Our Global Curriculum
Washington, DC Campus

An Education for the 21st Century

Whittle
SCHOOL & STUDIOS
Education Re-Imagined

We want to change for the better the lives of those students who attend and, beyond our own campuses, contribute to the cause of education on every continent. We measure our merit not through the narrowness of exclusivity, but through the breadth of our impact.

— Chris Whittle, Chairman and CEO

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Introduction

At a time of unprecedented technological transformation, economic change, and globalization, it is remarkable that the educational institutions preparing new generations for this world have changed so little. While we cannot predict the future, we can be sure that new kinds of skills, aptitudes, experiences, and perspectives will be needed as the world continues to evolve. What we are designing at Whittle School & Studios is a global network of schools that will embody the best of past educational practices with the most innovative thinking about how education must prepare young students for the demands—and the opportunities—of our changing world.

Fortunately, we know more than ever before about how children and young people learn at different stages of life, and so even as we design a new curriculum, we are also designing new ways to deliver it. In fact, by integrating a thorough commitment to personalization, cross-disciplinary studies, project-based learning, experiential education, immersive language instruction, and mastery-based assessment systems, we are providing all our students the tools and capacity to take charge of their own voyage of discovery.

“Our schools will be unique in that each school is being designed as part of an integrated and vitally connected network that is genuinely global in both conception and operation.”

We have worked for several years with a team of talented educators from some of the world’s most esteemed educational institutions to draw from the latest research about educational theory and practice, and study the most exciting models of new schools across the globe. As we recruit faculty and staff for a steadily expanding set of campuses, we will be able to draw from the largest pool of talent available anywhere in the world. This will enable us to keep refining and redesigning our programs and methods, while also adapting our global curriculum to each city and region where we open a new school.

Our schools will be unique in that each school is being designed as part of an integrated and vitally connected network that is genuinely global in both conception and operation. No school is simply a branch campus, in the old model where an established school extends its reputation to some global outpost. Instead, each campus is its own flagship, designed from the outset to embody our core values and mission, while being vitally rooted in its distinctive location and cultural milieu. This global network is critical for a world that is more connected than ever before. Accordingly, we will be able to educate our students to be real global citizens—as at home in the world as they are in their own cultures. Students will be educated to be proficient in more than one language; they will all have the experience of spending sustained time on other campuses in other parts of the world; and they will benefit from a multitude of opportunities to take personal advantage of the extensive global network we are creating.

As you read ahead, you will see how we are weaving all of these different elements together to achieve a stunningly unique educational environment, in schools that are attuned to the needs of our new century. Most important for us, however, is that this is an environment that will foster a love of learning in all our students, while providing them with the tools and support they need to realize their full human potential. We invite you all to join us in this exciting new venture.

— Nicholas Dirks, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman/Chancellor
Education Design Practice and Principles

DRAWING FROM BEST PRACTICES AROUND THE WORLD

The Whittle School & Studios Global Curriculum is an integrated synthesis of elements from the best curricula around the world. In order to deliver the future of education, our New York City-based Education Design Team, division heads, and key faculty on both campuses have spent the past four years visiting and researching the world's most prestigious schools: from traditional institutions such as Eton and Harrow in England and Phillips Academy Andover in Massachusetts, to leading progressive schools in the US and Europe, as well as the world's best-performing institutions across the Asia-Pacific region. Collaborating with the Center for Curriculum Redesign at Harvard, our Education Design Team has rethought education according to what we know from the science of learning to retain the best of traditional practices, while employing the best progressive practices and respecting local cultures in the development of schools that meet the demands of a new era in global education.

Every aspect of the curriculum, down to the way the daily schedule is structured, is built around ensuring that students are well developed in three spheres of life: World of Humanity, World of Knowledge, and World of Self.

OUR GRADUATE PROFILE

In order to face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, students need to learn more than just course content. Central to our approach is the consideration of what our graduates will need to make a meaningful contribution to the world. Whittle School & Studios students will learn how to solve problems in creative ways, how to work well with others, how to research and synthesize information, and how to apply their learning to real-world problems. They will be firmly rooted in their own culture while gaining great respect and knowledge of other cultures along the way. Every aspect of the curriculum, down to the way the daily schedule is structured, is built around ensuring that students are fully developed in three spheres of life: World of Humanity, World of Self, and World of Knowledge. We believe deeply in the power of education as a transformative force in society and in the lives of students. Our school is dedicated to cultivating in our students the skills, creativity and character necessary to solve the world’s most pressing challenges.
Our curriculum combines the innovative work of leading educators with the best curricula from around the world. For Early Learning, our curriculum is inspired by the Italian Reggio Emilia model, grounded in student autonomy and discovery of the world. Our curriculum draws upon the best standards including the Chinese National Curriculum, National Research Council’s Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Singapore Math, Australian Mathematics Standards (ACARA), the National Council for the Social Studies Standards (NCSS), the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), as well as competencies developed in partnership with the Center for Curriculum Redesign at Harvard.

Our model takes inspiration from the best American Independent School curricula, including research and presentation components of the AP curriculum, bolstered by some of the finest aspects from the British tutorial system. It is also deeply informed by research in learning science and some of the strongest aspects of the Chinese approach to education.
**Early Learning**

Students work as a whole class, in small groups and independently on projects rooted in global themes. Students master skills and develop knowledge in the context of student-centered, project-based work. Learning takes place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios and makerspaces and weaves together all disciplines. Students develop their learning through City Core and Center of Excellence work on expeditionary X-Days. In Early Learning, themes emerge from children's interests. In Lower School, themes are inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and begin a spiral that extends into Middle and Upper School.

