GRDC Mission

Embracing individual excellence and unique community resources, Gold River Discovery Center’s mission is to inspire, prepare, and empower each student to achieve his or her full potential as a responsible global citizen, critical thinker and innovative life-long learner by providing students with a collaborative learning community committed to delivering a superior education that is continually evolving and meaningful in an ever-changing world.
Why K-8?

- Studies have shown that the K-8 environment is a better grade level configuration to navigate the tumultuous middle school years.

- Read on to find out WHY K-8?
Why K-8?

• Students at K-8 schools have:
  – Higher levels of academic achievement, both in mathematics and reading.  
    (Coladarci et. al., 2002; Offenberg, 2001; Yakimowski & Connolly, 2001)
  – Higher rates of attendance.  
    (Pardini, 2002; Coladarci et. al., 2002)
  – Better performance in terms of emotional and social outcomes such as self-esteem, leadership, and attitudes towards school.  
    (Weiss & Kipnes, 2006; Simmons & Blyth, 1987)
Why K-8?

- Our K-8 school is closer to home thus we provide an even greater sense of community and personalization.
  (Mizell, 2005; Herman, 2004)

- Parents like the longer grade span which allows for families with several children to have siblings in the same school for longer periods of time
  (Pardini, 2002)
Why K-8?

• Parents often praise the greater sense of community that they feel exists in K-8 schools

• Several studies have noted the stronger relationships that seem to exist between:
  – Students
  – Teachers
  – Students and Teachers
  – Parents and Teachers

(Herman, 2004; Pardini, 2002; Offenberg, 2001; Yakimowski & Connolly, 2001).
Compare GRDC’s Program

• National Middle School Association’s *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), organizes the 16 research-based characteristics of effective middle grades education.

• GRDC’s middle grades program address ALL characteristics of the effective middle grades learning environment.
Characteristics of Successful Schools

National Middle School Association’s *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), organizes the 16 research-based characteristics of effective middle grades education into three areas that are critical to preparing students for the future:

- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Leadership and Organization
- Culture and Community
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Educators value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them. *(Value Young Adolescents)*
- Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning. *(Active Learning)*
- Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant. *(Challenging Curriculum)*
- Educators use multiple learning and teaching approaches. *(Multiple Learning Approaches)*
- Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it. *(Varied Assessments)*
Leadership and Organization

- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision. *(Shared Vision)*

- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices. *(Committed Leaders)*

- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration. *(Courageous & Collaborative Leaders)*

- Ongoing professional development reflects best educational practices. *(Professional Development)*

- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships. *(Organizational Structures)*
Culture and Community

- The school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all. *(School Environment)*

- Every student's academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate. *(Adult Advocate)*

- Comprehensive guidance and support services meet the needs of young adolescents. *(Guidance Services)*

- Health and wellness are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies. *(Health & Wellness)*

- The school actively involves families in the education of their children. *(Family Involvement)*

- The school includes community and business partners. *(Community & Business)*
GRDC – Communication
Facebook
GRDC – Communication Facebook

Non-Facebook Users:
You can still check our webpage to see all that is going on @ GRDC’s Facebook page – However you will be limited in your ability to interact with the social media stream.
GRDC K-8 Initiatives

• Focus on:
  – Comprehensive Balanced Literacy
  – Writer’s Workshop
  – Project Based Learning
  – 21st Century Skills
  – Technology - One to One Computing

• Strategic Plan

• Strong relationship with PTA
Literacy on a Continuum

GRDC progresses from Balanced Literacy in K-5 to Comprehensive Balanced Literacy in 6-8 fostering a smooth transition for students and powerful strategy work to prepare them for high school.
SJUSD & Google Apps

Google Apps for Education

Enter your username and password

Google Apps for Education is a suite of Web-based tools that allows San Juan Unified School District staff and students to generate and share content, ideas and work.

To log into Google Apps, please enter your District-provided email address and password below.

Google Apps in the Classroom

Access step-by-step tutorials for all the Google Apps products in the Online Training Center.

Attend one of the weekly Professional Development webinar series.

Use the Student Account Look Up tool to view student network account credentials and reset student passwords.

GRDC students are the only middle school students to have full access to 21st Century tools & the ability to bring their own computers to school.
GRDC Student Academic Achievement

- GRDC students outperform their grade level peers enrolled at comprehensive middle schools and specialty programs.
  - If you have concerns regarding how well your student will be challenged at GRDC, in comparison with a High Achiever/Accelerated program, please give the school office a call. We would happy to sit down and discuss empirical, standardized data that will address your concerns and illustrate our students success.