



## Gateway Lab School Renewal Application Initial Report - School Response – 11/22/19

The following information was requested:

1. **Educational Program** – See attached zip file with Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development workgroup answers.
  - a. **Links to the Social Studies Coalition Scope & Sequence and Lesson Plans:**  
<https://elde.schoology.com/group/1585854475/materials#/group/1585854475/materials>
  - b. **Links to the Science Coalition Scope & Sequence and Lesson Plans:**  
<https://elde.schoology.com/group/522186447>
2. **The plan on how to recruit students and teachers** as the grade levels expand will include but not be limited to: Expanding the Marketing Plan to extend to daycares and pre-schools in the New Castle County area. GLS plans to offer programs for children to attend with their parents to experience some of the arts integrated instruction offered at GLS. The programs will include play based learning that is experiential, creative, imaginative, and incorporates visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning. Materials will be created for the Pre-school aged learner to illustrate the power of arts integrated learning to stimulate interest and hold a child’s attention. It is our desire to collaborate with the Child Find program as detailed below.

“Children with special needs can often benefit from a number of therapies and, generally, the sooner they receive treatment, the better the outcomes will be. But, how do you know if a child needs help? [The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) requires each state to implement early identification policies to locate and refer children who may have a disability to that state’s [early intervention \(EI\) program](#). Although IDEA is a federal law, each state sets its own EI policies and implements its own programs, much like Medicaid. Not all states will call it early intervention or EI, but states generally use similar terms meaning early identification and service for children with disabilities. While certain elements of EI remain consistent between the states, parents and educators should contact their state’s education agency to learn about state-specific policies and procedures.

### Components of the Child Find Program

There are two methods for identifying and referring a child to EI. The first is a referral, usually by an educator or a parent. The second is the [Child Find program](#). Mandated by IDEA, Child Find continuously searches for and evaluates children who may have a disability with the use of Child Find activities, which can vary widely from school district to school district. For example, one district might hold periodic conferences to train staff on policies, while another may hold playgroups, during which parents are asked to complete a developmental milestone questionnaire.

At least seven main elements are included in a Child Find program:

- 1) **Definition of Target Population:** The state defines the criteria that determine which children are eligible for help. Some states expand the target population to include at-risk children, not just those who have disabilities or developmental delays.
- 2) **Public Awareness:** The state raises public awareness about children who need help and the services available to them, targeting parents, caregivers, educators, school staff, physicians and others.
- 3) **Referral and Intake:** A child is referred for services; specific procedures vary, depending on the state.
- 4) **Screening and Identification:** The child is screened for possible disabilities or developmental delays.
- 5) **Eligibility Determination:** Results of the screening are compared to the state's eligibility guidelines, which must be consistent with federal regulations.
- 6) **Tracking:** The state tracks and follows up with children who are receiving services.
- 7) **Interagency Coordination:** Some states have multiple agencies that share responsibilities mandated by IDEA. Resources must be coordinated to ensure availability of services."

**Teachers** will be recruited through Join Delaware Schools, Indeed, attending College Career Fairs, and of course networking with faculty, staff and board members to find the very best candidates to implement instruction at GLS. The AIM Academy in PA offers an Institute for teacher training. More than 6,000 professionals and parents have participated in AIM Institute programming and access to experts opportunities. Their content and programming resources reflect the expertise of world-renowned researchers and experts in the field of early literacy and learning differences. They also have interns who have been specifically trained to teach students with learning differences, who would be very desirable candidates for Gateway Lab School. AIM Academy is modeled on the Lab School of Washington, as is GLS.

3. **"Mission Creep"** is a term used to describe the drifting away from an organization's original mission and vision as a result of failing to focus on the principles and beliefs that constitute the organization's foundation. In the case of a charter school it is drifting away from the original charter's philosophy and tenants. The way to avoid "Mission Creep" is to clearly define the expectations for leadership in the initial hiring of key roles e.g. \*Head of School, \*Principal, and \*Academic Dean. The philosophy and beliefs of an organization filter down through its constituents from the top management positions. These folks are the key influencers of an organization. In addition, after these leaders are hired it is imperative to follow up with evaluations that measure the fidelity of their leadership as compared to the mission and vision of the organization, on a regular basis. Their educational philosophy must match the school's, as reflected in daily decision making, written documents, communication with faculty, staff and parents, board reports and literally every aspect of school life. In the case of the Head of School, this is the board's responsibility. In the case of other leadership positions, it is the Head of School that is assessing mission and vision fidelity. \*See attached Job Descriptions.
4. **The Mission of Gateway Lab School is not changing.** The school has added a Mission Focus statement for ease of memory, with concise, clear language for all. It is the GLS hope that teachers, staff, students and parents/guardians/grandparents will all be able to readily recite the new focus statement with ease.