**World of Knowledge**

**Language & World Culture**

From ELC through and Grade at Whittle School & Studios, we offer a 50/50 Chinese immersive-language model that is designed to teach children about Chinese language and culture, using language as a tool for gaining insight into cultural beliefs and practices as well as for communicating. The primary emphasis of the program in these grades continues to be on the oral language and cultural context, enabling students to participate actively in a Chinese cultural environment. From a young age, students will be able to participate in programs designed as family or parent-child experiences in countries where the language is spoken. CULTURAL IMMERSION: AT-A-GLANCE

**World of Self**

**Advisory & College Guidance**

Homeroom teacher serves as advisor with time for individual conversations and planning weekly. There will be one advisor to 10 students who will stay with the group of students for multiple years. Advisory time is four days a week for 35 minutes each day; college counseling seamlessly integrates students' personal and academic narratives, creating a holistic picture of an entire Whittle School & Studios journey and leading to admission to a college that is the best fit for each student.

**Physical Literacy**

Students develop skills and knowledge throughout their day in early learning. During the mathematics mastery band, students work on math investigations and problem-solving. Consolidation of skills, and understanding based on their level of development.

**Interdisciplinary Project Work**

Theme-inspired, project-based work in the classroom moves onto the school grounds, into the local neighborhood, and out into the city to answer questions developed by the students. Students and teachers design age-appropriate fieldwork, that responds to student interest, creating challenging projects that cultivate knowledge, skills, and traits identified in the City Core Toolkit.

**Curriculum Overview: At-a-Glance**

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<td>The Middle School Creative Arts and Design curricula introduce students to a wide range of materials, techniques, and pictorial concepts from around the world, and to the core principles of design thinking. CAD periods will often be used for student-centered work that align to interdisciplinary STEM and humanities projects.</td>
<td>The Upper School Creative Arts and Design periods provide space and time to allow students to choose their own materials and multimedia resources to build projects that align to interdisciplinary STEM and humanities projects, to electives, X-Day trips, and Centers of Excellence portfolio project work.</td>
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| World of Knowledge |**English Language Arts**

Through rich, experiential learning that includes songs, rhyming, storytelling, artistic expression and movement, children develop language, listening, and early writing skills. | Students design and engage in guided reading, shared reading, interactive “read-alouds”, and book clubs across genres to build their literacy and critical thinking skills. They develop a bank of word-solving strategies through phonics and word study. | The MS humanities curriculum combines three threads: history and geography; literacy and literature; and ethics and culture. Students learn to cultivate the power of their own voices in writing and in a variety of oral and multimedia presentations. They learn to listen actively to the voices of others, and to work collaboratively in student-guided teams to build projects that connect to other classes and the world beyond their school. |
| Mathematics | Students develop mathematical thinking and skills throughout their day in early learning. During the mathematics mastery band, students work on math investigations and problem-solving. Consolidation of skills, and understanding based on their level of development. | Students pursue a mastery-based progression of stage-appropriate mathematics concepts and skills. Through this progression, students balance individual/small-group skills-focused work and collaborative engagement with open-ended, challenging math problems designed to support development of conceptual understanding. In the Upper School, students who have demonstrated sufficient levels of mastery will have the opportunity to study advanced math topics and/or pursue math electives and independent study. | Students study a progression of STEM topics integrated across the life, physical, and Earth/space sciences through projects led by teams of interdisciplinary teams of faculty. Project work intentionally integrates the use of technology as a problem-solving and expressive tool, employs the skills and practices of engineering and design thinking, and applies the techniques of statistics, data analysis, and mathematical modeling. |
| World of Self |**World Language & Culture**

From ELC through and Grade at Whittle School & Studios, we offer a 50/50 Chinese immersive-language model that is designed to teach children about Chinese language and culture, using language as a tool for gaining insight into cultural beliefs and practices as well as for communication. The primary emphasis of the program in these grades continues to be on the spoken language and its cultural context, enabling students to participate actively in a Chinese cultural environment. From a young age, students will be able to participate in programs designed as family or parent-child experiences in countries where the language is spoken. CULTURAL IMMERSION: AT-A-GLANCE | Students learn to guide their learning in ever-widening areas of proficiency. Our global network will allow students to connect with students on other campuses to communicate and build friendships in advance of travel. The program's overall goals are for students to be continually preparing for appropriate in-country experiences, whereby exposure to language and culture will help students to achieve a truly immersive experience can occur. For younger students, in-country study opportunities will begin with shorter programs over some portion of a vacation. Beginning in Upper School, students will be able to study at other campuses for longer periods of time, whether for a full summer, semester, or year. At the completion of Whittle School & Studios, students will understand how to continue to learn language effectively and independently, and what it means to participate appropriately in another culture. | Students study a progression of STEM topics integrated across the life, physical, and Earth/space sciences through projects led by teams of interdisciplinary teams of faculty. Project work intentionally integrates the use of technology as a problem-solving and expressive tool, employs the skills and practices of engineering and design thinking, and applies the techniques of statistics, data analysis, and mathematical modeling. Students begin a progression from science topics, student and faculty-designed STEM electives, interdisciplinary electives, and independent study. |

### World of Humanity

**City Core on X-Day**

An interdisciplinary, experiential program in which teams of teachers from across the curriculum design projects that take students outside the school walls to research and resolve relevant scholarly and policy questions. The experience of City Core allows students to engage in projects that understand how communities work, integrating classroom learning with the life of the world, integrating different disciplines, and cultivating the awareness necessary for becoming socially responsible local and global citizens. Students will be able to move between schools and cultures with agency, ease, and awareness, and will see the connection between their learning, local relationships, and potential global impact.
AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

“Our Whittle School & Studios Global Curriculum program is designed to take advantage of best practices and programs worldwide. Our team started working on global program development more than three years ago, seeking out the world’s best programs.

