responsible
- Be safe

Discipline

All DCPS disciplinary policies are subject to the DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR Chapter 25) regarding Student Discipline and Student's Rights and Responsibilities, and are written to align with the tiered system of disciplinary responses. To access these documents, please visit dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/chapter25

Dismissal

Students who walk home are dismissed from the auditorium. Students who are enrolled in Star Achievers report to the cafeteria. Students who are signed up for the car pool will be dismissed from the main entrance.

Students must have all of their books and belongings, as they will not be allowed to return to the building (or classrooms) following dismissal.

Student will not be detained after school, for any reason, unless a parent has granted permission for such to occur.

Teachers will remain in their assigned duty area until 3:30 p.m. Student who have not been picked up by 3:25 will be taken to the main office.

Dress Code

All students will be held to a high standard of neatness, cleanliness and appropriateness. Shepherd ES is a uniform school. The colors for the Shepherd uniform are white and blue. This policy is in effect every day, unless the principal authorizes a change in writing. All students are expected to adhere to the uniform policy. The uniform consists of a white collared shirt and navy blue bottoms. Teachers will reinforce these expectations daily.

Below are some additional guidelines regarding acceptable dress:

- Undershirts cannot be worn as shirts
- No t-shirts with inappropriate messages or images
- Pants must be worn with belts and not extend below the waistline
- Dark-colored, rubber-soled are highly recommended

Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will remain in the main office until appropriate clothing can be provided. In addition, a parent or guardian will be notified.

Early Dismissal

Parents or guardians must report to the office and sign the "Early Dismissal" book *before* a student may be allowed to leave the school grounds. No student may leave the school grounds without being signed out by an authorized person. Parents **should not** go to the classroom to pick up a child, and a teacher will not release a student until s/he receives a call from the office.

Whenever possible, please send a note if an early dismissal is needed. This practice will assist the teacher in making arrangements so that disruptions in the school day are minimized. Students will not be dismissed after 3:00 unless there is an emergency.

Electronic Devices

Students should not bring valuables, such as electronic devices such as cell phones, MP3 Players, PSPs, Nintendo DS, Kindles, electronic games – not even for use at lunchtime or on school grounds at dismissal. If a child has a device that is prohibited, it will be taken by a member of the staff and returned to a parent or guardian.

Emergencies, Delays and Closures

The School Emergency Response Plan and Management Guide prepares schools to respond to emergencies including weather, natural disasters and threats involving weapons. The guide was developed in partnership with DCPS, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency and other government agencies.

The fire alarm bell is a distinct sound. When the alarm sounds, students should move quickly, without running, to the designated exits, accompanied by a responsible adult. Students should re-enter the building only after the signal that the drill has ended.

When inclement weather is predicted or occurs, DCPS works hard to ensure students and staff remain safe. The goal is to keep DCPS schools open whenever possible to ensure students have access to all they need, including academic instruction, nutritious meals and healthy extracurricular activity programming. The decision to delay or close schools is made with careful consideration of road safety, sidewalk safety and meal availability. You can always decide whether your child should attend school that day or leave early.

There are several options for staying informed about school emergencies, delays or closures:

1. Listen to the local news on the TV and radio
2. Check the DCPS homepage (dcps.dc.gov)
3. Sign up to receive email alerts (dcps.dc.gov/signup)
4. Follow DCPS on Twitter (twitter.com/dcpublicschools)
5. Follow DCPS on Facebook (facebook.com/dcpublicschools)
6. Sign up to receive text messages by texting NEWS to 91990

If an emergency occurs during the school day, know that the staff has been trained to evacuate, shelter in place or take the appropriate measures depending on the situation. The school and will allow you to connect with your child as soon as it is safely possible.

Field Trips

Field trips will be communicated in writing in advance by the teacher in the form of a permission slip. Permission slips must be signed and returned to the school in order for the student to attend the field trip. The permission form will provide details of the trip

(destination, times, transportation, and cost) and a way for the parent to sign up to chaperone. Students must wear their school uniforms for all field trips unless another dress policy is approved by the principal. Parent chaperones on a field trip are not to bring other children on the trip.

Health and Wellness

Health exams and oral health assessments are required annually. Students also must be current with their immunizations to attend school. As outlined below, a series of medical forms should be turned in to the school as part of the enrollment process and any updated forms throughout the school year should be submitted to the school nurse.

