



Golestan School

320 San Carlos Ave, El Cerrito, CA 510.704.8541

Golestan's Approach to Teaching & Learning in Elementary School



We are Kind.
We are Thoughtful.
We are Courageous.

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Golestan's Mission

At Golestan Education, we partner with children, families and educators to create joyful learning environments that are collaborative, grounding and connected to the natural world. We do challenging and meaningful work that creates a community of kind, thoughtful, and courageous learners who will embrace diversity and steward our earth for future generations.

Golestan Education fulfills its mission through the following offerings:

- *Our preschool and afterschool programs use a fully integrated, experiential based approach in a Persian language immersion environment.*
- *Our elementary school uses an academically rigorous, project-based learning approach with a global perspective.*
- *The Colab is a pro-bono consultancy that collaborates with local and global educators and community organizations to create their ideal learning environment for children*

EL Education at Golestan

Our Elementary school uses an academically rigorous, project based learning approach that integrates character development and academics called EL Education. EL Education is a national nonprofit that partners with K-12 schools to engage students and teachers in work that is challenging and meaningful. Their mission is to “create classrooms where teachers can fulfill their highest aspirations, and students achieve more than they think is possible, becoming active contributors to building a better world.” The mission of this transformational organization aligns closely with that of Golestan and since 2022, we have been using their open-resource materials to help us develop the curriculum and instruction at Golestan.

At EL Education schools, student achievement is measured in three ways:

1. Mastery of Knowledge and Skills,
2. Character, and
3. High-Quality Work.

Each year at Golestan, we create a strategic plan with three goals that align to these three areas of student achievement. Our staff collect data and collaboratively evaluate their growth in all three areas to make sure that Golestan children are learning beyond the basic knowledge and skills of the California State Standards. Our focus is comprehensive, both the quality of the work they create and their character, two important skills they will need in their lives outside of school.

Our Values

We are kind. We are thoughtful. We are courageous.

On kindness: *We are kind by caring for and cooperating with others.*

At Golestan, we believe children are inherently fair and can choose to be kind. Helping them develop a disposition of kindness in all their interactions is the foundation of our social emotional learning at Golestan. When a child is kind, it is the lens through which they see themselves and their place in the world. They strive to be helpers in every situation in order to make the world a more peaceful and just place.

On being thoughtful: *We are thoughtful by reflecting on how our words and actions impact others and by challenging ourselves to do high quality work.*

We believe it is our job as adults to prepare children for a rich and fulfilling life ahead. To that end, it is important to us that the children coming out of Golestan have an innate awareness of the people and the world around them. To be thoughtful is to understand that every choice we make in life - be it small or large - has the potential to impact others, either negatively or positively.

We also believe it is our responsibility to give children the opportunity to value effort and thought in their learning, and creating high quality work that reflects this learning.

On courage: *We are courageous by making good choices and taking risks to try new things.*

Be it in the dining room, on the playground, in the classroom, or in a difficult social situation, it takes courage to grow from difficult situations. Our dream is for our children to face these difficult situations with courage - even when it feels impossibly hard - so that they may grow physically, cognitively, and emotionally. By giving our children the opportunity to push through these difficult situations, not only are we showing them that we trust them (thereby building confidence), but we are helping them shed the fears that inhibit people from overcoming obstacles in life.

Our Learning Environments

At Golestan we have created a learning space that is joyful while grounding. Free of clutter and sensory over-stimulation, the school feels warm and homelike. The classrooms promote collaboration and project-based learning with group work tables, kinetic layouts, and adjustable tables and seating to accommodate each child's needs on any given day.

Every classroom has anywhere from one to six sinks so as not to inhibit our teachers from integrating messy hands-on work in the classroom. While we consciously bring the outdoors inside with large windows, plants, and flowers, our outdoor classrooms are also available to all our students for any number of projects and disciplines, including science, garden, cooking, maker's lab, carpentry, art, and so much more.

When you walk down the corridor in the school, you will notice soft music playing in the background, and often in the classrooms, to complement the hum that comes from joyful active learning in the classrooms. You will also notice the scent of delicious food cooking in the kitchen and the warmth of the natural materials and colors of all the furnishings and rugs. We strive to create the sense of being in a loving and calming home.