We’ve taken the program knowledge we gleaned from years of research and combined it with the most advanced thinking on teaching practices, learning science, and habits of skills-based acquisition. This result is an exciting program that is content rich and inspiring, enduring, and transferable. Built into our program is the premise that students learn in different ways, at different paces, and that they will develop different interests.”

— REBECCA UPHAM
VICE CHANCELLOR AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRWOMAN, WASHINGTON DC CAMPUS

EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AT WHITTLE SCHOOL & STUDIOS

LEARNING BY DOING
Experience, inquiry, and problem-solving are keys to rigorous and challenging learning, deep mastery, permanence, and growth.

CHOICE AND VOICE
Optimal learning is personalized and empowering—targeted to where the learner is, how they learn, and where their passions reside.

COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK
Humans learn in thoughtful relationships with others. Our lives acquire meaning through friendship, empathy, kindness, and communication.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS, LOCAL ROOTS
Learning should have a positive social impact, fostering social awareness, responsible citizenship, cultural inclusiveness, and active community engagement.

CREATING AND MAKING
Creativity is a fundamental human drive. Students learn through innovation and creation in an environment where it is safe to try and fail.

SEEING THE WHOLE CHILD
We engage with students holistically—along emotional, intellectual, physical, ethical, and social dimensions—fostering whole-student development.

At Whittle School & Studios, we see education as a student-driven process that cultivates agency, curiosity, and collaboration. Our model places skills and knowledge in context, taking into account a student’s own aspirations and grounding coursework in local and global challenges. A key aspect of this is integration. The more ways in which a piece of information is connected to different contexts and experiences, the more synapses are formed and the more ways your brain can access, manipulate, and apply it—making that knowledge more permanent, meaningful, and usable. The emotions of debate, the experience of exploring a city, the thrill of playing roles, the hands-on learning of laboratory experimentation, and the challenge of decision-making—these experiences all make learning “sticky” and help develop true mastery, creativity, and ownership.

Based on what we now know about how students learn, our program mixes disciplinary with interdisciplinary teaching, and classroom study with field work. In the past, high schools and middle schools were organized according to traditional disciplines: history, literature, math, foreign language, science, and art, and all instruction took place in a classroom where teachers lectured students. Even today, the only true innovation in most schools has been the addition of lab work in the sciences and seminar discussions in the humanities.

At Whittle School & Studios, we have retained a discipline-specific structure for world languages and math. However, we have organized other types of classroom learning into interdisciplinary clusters: science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), humanities (HUM), and Creative Arts and Design Studio (CAD). Interdisciplinary courses permit teacher teams to teach shared skills (i.e. research, writing, discussion, communication) across disciplines, using project-based pedagogy to reveal the intersections between what used to be siloed areas of study. Finally, students will apply the skills they have learned in their interdisciplinary classes through experiential learning during their expeditionary day, or X-Day, when students and teachers collaborate on fieldwork, lab work, service work, and community activities.

“When learning is motivated and initiated by vivid experience, and taken to a deep level, it is meaningful and enduring. Learning by doing is fundamental to our approach, and it happens in our school through individual and collaborative project work that challenges and inspires the pupils. Their choice and voice, and the guidance they receive from their advisors, helps to determine their areas of greatest passion and specialization. The path that students follow at Whittle School & Studios is one that encourages creativity and a global perspective based on strong local roots and community engagement. With us, they learn how to learn.”

— JIM HAWKINS
GLOBAL HEAD OF SCHOOL HEADS AND VICE CHANCELLOR

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**MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

The weekly schedule is made up of four interconnected modes: **Content Mastery Bands, Interdisciplinary Blocks, X-Days, and Life Skills and Wellness Bands.**

**Mastery Bands (45 Minutes)**

Mastery bands are focused on the development of specific skills and knowledge in math and languages, utilizing both time-tested and innovative techniques. Students are encouraged to work at their own pace and in ways that support their individual learning styles. The bands are supported by **acceleration periods**, during which students can further hone their skills, master competencies, and receive any additional support they need.

**Interdisciplinary Blocks (60 Minutes—Middle School; 85 Minutes—Upper School)**

Interdisciplinary bands for STEM, humanities, and creative arts and design studio are grounded in project-based work that combines multiple areas of content knowledge to forge connections across subject matter. By blending classroom study with fieldwork, students are encouraged to explore big questions and solve relevant problems. These blocks will operate in cycles of preparation, project, and reflection. Some examples of culminating activities that the blocks support include: STEM labs and experiments; simulations; historical role-plays; debates, trials, and roundtables; exhibitions and digital slideshows, and multimedia presentations; public readings; workshop fabrication; group collaboration; and peer evaluation.

