

**Submission Criteria for Locally Developed/
Acquired and Authorized Courses (LDCs)**

Course Name: Go Girls

School Authority: Calgary Girls' School Society

Grades 4-9

Course Description

The core principles of the Go Girls Program of Studies revolve around the importance of maintaining a strong sense of self, respecting and valuing the differences of others, contributing to a community of diverse individuals, building skills for personal resiliency and understanding historical and contemporary gender issues. Go Girls is taught to all grades at the Calgary Girls' School from grade 4 to grade 9. Success of the program is seen as students bring the course material outside of the classroom and embody the characteristics of a Go Girl in their daily lives.

□	<p>Philosophy</p> <p>Go Girls provides opportunities for students to develop the values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills and processes that will enable them to be active, informed and responsible citizens in their society. Recognition of historical and societal implications of culturally constructed gender roles is an integral part of being a critical thinker and an inclusive community member. Deconstructing cultural messages and values, encourages students to be reflective around their own developing sense of values and beliefs, which will empower students to explore their own self-identity and consider how this relates to being part of a diverse community as a whole.</p> <p>Go Girls is the study of culture and its impact on gender in relation to the interaction of individuals and groups. It is an inquiry-based and interdisciplinary subject that includes aspects of history, health and well-being, social studies, physical education, human sexuality, philosophy and other social science related disciplines. Go Girls fosters students' understanding of the importance of continually questioning and evaluating cultural norms in order to become active participants in deciding who they are, who they want to become and what kind of society they want to live in.</p> <p>Go Girls prepares students to become the model of the educated Albertan in 2030 as the program provides many opportunities for students to become engaged thinkers, ethical citizens and develop an entrepreneurial spirit. As engaged thinkers students are asked to inquire about and critically analyze gender issues through multiple perspectives and reflect on how their self-identity could be impacted. To help build ethical citizens Go Girls invites students to take part in social activism projects and teaches them how to effectively build relationships. Finally, in order to build an entrepreneurial spirit in students Go Girls asks students to question the norm and teaches them to be resilient.</p>
□	<p>Rationale</p> <p>As an all-girl school the Calgary Girls' School has created a place for girls to find their voice, learn to navigate social issues, develop greater aspirations for themselves and society, and celebrate the role of women from past to present. As such it is important that CGS has a space to intentionally address these issues. The Go Girls program allows teachers to have open dialogue with students and structure inquiry-based activities around maintaining a strong sense of self, respecting and valuing the differences of others, contributing to a community of diverse individuals, building skills for personal resiliency and understanding historical and contemporary gender issues.</p>

□ **Introduction**

The Go Girls Program of Studies is centered around the following pillars: engaging in critical thinking, taking up multiple perspectives, exploring controversial issues, engaging in activism, creating a personal belief inventory and cultivating a sense of hope and resiliency.

Critical thinking is a process of inquiry, analysis and evaluation resulting in a reasoned judgment, which promotes the development of democratic citizenship, and is the central focus of the Go Girls curriculum. Skills of critical thinking include: distinguishing fact from opinion; considering the reliability and accuracy of information; determining diverse points of view, perspective and bias; and considering the ethics of decisions and actions. The Go Girls Program of Studies naturally then emphasizes the value of examining multiple perspectives in efforts to legitimize voices that have been traditionally silenced or ignored and encourages the examination of controversial issues. Students are encouraged to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view and build informed opinions about a variety of topics. Furthermore, in order to continue to promote students' development into engaged and ethical citizens, the Go Girls Program of Studies suggests that students in grades 4, 6, and 8 participate in an activism-based inquiry project impacting one or several communities (home, school, municipal, national, international, and/or global). A cornerstone to being an ethical citizen is understanding and caring for one's self thus fostering a healthy self-image, a strong sense of self, positive self-esteem, and an appreciation for the rights of others as diverse individuals. In Grades 5, 7, and 9, students will develop their individual "voice" by creating and sharing with others their personal belief inventory using one or several communication modes (art, drama, technology, writing, speaking). The goal is to provide opportunities for students to examine their dynamic belief and value systems as part of a reflective, communicative and recurring process.

As can be established from the information above many connections to literacy are made throughout the Go Girls Program of Studies. Students develop the following literacy skills through this program: emotional literacy (being able to identify and feelings), research skills (reading), communication skills (writing, speaking, visual (art, drama)) and digital literacy. Numeracy skills are also developed through Go Girls. For example, when students examine data in research papers they must learn to understand the meaning behind the results.