Our outdoor spaces are alive and promote risk-taking and physical engagement by giving the children the opportunity to build their own play spaces. Hay bales, planks of wood, wine barrels, tree stumps, and crates are the building blocks the children use to create obstacle courses; in this process, the children are presented with many opportunities for proprioceptive input to their large muscles (carrying heavy things, climbing, jumping). Hammocks provide swinging motion for regulating their vestibular systems. The campus is home to flowers and dozens of trees (mostly fruit bearing) that together give the feeling of being in a magical garden where anything can be - and is possible.

Curriculum and Instruction

The Role of Standards

National and California State academic standards are the learning goals that all students are expected to meet or exceed by the end of each grade level. We incorporate the Common Core State Standards for [English Language Arts](#) and [Math](#), the [Next Generation Science Standards](#), and the [California State Social Studies Standards](#) (including geography). We also draw from the [Social Justice Standards](#) from Learning for Justice. Teachers at Golestan work together to ensure that a set of school-wide, standards-based curriculum maps act as the foundation for all planning and instruction. The maps incorporate all required standards and skills, and are revised as needed over time. The maps describe a vertical and horizontal sequence of learning expeditions and projects, and define

the key content and skills that need to be addressed every year with each class and across disciplines.

Designing Learning Expeditions

Learning expeditions at Golestan make content standards come alive for students and are designed with the whole child in mind. These transdisciplinary, long-term, in-depth studies offer real-world connections that inspire students toward a deeper understanding of our world and their place within it. Learning expeditions involve students in original research, critical thinking and problem solving, and they build character along with academic skills. Social-emotional learning, social justice, and environmental stewardship are integrated into our learning expeditions.

Students at Golestan learn from fieldwork, experts, and service learning in addition to learning from texts. They use the natural and social environments of their communities as sites for purposeful fieldwork and service connected to academic work. Students working in the field are active investigators using the research tools, techniques of inquiry, and standards of presentation used by professionals in the field. In addition to having students conduct research outside the school, teachers bring experts from the community into the classroom. These experiences maximize students' motivation to learn.

Culture and Character

The EL Education model fosters and celebrates students' character development by building a culture in which students and staff work together to become effective learners and ethical people who contribute to a better world. At Golestan, we model and discuss our three school values every day. The school promotes a spirit of crew: students and staff work together as a team to sustain a learning community where everyone belongs and can succeed.

Crew

The culture of crew impels all members of a school community to work together as a team. The structure of Crew—daily meetings to support everyone's learning and growth—makes time for students to build meaningful relationships with peers and their teachers, to reflect on and monitor academic progress, and to focus on character development. Crew is also an opportunity to help students gain strategies and skills for reflective self-awareness and self-regulation to help them feel grounded. Teachers incorporate daily mindfulness practices throughout the day and they teach self-regulation tools and social skills explicitly. Crew is also an engine for equity and inclusion, a place where all students feel

they belong and can succeed. Crew leaders strategically plan Crew meetings to address and assess these multiple goals, anchored in our [Golestan Values Matrix](#).

Risk Taking & Courage

Golestan promotes a spirit of risk-taking and courage in the classroom, the dining room, in field work and during outdoor play. This creates natural opportunities for leadership and collaboration as groups of students and teachers face challenges, both alone and together. Reflection is a vital component of risk-taking, so that each experience is a rich opportunity for learning about oneself, one's peers, and the world.

Making difficult choices that show courage in trying new things or being an upstander are always celebrated. Teachers are thoughtful in their planning of learning experiences to ensure physical and emotional safety, while also promoting risk-taking and courageous action by lovingly and respectfully helping children push through their fears and inhibitions. This is a safe place to learn how to take risks, both emotionally, and physically.

Literacy

The goal of the elementary school literacy program is to help children become thoughtful, inquisitive, creative, and critical readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Reading is a complex process that requires both decoding and linguistic comprehension in order for children to comprehend what they read. The reading process includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. In the early grades at Golestan there is an explicit focus on daily phonics instruction to support decoding individual words and supporting orthographic mapping. In the older grades, we build on this foundation through word study that allows students to decode multisyllabic words and identify root words and affixes and their meanings across texts and disciplines.

Since the curriculum is transdisciplinary, children of all ages read engaging texts about concepts and topics within their expeditions, while their reading strategies and skills are nurtured and challenged. This is done through a wide variety of genres, as children read picture books, nonfiction books, chapter books, novels, and poetry. These books are used for vocabulary development, comprehension and fluency within the context of the expedition. Children concurrently develop their phonemic awareness and phonics skills through multi-sensory small group

and whole group instruction using decodable books and phonics games. Our balanced approach is based in the [Science of Reading](#).