**X-Day (Once Weekly)**

By engaging with the environment beyond the classroom, students understand the real-world applications of their education. Each week, one day is set aside for applied learning through experience and civic engagement. Programmed by the faculty, the X-Day is reserved for work that cannot be contained by the regular schedule or even within the walls of the school. X-Days alternate between an “inward” day, which focuses on school community and personal growth via Center of Excellence (COE) work, and an “outward” day, which sends students out into the city on fieldwork in our City Core Program.

**Advisory (35 Minutes)**

Meeting four times per week, students will work closely with an advisor to guide their school, travel, and extra-curricular activities and to plan for college and their careers. For example, 9th graders may use an Advisory period to develop goals for each class, including how they will use their Acceleration period that week.

**Mind & Body (30 Minutes)**

Whittle School & Studios students are given a unique and innovative opportunity to begin each day by focusing on the Mind & Body connection. Building on the undeniable neuroscience research that intentional vigorous physical activity primes the brain for learning, our Mind & Body program is designed to use exercise as a simple means to improve cognition and focus. Students in our ELC and Lower School will have the program components built right into their early morning routines, while Middle and Upper School students will be encouraged to participate in a variety of exercise options.

**Acceleration (30 Minutes)**

Acceleration bands allow students to move faster than the pace of their current grade level or to receive extra support in one-on-one work with teachers or in small study groups. Work during these bands is coordinated among the student, the advisor, and subject teachers.
An Integrated Curriculum

Our curriculum is organized around themes for each grade level that have been carefully identified, chosen, and developed around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Mastery bands, interdisciplinary blocks, and X-Day experiential learning all approach those topics through various entry points, and have connections across campuses and subjects through those shared themes and topics.

STEM ACROSS THE DIVISIONS

In Early Learning, STEM immerses children in hands-on, open-ended investigations of directly observable phenomena that have emerged from each child’s innate curiosity and desire to explore and understand the natural world. Through inquiry-based discovery, children seek answers to their questions, draw conclusions and theories from their experiences, and construct their own knowledge. Early Learning STEM project investigations are steeped in a-disciplinary explorations where children develop the foundations of scientific and mathematical thinking and reasoning while cultivating skills in critical and creative problem-solving, empathy, resilience, communication, and collaboration. When stepping into an Early Learning classroom, one may observe:

Children comparing and contrasting natural materials like rocks and soil while using technology to develop a set of observable properties for each.

Children using a handheld digital microscope to investigate the segmented body parts of an insect found during an outdoor discovery walk.

Children experimenting with light, shadows, reflection, and refraction by manipulating an array of physical materials in a digitally simulated landscape.

Children using engineering design thinking to build a prototype of a butterfly garden that will be installed near the playground.

In Lower School, the STEM program is rooted in the thoughtful and intentional intersection of disciplines applied in meaningful and authentic project-based learning. Through our personalized mastery-based learning approach, students acquire a set of skills, knowledge, behaviors, and dispositions at their own pace and cement their newly learned content in integrated STEM projects. STEM teaching and learning is rooted in purposeful application of acquired content, often in the context of integrative, human-centered, and engineering design experiences—providing an access point for exploring phenomena through the expansion of creative ideas and passions, developing skills in problem-solving and critical thinking, embracing productive collaboration steeped in empathy and respect, and developing an unshakable growth mindset.

When observing STEM projects in the Lower School, one may see:

- 1st Grade: Students using engineering design thinking and biomimicry to create and build a habitat for a classroom pet that mimics its natural environment.
- 2nd Grade: Children exploring the water cycle by determining the components of surface water that can enhance or hinder the water quality of the Rock Creek tributary.
- 3rd Grade: Students exploring the growth patterns and cycles of plants by collecting and analyzing data gathered from soil testing, accessible water sources, and sunlight exposure of various locations around the campus in an effort to select the optimal location for a working vegetable garden.
- 4th Grade: Students exploring the resiliency of nature by collaborating with the Anacostia Watershed Society to raise and release native mussels into the Anacostia.
- 5th Grade: Students partnering with the experts in the CAUSES department of the University of the District of Columbia to explore the ethical implications of aquaponics by designing an aquaponic system that incorporates humane living conditions for the fish.

In Middle School, students engage with STEM projects that are thematically aligned to the progression of the humanities and creative arts and design studio curricula, and are led by interdisciplinary teams of faculty. Project work intentionally integrates the use of technology as a problem-solving and expressive tool, employs the skills and practices of engineering design and design thinking, and applies the techniques of statistics, data analysis, and mathematical modeling.

- 6th Grade: Science of Mind and Learning, Body Systems, Genetics and Heredity, Kinesiology, Food and Nutrition, Health and Disease
- 7th Grade: The Solar System, Earth History, Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Human Life, Biodiversity and Evolution, Biomimicry
- 8th Grade: Designing Sustainable Communities: Shelter and Housing, Food Systems, Transportation, Power and Energy, Communications Systems, Waste and Water

In Upper School, students study a progression of STEM topics integrated across the life sciences, physical sciences, and Earth and space sciences through projects led by teams of STEM experts from each of those domains. As in Middle School, projects intentionally incorporate technology, engineering, and mathematics. This progression serves as the foundation in later years for advanced study of science topics, student and faculty-designed STEM electives, interdisciplinary electives, and independent study.