□ **General Outcomes**

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for themselves as strong individuals within a diverse community.
- Demonstrate an understanding and ability to apply strategies and skills that will help them create and maintain healthy relationships with their peers.
- Demonstrate an understanding and ability to apply strategies that will enable them to cope with a variety of challenging situations in healthy and productive ways.
- Engage in critical inquiry to build and extend their understanding of Go Girls themes within the context of other subject areas.

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Specific Outcomes

Go Girls is taught at every level from grade 4 through 9. Below is a sample of the specific outcomes from grades 4 and 9.

Grade 4 students will:

- Develop an appreciation for the multi-dimensional nature of individuals (e.g., friend, sister, daughter, student, athlete).
- Develop an understanding of the difference between “sex” and “gender”.
- Accept that they can and should choose from a range of interests and behaviours regardless of what gender rules they might encounter.
- Develop an appreciation and acceptance for the diversity of others and the rights that others have in choosing from a range of interests and behaviours regardless of what gender rules they might encounter.
- Develop an understanding of the different types of rights and responsibilities that individuals have within the context of peer relationships.
- Model an understanding of the importance of asking for what you need in the context of managing conflict with peers and avoiding playing the guess what’s in my head game.
- Model an understanding of the importance of making “I feel” statements in the context of conflict or in the sharing of feelings and needs.
- Model an understanding of the importance of engaging in one on one dialogue in efforts to keep the issues between relevant parties only.
- Develop an understanding of a variety of coping strategies and self-soothing techniques (e.g., relaxation, positive self-talk, play, establishing a positive mindset).
- Model an understanding and ability to ask for what you need in accessing academic, emotional and social support from trusted adults and peers.
- Develop their individual voice by participating in an activism-based inquiry project impacting one or several communities (e.g., home, school, municipal, national, international, global).
- Examine the contributions and impact of aboriginal women in Alberta.
- Examine the contributions and impact of various female mavericks in Alberta.
- Engage in opportunities to explore various historical and contemporary role models to provide images of successful women (e.g., guest speakers, case studies, biographies).

Grade 9 students will:

- Identify and describe beliefs and behaviours associated with their true self vs. false self
- Develop an understanding of possible social pressures associated with conforming to gender stereotypes in mixed-gendered settings and explore a variety of strategies for maintaining their true selves.
- Develop an understanding of the importance of personal agency in everyday decision-making.
- Explore options for accessing support and resources around decision-making for high school and career options for the future.
- Review techniques and language explored in previous grades (i.e., asking for what you need, social currency, power hierarchies, divide and conquer).
- Develop an understanding of the ways in which power and privilege influence interpersonal relationships and institutional processes.
- Develop their individual “voice” in communication with people in positions of power and/or authority by expressing ideas, personal opinions, and beliefs in an informed, organized, appropriate, responsible and persuasive manner.
- Develop an understanding of a variety of coping strategies and self-soothing techniques (e.g., relaxation, positive self-talk, journaling, exercise, seeking support).
- Develop an ability to recognize dysfunctional relationships with a variety of people and groups.
- Identify and describe the personal and societal consequences of violence against women.
- Develop their individual “voice” by creating and sharing with others their personal belief inventory using one or several communication modes (e.g., art, drama, technology, written, oral).
- Develop an understanding of the issue of equal pay for women and pay equity in the United States and Canada.
- Examine current practices of social activism associated with gender equity and the interconnectivity of related ideologies (i.e., sexism, classism, racism, heterosexism).
- Engage in opportunities to explore various historical and contemporary role models to provide images of successful women (e.g., guest speakers, case studies, biographies).

□	<p>Resources <i>Go Girls program of studies.</i> Retrieved from http://calgarygirlsschool.com/upload_docs/gogirls/go-girls.pdf</p>
□	<p>Assessment Student work in Go Girls is assessed and consistently reported through ongoing feedback.</p>
<p>Implementation * This program will be implemented for the 2015-2016 school year as a complimentary half year class.</p>	
□	<p>Clarification of Overlap Certain specific outcomes are meant to overlap with the provincial program of studies so that curricular connections can be made between Go Girls and social studies. For example, in grade 5 students examine the contributions of the Famous Five in Canadian history. They also examine the contributions of Canadian women in wartime, and the social, political and economic impact this had on the lives of Canadian women and the larger Canadian society.</p>
□	<p>Facilities Classroom</p>
□	<p>Equipment Laptops Classroom materials</p>
□	<p>Safety Components All school safety protocols are followed.</p>
□	<p>Sensitive & Controversial Issues Go Girls encourages the exploration of controversial topics. Controversial issues that are planned for or arise incidentally during instruction should be used to promote critical inquiry and teach creative thinking skills. These topics are always addressed sensitively and given context.</p>

Approval: _____

Date: _____