Writing is giving voice to children's ideas and identity as a form of self-expression and social change. Through written communication, children feel empowered with the knowledge that their thoughts and ideas have the power to inform, persuade, and entertain. Generating, discussing, and organizing coherent ideas onto paper helps children become confident and capable writers. Through self-assessment rubrics and questions during teacher- and peer-conferences, our young writers use feedback to help them improve their writing.

We use a workshop approach to teach writing. In writing, students explore a range of writing genres: opinion and argument writing, informational writing, poetry, and narrative. Through whole group mini-lessons, one-on-one conferring, small group work, and peer conferencing, they learn to make a plan for their writing, write with fluency and organization, and communicate effectively with different audiences. Students build their craft as writers, and develop precision in writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation, and grammar). Students learn about the writing process which includes revising work and editing pieces for publication.

Kindergarten & Grade 1

Kindergarten and first grade students are immersed in a strong culture of literacy throughout their day, which helps them see themselves as authentic readers, writers, and communicators. At this age, children begin to form their identities as readers. Teachers foster a love of reading through read-alouds and a print-rich environment. Children develop concepts of print, phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, and the knowledge of how stories work to support their emerging reading skills. As they move through the year, students learn decoding strategies and work on fluency. As the year progresses, they work toward using these strategies with greater independence to read with accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. When they move into more complex texts, they pay attention to characters, setting, and plot, as well as becoming experts in the nonfiction texts they read.

Our young writers learn to communicate their thoughts and ideas through drawings and labels. As their knowledge of letters and sounds increases, they begin to encode those sounds to letters using inventive spelling to form words and short sentences. Students practice letter formation, spacing, and directionality in their writing.

In our Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms we use the University of Florida Literacy Institute Foundations program to develop foundational decoding and encoding skills.

Grades 2 & 3

In our combined second and third grade classroom, children explore their identity as readers and writers. Teachers consider each child's developmental level and academic needs when planning whole group and small group lessons, and individual conferences during reading and writing time. The children learn to select appropriately leveled texts and build their reading stamina. Teachers also individually coach students in order to enhance their decoding and comprehension skills. As writers, children are encouraged to get their many thoughts and ideas onto paper, while being authentically guided through the writing process to draft, revise, edit, and finally publish.

In our second and third grade classroom, we continue to use the University of Florida Literacy Institute Foundations program to develop foundational decoding and encoding skills, focused on more complex spelling patterns and reading multisyllabic words with fluency.

Grades 4 & 5

As students transition to upper elementary, they become more independent and their reading and writing skills and strategies become more sophisticated. Having mastered most decoding skills, the upper elementary students focus on comprehension and the nuances of literary analysis. During whole-group read-alouds and small-group book clubs, plot structures, characters' motivations, conflicts, and resolutions are discussed in great detail. Children read both fiction and nonfiction in a wide variety of genres. Our fourth and fifth grade students also engage in word analysis using texts from their expeditions. These skills transfer into their independent reading and writing.

In writing, the emphasis is on understanding how to organize ideas in coherent ways based on the type of writing, with more time applying the conventions of written language through revising and editing with peers and teachers. Students craft sophisticated narratives, opinion essays, poetry, and informational text based on the learning expeditions they are investigating. Students practice selecting evidence from complex texts, field work and academic discussions to support their ideas. Students determine which evidence is most appropriate to support their claims and build their skills of elaboration to strengthen their arguments.

Mathematics

At Golestan, the math program is designed to build a community of fluent mathematicians, skilled problem solvers, and creative thinkers. The goal is to help students construct their own mathematical knowledge by working with three dimensional materials for real life application. Students learn not only how to use algorithms, but how to think mathematically and tackle authentic, real-world math problems. Teachers encourage risk-taking, sense-making, curiosity, and wonder, and introduce new concepts in ways that allow children to move from the concrete to the pictorial to the abstract.

In addition to building skills and fluency, the program focuses on developing mathematical habits of mind: perseverance, precision, reasoning, and logic. Teachers use ongoing assessments and tasks from the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative (SVMi) to differentiate and drive instruction. Students share their mathematical reasoning with one another and talk about each other's thinking, which creates a community of mathematicians that not only perform at high levels but are able to engage with one another's thinking in increasingly complex ways.