- 9th Grade: Building Blocks of Life, Matter, and Energy: Cells, Atoms, Nuclear Physics, Kinetic and Potential Energy, Light and Optics, Earth Structure and Materials
- 10th Grade: Interactions of Life, Matter, and Energy: Respiration and Photosynthesis, Disease and Nutrition, Evolution and Speciation, Chemical Reactions, Force and Momentum, Electromagnetism, Gravitation
- 12th Grade: Advanced topics in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology; STEM Electives; Interdisciplinary Electives; Independent Study

STEM ACROSS THE DIVISIONS

UPPER SCHOOL

The main difference between the Whittle School & Studios STEM program and a traditional math and science curriculum is the integrative approach. Instead of the usual isolated sequence of topics—chemistry, biology, physics—we are teaching our students scientific principles that cut across all disciplines, and joining those with technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students learn as much content as they would in a traditional curriculum, but in the larger context of thinking through a challenging problem and developing the methodologies to apply their knowledge to real-world issues. Our team is developing a framework that leads students to approach major global challenges—such as hunger or access to education—using human-centered design principles. Instead of being handed a worksheet with instructions to conduct an experiment, students design experiments themselves, test them, create prototypes, and critique each other’s approaches. The math program is built around problem-based learning. Instead of being shown an algorithm by the teacher and then given a set of related problems to practice, students begin with a complex problem and work with the teacher and each other to construct the skills and strategies necessary to solve the problem. This process leads to a more complete and transferrable understanding of mathematics and greater self-confidence and perseverance in young mathematicians.
In Early Learning the HUM program is integrated into an a-disciplinary project-based curriculum. Students work as a whole class, in small groups, and independently on projects rooted in global themes. Students master skills and develop knowledge in the context of student-centered, project-based work. Learning takes place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios, and makerspaces and weaves together all disciplines. Students deepen their learning through City Core and Center of Excellence work on expeditionary X-Days. In Early Learning, the themes emerge from children’s interests. In Lower School themes are inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and begin a spiral that extends into Middle and Upper School.

In Lower School the HUM program is also embedded in an a-disciplinary curriculum. The projects emerge from balance between student interest and passion, mastery of skills and content along a competency progression, and themes that drive inquiry-based learning. As in ELC, students work as a whole class, in small groups and independently on projects rooted in global themes. Students master skills and develop knowledge in the context of student-centered, project-based work. Learning takes place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios and makerspaces, and weaves together all disciplines. Students deepen their learning through City Core and Center of Excellence work on expeditionary X-Days.

In Middle School and Upper School the HUM classes are taught by a team of three teachers (history and geography, literature and literacy, ethics and culture) during blocks that provide time for project-based explorations of core social science and literary concepts and skills. They are integrated with the STEM and Creative Arts and Design Studio (CAD) courses through interdisciplinary projects on X-Days. Students learn to cultivate the power of their own voices in writing and in a variety of oral and multimedia presentations. They learn to listen actively to the voices of others, and to work collaboratively in student-guided teams to build projects that connect to other classes and the world beyond their school.

True humanity requires creative, critical, causal, and rational thinking. Students in our Upper School humanities program go beyond basic mastery of facts and fluency to master archival research, deep textual analysis, an understanding of causation, empathetic interpretation of historical events, historical numeracy, scholarly writing, creative writing, portfolio presentations, and verbal expression. Above all, they come to understand themselves, their world, and the experiences and cultures of others, deploying their humanities skills and knowledge to understand, collaborate, communicate, and think critically about the world around them.

HUMANITIES ACROSS THE DIVISIONS

EARLY LEARNING CENTER
In Early Learning the HUM program is integrated into an a-disciplinary project-based curriculum. Students work as a whole class, in small groups, and independently on projects rooted in global themes. Students master skills and develop knowledge in the context of student-centered, project-based work. Learning takes place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios, and makerspaces and weaves together all disciplines. Students deepen their learning through City Core and Center of Excellence work on expeditionary X-Days. In Early Learning, the themes emerge from children’s interests. In Lower School themes are inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and begin a spiral that extends into Middle and Upper School.

LOWER SCHOOL
In Lower School the HUM program is also embedded in an a-disciplinary curriculum. The projects emerge from balance between student interest and passion, mastery of skills and content along a competency progression, and themes that drive inquiry-based learning. As in ELC, students work as a whole class, in small groups and independently on projects rooted in global themes. Students master skills and develop knowledge in the context of student-centered, project-based work. Learning takes place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios and makerspaces, and weaves together all disciplines. Students deepen their learning through City Core and Center of Excellence work on expeditionary X-Days.

- 1st Grade: Students using engineering design thinking and biomimicry to create and build a habitat for a classroom pet that mimics its natural environment.
- 2nd Grade: Children exploring the water cycle by determining the components of surface water that can enhance or hinder the water quality of the Rock Creek tributary.
- 1st and 2nd Grades: Global efforts at species survival and water conservation (Whittle School & Studios frame: Life on Earth; UNSDG: Life on Earth, Life Below Water, Clean Water and Sanitation)
- 3rd and 4th Grades: Embassies and the World in Our Neighborhood; Human Nature and Exploration (Whittle School & Studios frame: Local Communities, Expanding Communities; UNSDG: Sustainable Communities; Peace, Justice, Strong Institutions)
- 5th Grade: Silk Road; Globalism Then and Now (Whittle School & Studios frame: Global Communities; UNSDG: Industry, Innovations, Infrastructure)

MIDDLE SCHOOL
In Middle School and Upper School the HUM classes are taught by a team of three teachers (history and geography, literature and literacy, ethics and culture) during blocks that provide time for project-based explorations of core social science and literary concepts and skills. They are integrated with the STEM and Creative Arts and Design Studio (CAD) courses through interdisciplinary projects on X-Days. Students learn to cultivate the power of their own voices in writing and in a variety of oral and multimedia presentations. They learn to listen actively to the voices of others, and to work collaboratively in student-guided teams to build projects that connect to other classes and the world beyond their school.