- Universal Health Certificate (required annually for all grades, documenting immunizations, tuberculosis assessment, lead screening and a physical exam).

If you have questions about DC's immunization requirements, please discuss them with your child's physician. You can also contact the DC Department of Health Immunization Division at 202.576.9325.

- Oral Health Assessment (required annually for all grades)
- Medication and Treatment Authorization Form (as needed)
- Asthma Action Plan (as needed)
- Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (as needed). If you need to file an exemption for vaccines, please contact your school nurse. Links to all health forms are available at dcps.dc.gov/health.

Homework

Teachers may assign homework to aid students in the progress of their studies. It is useful to reinforce daily lessons, to build good study habits, and to provide opportunity for parent involvement in student learning. Therefore, we encourage parents to provide a suitable environment for the completion of daily homework. Parents are urged to monitor their child's work daily. The parent should help the child to become responsible in returning the homework completed and on time. Parents should make a point to find time each day to discuss what their child has learned at school.

Illness

If a child has been ill during the night or became ill upon awakening, please consider not sending the child to school. Students with low-grade fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or other acute symptoms will be sent home. If your child has been ill at home with any of these symptoms, please keep him/her home until these symptoms have subsided for 24 hours. If a child becomes ill after coming to school, the parent will be contacted. If a child has a fever of at least 100 degrees of temperature or has vomited, the student will be sent home.

If the parents cannot be reached by phone, the emergency contact person(s) listed in the student file will be called to pick up the child. **Please maintain accurate and current information for the emergency file. Any addition or deletion for emergency contact person(s) should be given immediately to the school office.**

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather includes rain, sleet, snow, and temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. This also includes code orange or red days for severe heat.

Key Enrollment Dates

Families should keep in mind several important dates during the school year that relate to enrollment. Visit the DCPS web site at dcps.dc.gov/enroll or contact your school to confirm specific dates so you do not miss an enrollment deadline.

- My School DC Application (Grades PK3-12) Opens – December of the current school year
- My School DC Application (Grades 9-12) Closes – February of the current school year
- My School DC Application (Grades PK3-8) Closes – March of the current school year
- Enrollment packet for upcoming school year available – April of the current school year
- Enrollment packet due for students who received a seat through the My School DC lottery – May of the current school year

Note: To enroll your child in a DCPS school, you will need to prove DC residency each school year. For a complete enrollment packet and list of accepted residency verification documents visit the DCPS website at dcps.dc.gov/enroll.

Language Line

DCPS offers a free Language Line with over-the-phone interpretation services to support families during enrollment, parent-teacher conferences and other times when families need support in their native language. You can access the Language Line by contacting the staff of your local school or calling the Language Acquisition Division for support at 202.671.0750. “I Speak” Cards can also be downloaded from <http://ohr.dc.gov/ispeakcards> in multiple languages. For an in-person interpreter, school personnel must submit an Interpreter Request Form at least three days in advance to the Office of Bilingual Education. Parents needing translation or interpretation services should contact the school immediately

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found bin can be found in the main office. Because children frequently lose or misplace items, please consider labeling students’ belongings, especially outerwear. At the end of the month, items that have not been claimed will be donated to a shelter or clothing bank.

Medications

Families are encouraged to administer medications at home. If medications are needed during school hours, please have your medical provider complete the appropriate forms listed above and return them to the school nurse.

When your child needs to receive medication or treatment, school staff will ensure that your child is released from class to go to the nurse’s office where the school nurse will administer the medication or treatment. Sometimes the school’s nurse is not at the assigned school due to a normal absence or to cover another school. When this occurs,

the school will ensure other trained school staff are available to administer your child's medication.

Unless trained and authorized, staff are not allowed to dispense prescribed or over the counter medication.

Mental Health Support

To support the emotional well-being of students, Shepherd's mental health team is comprised of a full-time social worker, full-time counselor, and part-time school psychologist, who are able to help with a range of issues including, but not limited to, school culture and climate and self-confidence.

Nut Free Policy

Shepherd Elementary is a **nut-free school**, including, but not limited to the following:

- peanuts
- almonds
- Brazil nuts
- Beechnut
- Butternuts
- Cashews
- Coconuts
- Hazelnuts
- Macadamia nuts
- Pecan
- Pine nuts
- Pistachios
- Walnuts

Please do not send any of these items or food containing these items, including peanut butter, granola bars with nuts, Nutella, etc., for lunch, snack or classroom parties as children can react to an allergen by eating or touching a food they're allergic to. They can also react by touching something that has traces of that food on it, such as peanut butter residue. If they have traces of food on their hands and put their hands in their mouth, they can have a life threatening reaction.