Kindergarten & Grade 1

In Kindergarten, we focus on representing and comparing whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; and describing shapes and space. More learning time in Kindergarten is devoted to developing number sense than to other topics. Children use numbers, including written numerals, to represent quantities and to solve quantitative problems, such as counting objects in a set; counting out a given number of objects; comparing sets or numerals; and modeling simple joining and separating situations with sets of objects, or eventually with equations.

First graders focus on developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20; developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value, including grouping in tens and ones; developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units; and reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.

All of these mathematical concepts and skills are integrated into the learning expeditions in kindergarten and first grade at Golestan. We look for math opportunities in our science, social studies and literacy explorations both inside the class during circle and play centers, as well as outdoors during garden, cooking and physical education classes. Through daily calendar routines, Golestan children build their conceptual understanding and practice writing numbers to 30 and 100, in kindergarten and first grade respectively.

Grades 2 & 3

Second graders focus on extending understanding of base-ten notation to three digits; building fluency with addition and subtraction with two digit numbers; using standard units of measure; and describing and analyzing shapes. They also begin to explore repeated addition as a foundational understanding of multiplication.

Third graders focus on developing their understanding of multiplication and division and strategies to do both within 100, including the use of rectangular arrays as an area model. They also develop an understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1) and practice describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes.

In our second and third grade classroom these concepts and skills are developed both within and beyond the expedition. Instruction is balanced between inquiry-based problem solving and explicit skills instruction. Mathematical concepts and skills are regularly applied to word problems within their expeditions. Students are required to model how they solve problems and listen to the different problem solving strategies their peers use.

Grades 4 & 5

Fourth graders focus on developing understanding and fluency with multi-digit multiplication, and developing understanding of dividing to find quotients involving multi-digit dividends; developing an understanding of fraction equivalence, addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators, and multiplication of fractions by whole numbers; understanding that geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties, such as having parallel sides, perpendicular sides, particular angle measures, and symmetry.

Fifth graders develop fluency with addition and subtraction of fractions, and develop an understanding of the multiplication of fractions and of division of fractions. They also extend their understanding of division to 2-digit divisors, integrate decimal fractions into the place value system and develop an

understanding of operations with decimals to hundredths. They also develop an understanding of volume, relating it to multiplication and addition.

In order to build these conceptual understandings and mathematical skills, instruction is balanced between operational fluency, application to problem solving and mathematical discussions. There is an emphasis on math talks which allow students to express their own mathematical ideas and also learn to value the diverse problem solving strategies of their peers. These discussions create a mathematical community where students are required to analyze and critique the reasoning of others. Students are encouraged to develop a more advanced mathematical understanding of the world.

Science and Social Studies

[Social studies](#) and [science](#) standards form the basis for our inquiry-based units, called learning expeditions, and are driven by guiding questions and big ideas. Expeditions are transdisciplinary, integrating knowledge and skills from across the disciplines. Reading, writing, mathematics, research, and public speaking are common components. Through real-world application and collaborative experiential learning, children develop their understanding of the world and their place in it. Our developmentally-appropriate learning expeditions are designed to foster children's natural curiosities and develop conceptual understanding of the issues facing our world today.

The arts are often integrated as students research and prepare their final products. The expeditions are highly focused, real world applications of learning meant to engage students' curiosity and motivate them to seek answers outside the classroom.

Example Expeditions

Kindergarten & Grade 1

How do each individual's unique attributes contribute to a strong community? In this expedition we explore how we are similar and different to others in our classroom community, and the value of that diversity. We begin by learning about our personal interests and families through Gol Gol of the Day and our story writing journals. We also learn about the 12 tools in our toolbox and how we can use them to regulate our feelings and solve problems with friends. We learn about how "all bodies are good bodies" and how we can use our voices to stand up for ourselves and others when someone is being unkind or unfair. We culminate the expedition with an exploration of how humans receive and send messages with sound and light, both in our everyday lives and during diverse cultural celebrations.

What can we learn from marine animals?: This expedition uses the ocean as a case study to understand the principle of structure/function of live organisms. We begin with exploring the deep ocean, connecting this to our studies of light and sound earlier in the year. As we explore different layers of the ocean, student questions guide our inquiry. We use our imagination and creativity to collaboratively write story plays and bring them to life as directors and actors. We integrate the lessons we learn from sea animals as morals in these stories.