- 6th Grade: Exploring Identity (Whittle School & Studios frame: The Self; UNSDG: Good Health & Well-Being)
- 7th Grade: Conflict and Cooperation (Whittle School & Studios frame: Others; UNSDG: Reduced Inequalities)
- 8th Grade: The Character of Communities in Human History and Literature (Whittle School & Studios frame: Communities; UNSDG: Peace, Justice, Strong Institutions)

UPPER SCHOOL
True humanity requires creative, critical, causal, and rational thinking. Students in our Upper School humanities program go beyond basic mastery of facts and fluency to master archival research, deep textual analysis, an understanding of causation, empathetic interpretation of historical events, historical numeracy, scholarly writing, creative writing, portfolio presentations, and verbal expression. Above all, they come to understand themselves, their world, and the experiences and cultures of others, deploying their humanities skills and knowledge to understand, collaborate, communicate, and think critically about the world around them.

- 9th Grade: Global Connections Through Local Roots—Cities of a Modernizing World (Whittle School & Studios frame: The City; UNSDG: Sustainable Communities)
- 10th Grade: Center and Periphery in American Life (Whittle School & Studios frame: The Nation; UNSDG Decent Work & Economic Growth)
- 11th Grade: Teacher-designed Electives (Whittle School & Studios frame: The World; UNSDG: Climate Action)
- 12th Grade: Student-designed Electives and Independent Study (Whittle School & Studios frame: Solving Global Challenges; UNSDG: Strategic Partnerships)

HUMANITIES
The Whittle School & Studios humanities program weaves together the study of geography, ethics, history, religion, politics, economics, literature, and arts. Each year will culminate in a long-form portfolio project that aligns with one or more of the overarching themes for the grade. For example, 6th graders might explore the theme of “understanding of self,” and spend the year studying memoirs, autobiographies, and self-portraiture; finally creating a portfolio project that could be an autobiographical essay, video performance, or graphic novel.
WORLD LANGUAGES – CHINESE AND BEYOND

From Early Learning Center through 2nd Grade at Whittle School & Studios, we offer a 50/50 Chinese immersive language model that is designed to teach children about Chinese language and culture, using language as a tool for gaining insight into cultural beliefs and practices as well as for communication. The primary emphasis of the program in these grades continues to be on the spoken language and its cultural context, with a view to enabling students to participate actively and comfortably in a Chinese cultural environment.

Other world languages are offered during Studios. In addition to languages more typically found in US schools such as French, German, Italian, Latin, and Russian, we look to offer Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, or Korean, for example.

CHINESE IMMERSIVE LANGUAGE MODEL

Lessons take place in a colorful, comfortable, and engaging environment designed to stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for all things Chinese. Students will have daily exposure to spoken Chinese through activities, stories, rhymes, songs, and games. The arts will be a key component of the curriculum at this stage, and students will be encouraged to express themselves creatively through the arts as well as language. The students will be exposed to both Chinese traditional characters and simplified characters. They will engage in fun activities and projects to reinforce their learning and help them develop oral and aural skills that will serve as a foundation for further Chinese studies in 3rd Grade and beyond. By 2nd Grade, they will have a solid foundation in several key areas: pronunciation (including tones), key school and home vocabulary, listening comprehension, Chinese children’s culture, and Chinese behavioral norms for school and home.

Chinese language for American students or heritage students who don’t have a solid foundation of speaking and listening in Chinese will join the American students through the regular mastery-based progression program.

Heritage students who speak Mandarin at home will have their own program focused on developing reading and writing proficiency.

Spanish will be offered as a second foreign language, and other world languages will be offered during Studios.

The Whittle School & Studios Chinese Program for 3rd–12th Grades is geared towards helping students attain linguistic proficiency and cultural competency. We teach students to communicate in Chinese using the four core language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Pinyin Romanization and simplified characters are used, but students may opt to learn traditional characters as well. Our methodology emphasizes proper pronunciation and tones, grammatical accuracy, and colloquial speech. We cover a wide variety of topics of increasing complexity, and as students become more advanced, they may focus their study on particular areas of interest. A varied and rich cultural program is offered covering diverse topics such as Chinese music and art, etiquette, religion, cuisine, folk tales, philosophy, and popular culture. Authentic materials are used to ensure that language and culture are taught together, with a view to enabling students to learn to engage in culturally appropriate behavior and understand and compare Chinese cultural perspectives with their own. Such an approach gives Whittle School & Studios students the skill to manage socially as well as linguistically in a Chinese environment, which enables them to transfer seamlessly to one of our Chinese campuses for intensive language study during the summer or school year in Middle and/or Upper School. This intensive overseas program gives all Whittle School & Studios students of Chinese language the opportunity to attain functional linguistic proficiency prior to graduation from Upper School.
Our Signature Programs

“Our signature programs tie World of Knowledge to Worlds of Self and Humanity, deepening the student experience through personal, applied, and civic connections. Our Personalization program, through our robust Advisory system and innovative mastery-based progression, encourages students to understand how they learn, and to develop their own personal pathway through the Whittle School & Studios experience. Our Global Connections Through Local Roots programs—in the form of our City Core Toolkit, City Core expeditions on X-Day and Global Exchange—cultivate in our students the skills, knowledge, and traits necessary to become successful, empathetic, and effective citizens. And our Centers of Excellence provide a network of expertise and resources across the globe for deep research and hands-on experiences in collaboration with experts in diverse fields.”