Outside Play

When weather is dry and 32 degrees (wind chill will be considered) or above, the children will spend time outside. Consider weather conditions to insure that students are dressed appropriately. Hats, coats, and gloves should be sent with your children during cold weather months.

School Supplies

Teachers provide a list of supplies at the beginning of the school year that is specific to their grade level. While this list is distributed at the beginning of the school year, it is often necessary to replenish supplies through the year.

School Visitors

Shepherd ES is open to the public as long as visitors do not disrupt instruction, operation or activities, or threaten the safety and security of students and staff. All visitors must adhere to the posted visitor's policy, which includes showing identification and then reporting to the main office. A "Visitor" badge will be given to each guest, which must be worn at all times within the building.

Security Officer

Security officers work for MPD through a contract. Our security guard, Ms. Douglas, works with the school principal and staff to make sure that students are physically safe at all times. She will conduct security patrols throughout the building and grounds. Officer Douglas will monitor cafeterias, auditoriums, hallways, stairwells, restrooms, entrances and exits. She will also provide security at athletic events, social gatherings, group assemblies and other school activities.

Transportation

DCPS does not provide yellow bus transportation for students. However, through the Kids Ride Free Act, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) offers students reduced Metrorail fares through the School Transit Subsidy and free Metrobus/DC Circulator access Monday-Friday, 5:30–9:00 a.m. and 2:00–8:00 p.m. only. Students must use their active and registered DC One Card in order to ride the Metrobus/DC Circulator. They will only have to visit a Metro Sales Office once every school year to activate the DC One Card and will be able to renew their monthly pass at any Metro station—unless they let their pass expire. Students will also be able to enroll online and receive partial refunds for lost or stolen passes.

Unit Assessments

One way that we measure and respond to student progress is by tracking their performance on unit assessments. The DCPS unit assessments are tools that schools use to assess student progress for grades 3-5 throughout the year. After each unit assessment is given and scored, teachers use this data to modify instruction to student needs.

Another way we measure and respond to student progress is through an annual summative assessment, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). This online assessment is aligned to the Common Core and will be administered to students in grade 3-5.

Please continue to work with your child's teacher, the person who best can provide information on your child's areas for improvement and suggest strategies that will help your child in both instruction and assessment.

To further support student success, we encourage you to review your child's assessment results. More information about assessments is available at dcps.dc.gov/assessments. If you have any questions, please contact the school or email to dcps.testing@dc.gov.

Volunteering

Volunteers who work directly with students on a regular basis or have the potential to be alone with a student are required to complete the DCPS volunteer clearance process. Volunteers must have a confirmed placement in a DC public school before going through this process.

Volunteers are processed and fingerprinted on a walk-in basis on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am - 3:30 pm**. DCPS Central Office is located at 1200 First Street NE—10th floor, Washington, DC 20002, one block from the NOMA/Gallaudet (formerly New York Ave) Metro stop on the redline.

Other opportunities to volunteer include, but are not limited to, the following:

Special Activities

Teacher Appreciation Coordinator & Volunteers

Fundraising

Spring Auction/Gala
Grant Writing

Clerical Work

Photocopying

Classroom Help

General classroom assistance
Recess Volunteers
Field trip chaperone and/or driver
Home room parent/party assistant
Tutoring

Miscellaneous

Uniform resale coordinator
Sorting assistance
Computer help

Healthy School Snack Suggestions

- Fruits
- Unsweetened applesauce, fruit cups and canned fruit
- Dried fruit
- Frozen fruit
- Fruit leathers
- Fruit salads
- Popsicles
- Smoothies
- Vegetables, including broccoli, carrots, celery sticks, tomatoes, etc.
- Salads
- Animal crackers
- Rice cakes
- Popcorn
- Baked Tortilla chips
- Yogurt
- Low-fat cheese

Additional website resources for healthy school snack ideas:

http://www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/healthy_school_celebration.pdf

http://www.betterschoolfood.org/downloads/resources/BSF_Healthy_Snack_List.pdf