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Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Barbara L. Baker

To: Mrs. Donna Gunning, Executive Director Office of Policy and Fiscal Analysis Office of Finance

From: Dr. Nicole Miller, Chief Academic Officer

Subject: ARP ESSER Programmatic Memo #1

Date: February 22, 2022

Within the original ARP ESSER grant application, GCPS identified extended learning opportunities such as after school math/ELA academics, tutoring, evening high school etc. as a strategy to provide necessary intervention to close learning gaps.

Through the school improvement process, some schools are finding the need to offer instructional programs in additional areas beyond ELA and math, such as science. Over the course of the pandemic, science instruction was significantly impacted due to the various forms of virtual, hybrid, and modified in-person learning models. During this time, it was challenging to provide the hands-on science instruction that students are normally accustomed too. As such, it is not surprising that schools are identifying this area as an area of need for extended learning opportunities to fill learning gaps especially as schools work to prepare students to reach grade level standards as well as perform on the upcoming MISA assessment. This memo is to clarify that GCPS intends to allow extended learning opportunities based on the specific needs of students and schools in the area of science. The following information will guide our work in this area.

Eight practices are identified within the NGSS as essential for all students to learn across all the grade-level concepts and standards. We often hear this process described as being able to think like a scientist or an engineer and these are essential skills for all students. Students should be able to understand, discuss and demonstrate these skills while involved in investigations and/or hands-on experiences that take place in a classroom, lab, or natural world. The eight practices are as follow:

Science and Engineering Practices - NGSS

1. Asking questions (science) and defining problems (engineering)
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using Mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations (science) and designing solutions (engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Extended learning opportunities in the area of science will focus on the above high-quality practices.

Should a school identify social studies as an area of need through their School Improvement Plan, we will use the same process for the inclusion of necessary content in extended learning opportunities following the standards and practices associated with social studies. This will allow all core content areas to be covered through extended

learning opportunities. Finally, to provide clarification evening high school and after school tutoring would encompass any credit bearing course at the high school level. We will of course continue to provide opportunities in ELA and math based on the evidenced based practices described in our application as appropriate.

If there are any questions specific to these instructional opportunities, please feel free to contact Dr. Nicole Miller, Chief Academic Officer at nicole.miller@garrettcountyschools.org.