— PETER MERRILL
CO-CHAIR OF EDUCATION DESIGN TEAM
GLOBAL HEAD OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

“Personalization is not about students doing whatever they want. It is about the process of finding the intersection among a learner’s interests, strengths, and values, and what it is that society ‘needs,’ broadly defined. It is about finding a way into the learning process for each learner that aims progressively more accurately at that intersection, all the while helping each learner come to understand the broader context in which they hope to contribute.”

PERSONALIZATION

We want our students to find meaning in a world where information is easily available, but where deep understanding and purposeful application of that knowledge is harder to achieve. We seek to build a model for education that engages student curiosity and passion.

For many of us, curiosity dampened as we moved through our education. Sitting through lectures, doing drills, slogging through problem sets, or preparing for standardized tests could discourage even the most engaged of students. The old model, rooted in an industrial culture, saw students as vessels to be filled with knowledge.

Today’s model, growing out of a global innovation economy, must see students as critical thinkers who can identify the right questions, find the best data, synthesize solutions, and create meaningful change.

At Whittle School & Studios, “personalization” is an emergent property from within a complex educational ecosystem, and not something embedded in a single role or in one person. It emerges from a system in which the learner is guided by an advisor, teachers, family, and experiences to develop a life path that builds on and extends the interests that students bring to and develop in their lives.

At the intersection of our students’ learning is the role of the advisor: this takes the form of the homeroom teacher for younger students in Early Learning Center and Lower School, and the advisory group for older students in Middle and Upper Schools.

At Whittle School & Studios, the advisor fills two roles. One is to be the “point person” for information flow between family and school, in both directions. This information may be related to informing parents about their child’s life at school, so that they can continue to engage with those topics as opportunities arise. Additionally, the advisor’s role will include more formal reporting, which will integrate information from all sources.

It may also serve as an opportunity to share “problems” that one side or the other might need to be aware of—the death of a pet, hurt feelings on the playground, etc.

The other—and fundamentally much more important—role of the advisor is that of keeping alive the inborn human drives of exploration and learning. Advisors nourish these drives and help students become progressively more competent at managing their own learning. They are the ones who most actively help students navigate in ever more complex learning environments.

THE ROLE OF ADVISORS

1. Foster a sense of community
2. Make students feel safe
3. Check in on personal projects
4. Supervise academic progress
5. Guide the college process
6. Be a conduit between home and school

— PETER MERRILL
CO-CHAIR OF EDUCATION DESIGN TEAM
GLOBAL HEAD OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
**Advising Daily Schedule in Middle and Upper Schools**

Advisors have a 35-minute period at their disposal four days per week to decide what each child in their 10-student group needs, as well as what the group needs as a whole. A distinctive component of Advisory will be the means by which we approach the college process. Beginning in the first year of Upper School, students and their families will receive thorough grounding in the nature of English-medium systems of higher education. Flowing from the evolution of their personal projects, students and families will be guided to understand the complexities in university structures (including disciplines students might not yet even know about, undergraduate and graduate education in different countries, and the nature and purpose of a liberal arts education). They will learn approaches that work best in different colleges and universities, specific areas of expertise that line up with students’ interests and goals, how to make good use of visits to campuses and more. The process will be one of a gradual unfolding, so that the entire transition to university will feel more like “the logical next step for me” rather than “how I did in the status lottery.”

**Personalized Mastery-Based Progression**

Our competency-based learning approach establishes a set of skills, knowledge, behaviors, and dispositions that students master at their own pace and in their own way in all of the disciplines described above. Students move forward through their competencies based on “stage” not “age.” These competencies grow from our research into the best international practices and systems of standards from around the world.

One important aspect of personalization is that students move at a pace that works for their learning, not at a predetermined pace of coverage. “Fast” students might benefit from going into greater depth than normal for their grade level, rather than jumping “ahead.” In language, this may involve spending more time on work related to culture or a deeper range of vocabulary on the current topic, rather than pushing ahead to cover new grammar or the vocabulary of a new topic.

A particularly powerful component of the “bands” section of the day is something we call Acceleration. This is a period of the day when we can customize pacing. In these periods, students can work to move faster than the pace of their current level or master material at their own pace. This covers both traditional “remedial” work and advanced work that a student might choose to undertake because there is a project he or she wants to prepare for. Acceleration periods will provide students with a variety of tools to achieve mastery, including one-on-one work with teachers, interactive multimedia activities, and an “academic playlist” of curated adaptive online worksheets. A student’s acceleration work will be coordinated among the student, advisor, and subject teachers—another manifestation of deep personalization.

**Global Connections from Strong Local Roots**

The challenges and opportunities of the modern world demand an education that exposes students to the world and provides them the language, traits, knowledge, and social skills to navigate multiple cultures. The experiences our students have in each of our host cities will be essential for understanding how diverse communities work, integrating classroom learning with the real world, and cultivating the awareness necessary to become responsible local and global citizens.

