



Global Friendship Through Space Education

## **PARTNER SCHOOL SCIENCE PROGRAM Framework**

**\*\*\* For Participating Schools in the U.S. during 2009-2010 school year\*\*\***

**The Partner School Science Program (PSSP)** connects teachers and students of different countries through space education to expand their knowledge of math and science. Collaborative research and hands-on science and math activities are intended to promote cross-cultural understanding and Global Friendship.

### **Program components include:**

#### **1. E-mailing (mandatory)**

Students are assigned an e-pal from one of their overseas partner schools using our private GFTSE messaging system (<http://www.gftse.org/epals.html> ). Since many schools do not allow students to directly e-mail one another, we use a secure, teacher-moderated messaging system that requires teachers to approve all messages sent between students. Students are able to communicate with their e-pals about the current PSSP projects they are working on in school, and their own cultures and lives. This promotes not only science education, but cultural understanding. Students will receive newsletters that include the latest in space news, fun facts, pictures, games, and articles about what other PSSP classes are doing.

#### **2. Studying NASA Digital Learning Network material (mandatory)**

NASA-designed space education projects are offered online at the NASA website under the NASA Digital Learning Network. Students can study science topics in a unique way through NASA activities; teachers can also incorporate activities into their class curriculum. The study of the NASA topics will be conducted during regular school hours or as an after-school activity, depending on how the teacher chooses to work it within the curriculum.

#### **3. Videoconferencing (mandatory)**

Three-way videoconferencing between NASA and the two partner schools in different countries offers participants the opportunity to meet face-to-face and to personalize their partnerships in a meaningful way. Videoconferences enable students to see each other in real time and have the opportunity to share their science projects with NASA and each other. Partner schools can choose to have an unlimited number of “Meet and Greet” videoconferences just between the two schools, without NASA participation.

#### **4. Attending E-Pal Week at Space Camp Turkey (highly recommended)**

Program participants have the opportunity to meet their “e-pals” during a special six-day session in July at Space Camp Turkey called E-Pal Week. In this session, campers will have the opportunity to interact with students from many countries and to share their team projects during a “**Science Fair**”. Three days of sightseeing are added for American students, giving them the opportunity to further their understanding of different cultures.



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## **PREREQUISITES**

**Age group:** Students of participating schools must be between 12 and 15 years of age. It is desirable that boys and girls of partnered schools be equally represented and as close in age as possible.

**Language:** Proficiency in the English language is a program requirement and all communication will be in English, the language of Global Friendship. In their e-mail correspondence, students are encouraged to use standard English and not computer shorthand.

**Class size:** Class or group size of each school should include at least 15 students but should not exceed 30 students.

**Technical requirements:**

- 1 computer for every 3 students
- Internet access
- Digital camera and/or scanner
- Videoconferencing capability

## **EXPECTATIONS**

In order to join the program as a partner school, all teachers and school principals must agree to do the following to participate in the Partner School Science Program.

### **Correspondence**

- Participating in the PSSP for one academic year.
- Assigning students to e-pals with whom they will correspond throughout the year through our e-pal messaging system.
- Teachers must keep in regular contact with their partner teacher and encourage their students to:
  - E-mail their e-pals frequently (minimum of twice a month),
  - Send one or more letters by regular mail,
  - Send a culture capsule at least once during the school year by regular mail. A culture capsule would include small items that represent the students' daily lives or region where they live.
- Monitoring e-mails to prevent transmission of inappropriate content. Our system will automatically stop any bad language and redirect that e-mail to the teacher in charge of that student. This requires teachers to regularly approve and release all student mail.
- **Exchanging school calendars and national holidays** at the start of the school year to help schedule video conferences.
- Using the on line NASA Digital Learning Network to choose and study topics offered at <http://nasadln.nmsu.edu/dln/content/catalog/>
- Completing a minimum of two NASA topics during the school year on NASA's Digital Learning Network.



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### **Videoconferencing**

- Having access to a videoconference facility (at or outside school).
- Coordinating dates for videoconferencing with partner school. NASA requests that dates and times be kept between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., EST Mondays through Fridays.
- Informing GFTSE staff about proposed videoconferencing dates and time **1.5 months** in advance for GFTSE to register with NASA. All registrations for videoconferences with NASA will be done by GFTSE and not by individual schools.
- Participating in at least two videoconferences, one with the partner school and one involving NASA as well.
- Conducting first videoconference (the “meet and greet” VC) with one’s partner school to meet each other, without NASA involvement.
- Following and completing the lesson plans for each topic provided by the NASA Digital Learning Network to qualify for the videoconference with NASA and your partner school.
- Informing GFTSE staff of students’ questions to NASA two weeks in advance of videoconference and preparing students for the videoconference.

### **Documentation**

- Documenting correspondence and keeping a record of testimonials from students and teachers during the school year and after E-Pal Week.
- Keeping a record of PSSP projects and providing GFTSE with photos, projects, and updates to post on the GFTSE website.

### **Attending E-Pal Week**

- Making parents aware early in the school year of the possibility of attending E-Pal Week at Space Camp Turkey and the associated costs.
- Making every effort to meet one’s partner school at E-Pal Week at Space Camp Turkey during the summer.
- Bringing in and sharing PSSP projects for a **Science Fair** at Space Camp Turkey. Usually schools present one of the year's NASA topics

Our program has a limited number of participants. For an application or for further information, please contact Tolga Yildirim, Partner School Science Program Coordinator: [tyildirim@gftse.org](mailto:tyildirim@gftse.org)