



**POLARIS**

LEARNING LABS



## HOW WE SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS

The commitment to honoring and developing each person's gifts is at the core of our mission at New Garden Friends School. The concept of Polaris Learning Labs was conceived to ensure that each student in our inclusive community is provided with the intellectual, social, and emotional skills they need to take their next steps with confidence and compassion.

At NGFS, our concern for students' social and emotional wellness and growth does not take a back seat to academic endeavors. We are committed to healthy, balanced, and developmentally appropriate levels of support and challenge.

Polaris Learning Labs are staffed by our Learning Specialist Team, including the Director of Literacy Instruction and Math and Reading Specialists. The Labs encompass executive functioning skills, support, and enrichment.

**LEVEL 1 SERVICES ARE INCLUDED IN OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.**

# LEVEL 1

**All NGFS students have access to Level 1 services:**

- Explicit instruction in executive functioning skills from our faculty throughout the year, as developmentally appropriate by level
- As needed, intermittent tutorial or enrichment support from faculty and/or Learning Specialists in small group settings
- Personalized plans for student support and extension based on strengths and/or struggles, created by the Learning Specialist in collaboration with faculty
- Access to and scheduling for more intensive privately paid tutoring with recommended providers who can aid students on campus during the school day or after school
- Accommodations for students with demonstrated need or ability with or without up-to-date psychoeducational testing





# LEVEL 2

## READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS SERVICES

Families of students who qualify for accommodations or extension based on psychoeducational testing or demonstrated ability or need may choose to participate in additional individualized learning options available with Level 2 services.

Level 2 services also include all Skills Support and Enrichment included in Level 1.

# READING SUPPORT

## GRADES 1-4

**There are several ways students can receive additional support.**

In the lower grades (1-4), Level 2 reading support is provided from an Orton-Gillingham trained specialist and a specialist with advanced training in reading instruction. Support is offered in numerous forms, depending on the needs of the reader. In the early grades, there is a significant developmental variation in the acquisition of reading skills. Level 2 support is designed to support students during this exciting time of reading growth. At this stage, students are learning to read and beginning to use reading as a tool to learn. Some students receiving Level 2 support have diagnosed dyslexia or other language-based learning differences, and other students may not have identified needs but are demonstrating the need for additional support in a classroom setting.

### **Sight words, decoding, fluency, and comprehension**

As emerging young readers, lower school students are developing the instant recognition of commonly used words in text, often referred to as sight word knowledge. Level 2 support may include additional individual or small group activities designed to grow this base of knowledge. Students in the lower grades are also learning to apply language concepts to decode unknown words in text. Level 2 support can offer students opportunities to apply these growing skills at their own instructional reading level, while being supported by immediate 1:1 teacher feedback in reading fluency, including prosody, reading rate, and accuracy. The ultimate goal in acquiring reading skills is to use these skills to understand and interpret text. Level 2 support can include instruction in the most effective reading comprehension strategies, including visualization, questioning, analyzing text structure, and summarizing. Level 2 support can provide further opportunities to effectively utilize these techniques, leading to deeper understanding.





# READING SUPPORT

## GRADES 1-4

### Language concepts, phonetics, and spelling

During “word-work” time, students are learning about the structure of language, including phonetic reading and spelling skills and other language concepts. The approach to providing Level 2 support for word work skills at all levels is multi-sensory, diagnostic, prescriptive, sequential, and research-based with proven efficacy. Level 2 support may enable students to receive word work instruction in a smaller group, with pacing adjusted to meet the needs of learners in the group, as well as increased opportunities to review and practice reading skills. Word work review and re-teach support may also be offered during the literacy block, supplementing classroom word work instruction. This additional instruction provides more time and practice in applying language concepts with immediate individual feedback.

## GRADES 5-6

In the middle grades (5-6), classroom reading instruction shifts to a primary focus on reading to learn, and in the application of comprehension strategies to more deeply understand and interpret text. Some students in the middle grades are still developing the foundational reading skills necessary to decode text and to read with fluency. Level 2 reading support is specifically designed to address the needs of these readers and may include supplemental reading instruction in phonetic reading, spelling skills, and the structure of language. Reading support may also focus on fluency instruction. Students receive guidance and corrective feedback with the goal of improving the reading rate and accuracy. Students may also receive additional individual or small group instruction designed to improve reading comprehension both within and beyond the text.

**CONTACT THE DIVISION HEAD FOR INFORMATION ABOUT LEVEL 2 FEES; FEES CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON THE NGFS WEBSITE.**



# LEVEL 3

Families of students who are already receiving accommodations and individual instruction and who are experiencing acute challenges in their educational journey may request participation in the one-on-one learning options available with Level 3 support.

Level 3 support is designed to be short-term interventions, not lasting more than a school year, to aid students in either integrating into the full NGFS program or to ensure that students continue to progress as families consider educational opportunities for the future. The individualized nature of this program allows for one-on-one teaching and support as identified by the Learning Specialist Team and approved by the Division Head.

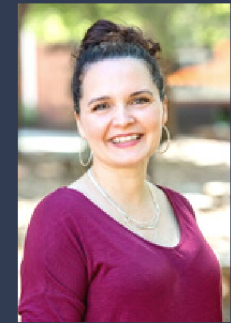
Due to the resource commitment necessary for Level 3 support, enrollment in this program is extremely limited.



## LEARNING SPECIALIST TEAM



**Christine Lawe**  
Director of  
Literacy Instruction



**Marci Richardson**  
Learning  
Specialist



**Susan Pelletier**  
Math  
Specialist



**Leslie Redmon**  
Reading and  
Math Specialist

GUIDED BY QUAKER VALUES, NEW GARDEN FRIENDS SCHOOL  
IS COMMITTED TO BEING AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY  
THAT HONORS AND DEVELOPS EACH PERSON'S GIFTS.



New Garden  
FRIENDS SCHOOL