

## Whitman Child Development Program

Whitman offers course work and internships in child development – ranging from an introductory elective or culminating in a program completer (which lets future employers and colleges know that a student has taken all coursework that MCPS offers in this academic field of study). All study in this area has proven to be a great basis for not only those going on to become teachers, but also pediatricians, psychologists and social workers as well. Generally, Child Development curriculum covers development from birth through adolescence in four areas: Physical (including fine and gross motor skills), Social (including child guidance and discipline), Intellectual (including language acquisition, prereading/prewriting/mathematic skills, and theories of learning) and Emotional Development (including moral development).

**First Year** – Any student can register for Child Development 1A – offered every fall semester. The class begins with 6 weeks of introductory material, preparing students for working with children in a preschool setting beginning in the middle of October, when the Whitman preschool lab begins. During these introductory sessions, students learn about best practices when working with preschoolers, about what behavior is developmentally appropriate at different ages, how to do formal observations, and how to plan activities and write lesson plans that align with the MCPS pre-K curriculum. From then on, students help run the preschool four days a week, and have one day a week reserved for an academic seminar.

Each high school class is divided into 3 heterogeneous groups, with each group taking turns weekly (i) teaching, (ii) planning and (iii) observing and completing research projects. Students taking this elective will learn about human growth and development, and will also gain wonderful organizational, time management, and leadership skills.

**Second Year** – If students continue taking Child Development past this first year, there are many opportunities for them to gain important practical, as well as academic credentials.

During the second year, students will work one-on-one with a particular preschooler, gaining experience with the Early Childhood Observation Record (ECOR) assessment and participating in year-end meetings with the parents of the preschooler that they oversaw. With proper attention to paperwork, students at this level can earn the *Maryland State Department of Education 90-Clock Hour Certification* (a Maryland childcare worker certification that allows students to be hired as a senior staff member in early childhood settings for jobs after school and during the summer).

**Third Year** – If students enroll in Child Development for a third year, they will spend one week out of every month at the Kenwood Park Children’s Center, an independent day care center located in the Whittier Woods annex. In this setting, students gain additional supervised experience with children as young as two years old.

**Fourth Year** – During the fourth year of study in the department, high school students take internships at area preschools, elementary schools, or middle schools. Students leave Whitman to spend an hour and a half per day working at these placements. These internships are closely supervised not only by the schools served, but by the Whitman teacher responsible as well. They are also supplemented monthly by in-school seminars.

**College Credit** – Finally, students who qualify can apply to take Foundations of Education in conjunction with their internship. This is a college class taught at Whitman during first semester – thus students will earn college credits by December of their senior year. These credits transfer to any college or university students choose to attend.

*Comprehensive lists of electives as well as detailed course descriptions can be found in the Whitman Course Bulletin. Students should consult with their counselors when making course scheduling decisions.*