Grade 2 & 3

What's the matter with our food? In this expedition students learn about the properties of matter (solid, liquid and gas) through food and cooking. They develop vocabulary around the properties of solids and liquids, while also learning about different dietary needs from toddlers to elders - as well as medical conditions that require specific diets. The students visit an assisted living facility to learn about how meals are planned and prepared for different residents, and have an opportunity to meet some of the residents and interview them about their dietary preferences and needs. The expedition culminates with the development and execution of a recipe that shows their thoughtfulness for someone else's needs.

What is a Wildlife Habitat Garden and why are they important? In this expedition, students go through the process of learning about different habitats; learning about the plants and animals that live there. They explore the concept of a wildlife habitat garden and the four components necessary for an open space to get certified as a wildlife habitat garden. In this process we deepen our understanding of pollinators, specifically through a study of beetles, butterflies, and bees. Lastly, the students will work to assess a local garden to become a certified wildlife habitat garden.

Grade 4 & 5

Routes to Roots: Who We Are & How We Came to Be Here In this unit students embark on a discovery of self identity, family roots and how part of their personal history came to be in this place, Golestan School in El Cerrito, CA. Students investigate a story deep in their lineage before they came to the United States and how they came to be in the San Francisco Bay Area via a family interview. They then take that information and craft a fictional story from a real event culminating in a realistic fiction narrative. To add a contemporary liveness, we transform this story into a graphic novel. As an extension of this 'character study,'

students investigate the concept of artifacts, ethnicity, family lineage, heritage, family recipes, and maps that pertain to the route that family member(s) had taken, and artifacts that represent their journey. The whole class presents their findings in a suitcase, a representation of the journey taken and the echo of transitory lives. The entire class celebrates their art and celebration in a museum and family potluck celebration titled “Routes to Roots.”

Our Nature is Interconnection. In this expedition students have the opportunity to consider the interconnection of all living beings, not only between the humans in their lives but also plants, animals, and the Earth itself. Students study the elements of a living system, including decomposers, producers, and consumers, as well as the elements of our systems at Golestan. They visit a local garden, Blake Gardens, and have an opportunity to collect notes and interview a docent botanist, to support their connection with plants and animals there, and cultivate their sense of responsibility for the world around us. Students then have the opportunity to research and gather information to complete a field guide of plants and animals at Blake Gardens. The expedition culminates with the students practicing interconnection through sharing their learning with younger students at the school during a Blake Gardens joint Crew.

Additional Languages

At Golestan we encourage students to explore their personal language histories as well as the languages that are spoken in their communities and around the world. Each teacher who speaks a second or third language is encouraged to use words and phrases from these languages in the classroom with the help of a standard language guideline that is shared with faculty across grades. The goal of the language program at Golestan is exposure to many different languages, to the sounds and tones of those languages and to build basic familiarity with commands, greetings, colors, etc. We do not expect students to build oral fluency or literacy skills in these additional languages, but we do hope to build empathy and curiosity about the diversity of the world we live in.

Art

Art is an integral part of the children’s daily experience in their classes. Teachers integrate art explorations and projects in their learning expeditions. They also give children ample time each day to explore their own creativity and interests through art. Students work with a range of media from year to year including but not limited to clay, sewing, collage, paint, sculpture and much more.

Music

Our music program uses the ORFF approach; it focuses on the fundamentals of music, including rhythm, melody and form. Dance and movement are also integral to this approach. We incorporate folk songs, world music and cultural elements to expose students to a wide variety of musical styles. The experience is fun and engaging while integrating the learning that happens in the expeditions across disciplines. Students learn to participate in a musical ensemble with ORFF instruments in order to learn collaboration and teamwork. We aim to create a musical culture in which every child participates joyfully and confidently.

Garden

Our garden program offers a hands-on opportunity to practice our commitment to environmental stewardship. Students learn multiple ways to grow food; they prepare, plant, care, harvest, compost and reflect in our outdoor learning gardens and farm space. By reflecting on the origin and impact of our choices, we teach awareness through sustainable gardening practices. The food we grow is tasted fresh in the gardens, used in cooking classes and by the kitchen team for school lunches and snacks. In 2023 we became a Certified Wildlife Habitat Garden as part of a class expedition.

Cooking

Food is an integral part of the Golestan experience. Our approach to nurturing the whole child starts with what they put in their bodies. We teach children this both through what we feed them (fresh, wholesome, 100% organic, home-made meals made without any preservatives or hormones) and also our cooking classes. We attempt to source all the foods used in our kitchen and cooking classes from our garden or local farms. We use cooking as a medium for learning technical skills as well as as scientific experimentation, especially when learning about physical sciences such as chemistry and physics. We also use cooking as an opportunity for applied mathematics, counting in the early years to more complex proportions, ratios and fractions in the older years. Cooking is often also part of our social studies expeditions when integrating global studies and sharing our respective heritage cultures with our community.

Physical Education

Our physical education program integrates the learning that happens in the expeditions in a dedicated physical education class. Children develop their gross motor skills through agility exercises, warm ups on and off the ball, leading into a team game. The social-emotional skills of cooperation, boundaries, sharing, and safety are developed during these team games.

Student Engaged Assessment

Leaders of Their Own Learning

Golestan assessment practices motivate students to become leaders of their own learning. Students track their progress toward standards-based learning targets, set goals, and reflect on growth and challenges. Students and teachers regularly analyze quantitative and qualitative data that informs goals and instruction. Students present evidence of their achievement and growth regularly through celebrations of learning, student-led family conferences in 4th and 5th grades, and 5th grade portfolio presentations.

Models, Critiques and Descriptive Feedback

The EL Education model compels students to produce high-quality work that demonstrates complexity, craftsmanship, and authenticity. Teachers plan deeply to support students in creating products that demonstrate these qualities. They support students to create products for audiences beyond teachers and parents (e.g., a whole-class scientific study of a local pond, resulting in a water-quality report for the city board of health). Creating real work for real audiences motivates students to meet standards and engage in revision. In the process, they develop perseverance and realize that they can do more than they thought possible.

To create a culture of excellence, teachers have high expectations for all students and support all students with the scaffolding and equitable opportunities they need to achieve excellence. Students analyze models of excellence—student work and professional work—and use those models to build criteria for excellence in that genre of work. They receive targeted feedback from teachers, experts, and peers based on established criteria and revise their work through multiple drafts.

Teachers analyze student work samples, task descriptors, and rubrics in professional learning to develop a common understanding of how to build complex, engaging tasks and how to support students to achieve high-quality work and meet standards.

Celebrations of Learning

At Golestan we hold two Celebrations of Learning each year to celebrate the learning of all students. Families and community members are invited to serve as an authentic audience for these celebrations. Teachers prepare students for a musical performance and also a presentation of their own learning. They often create protocols that enable family members and community members to ask questions about student work and engage with the learning process.

Standards-based Grading & Progress Reports

Progress reports at Golestan are standards-based, narrative reports without traditional letter graders. Teachers often ask students to track their progress toward meeting learning targets during class time. Conferences are held twice a year to communicate progress to families. During conferences teachers share data in the areas of social emotional learning, reading, writing, math and expeditions and have the opportunity to partner with families to make support plans for the child.

Beginning the Spring semester of 3rd grade, these conferences are student-led. Families are supported to understand the structure, purpose and expectations of the conference. The students share student work during the conference, as well as their own reflections on what they have learned academically and socially, and how they have applied the school values in their work.

Passage Presentations

In fifth grade, students are supported to create a passage presentation to present their readiness to move forward to middle school. Through these presentations students will demonstrate their commitment to the school mission of embracing diversity and environmental stewardship, and will share examples of their academic growth as well as their growth with the school values (kind, thoughtful, courageous). Families and community members are invited to assess these presentations, share feedback, and celebrate the children.

Conclusion

At Golestan our definition of student achievement includes academic achievement, but also takes into account the development of children's character and their ability to create work of high quality. We believe that academic success is built on strong character qualities of kindness, collaboration, thoughtfulness, persistence and courage, and that character is shaped through engaging and challenging academic work. We expect that when children graduate from fifth grade at Golestan they have had meaningful learning experiences that have helped them develop the skills to not only be successful in school but contribute to a better world for all.

At Golestan Education, we partner with children, families and educators to create joyful learning environments that are collaborative, grounding and connected to the natural world. We do challenging and meaningful work that creates a community of kind, thoughtful, and courageous learners who will embrace diversity and steward our earth for future generations.