At Whittle School & Studios, students’ interaction with the world begins at the local level. Starting in Early Learning, students study their home city and other cities in our network, both in the classroom and outside of it, rooting their learning in meaningful interactions with the outside world. We believe that deep learning occurs best when students apply what they have learned in the classroom to answering relevant, real-life questions.

“A global network is, of course, great for sharing best practices. Our teachers can all learn from each other. But the real strength is in the experiences we can give our students. If we’re going to solve the problems of the future, we need to cultivate in our students the awareness, skills sets, and strong characters that make it possible for them to move seamlessly, confidently, and respectfully across cultures.”

— Andrew Meyers
Co-Chair of Education Design Team
Global Head of Experiential Learning
Global Experience
Through the Network

Every Whittle School & Studios student from Early Learning through 12th Grade masters a set of skills we call the “Global City Toolkit.” It is an integral part of the curriculum across all campuses, ensuring that students have the capacity to study their environment effectively, safely, and respectfully, and to engage in rewarding partnerships in communities around the world. The toolkit will build from Early Learning through Upper School, giving each student the knowledge to support increasingly ambitious and independent work in the world beyond the classroom. With this toolkit, students will be able to immerse themselves first in their school’s neighborhood, then their home city, eventually culminating in exchanges between campuses (both through study abroad and virtual student collaboration). Students will gain essential skills that will serve them well in college and throughout their professional lives. This toolkit teaches students how to move through life with empathy, insight, and agency.

**WHITTLE SCHOOL & STUDIOS GLOBAL PROGRAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immersive City Experience</th>
<th>A trimester or more in our rigorous, experiential urban studies program. The adventure and challenge of a study abroad program, but at home.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Abroad</td>
<td>Take courses at another Whittle School &amp; Studios campus for the summer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-Year Global Rotation</td>
<td>A year in the Global Rotation program at another Whittle School &amp; Studios campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer Within</td>
<td>Seamless transfer between campuses for families who change cities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whittle School &amp; Studios Network</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*For detailed information on these options, please visit our website: [www.whittleschool.org/en/program-overview](http://www.whittleschool.org/en/program-overview)*

**GLOBAL CITY TOOLKIT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>TRAITS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARLY LEARNING CENTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Zero Thinking Routines: Harvard Graduate School of Education</td>
<td>• Interviewing family</td>
<td>• Sense of adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children are Citizens</td>
<td>• Neighborhood study and mapping</td>
<td>• Courage to take appropriate risks</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Smithsonian Learning Lab</td>
<td>• Recording thoughts and ideas</td>
<td>• Classroom leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• North American Reggio Alliance</td>
<td>• Careful looking and active listening</td>
<td>• Beginning to see failure as a catalyst for growth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)</td>
<td>• Recognizing personal space</td>
<td>• Adapting to your surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CUBE Box City</td>
<td>• Carefully navigating shared space</td>
<td>• Practicing empathy and social awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Neighborhood study and stories (building our neighborhood)</td>
<td>• Respectful conversation</td>
<td>• Self-regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Expressing gratitude</td>
<td>• Making decisions using logic and reasoning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognizing challenges and designing solutions</td>
<td>• Love and respect for nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Considering impact on the world around you</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Walking and swimming</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **LOWER SCHOOL** | | | |
| | • Local history texts | • Recording facts and opinions (making thinking visible) | • Working independently and seeking help when needed |
| | • Urban ecology | • Mindful observing | • Engaging with others in a vulnerable way |
| | • City, migrant, and immigrant fiction | • Reading landscapes | • Taking thoughtful risks, being comfortable with uncertainty |
| | • Project Zero | • Exhibition skills | • Grade-wide leadership |
| | • Smithsonian Learning Lab | • Public speaking | • Assessing situations |
| | • Cognitive mapping of neighborhood | • Newspaper writing | • Respectfully collaborating with, helping, and motivating others |
| | • Constructing a classroom neighborhood | • Emailing, letter writing, phone skills (inquiries, requests, outreach, thank-yous) | • Practicing empathy with those beyond the school |
| | • Dioramas and model-making | • Interviewing experts | • Respecting difference |
| | • Teacher-led walking tours | • Understanding compass points and use | • Recognizing different landscapes and environments |
| | • Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) role games and simulations | • Cognitive mapping of the city (nodes, paths, edges, landmarks) | • Understanding nature as a system |
| | | • Using traditional and Google maps | |
| | | • Imagining possibilities and connecting ideas | |
| | | • Cycling, canoeing, day hiking | |
| **MIDDLE SCHOOL** | | | |
| | • Rachel Carson | • Lynchian cognitive mapping | • Having integrity and standing up for what’s right |
| | • A.E.J. Morris | • Mapping the city/orientieering | • Traveling across cultural boundaries respectfully |
| | • Lilla Watson | • ABCD Asset Mapping | • Seeing failure as an opportunity |
| | • Regular reading and analysis of newspapers and journals | • Creating virtual 3D maps | • School leadership |
| | • Urban fiction and films | • STEM fieldwork (City as a lab) | • Thinking strategically to best utilize resources (people and material) |
| | • Local river communities analysis (water quality, changes in the land, human and nonhuman communities, resilience, and sustainability) | • Place-booking | • Contributing to the broader group or community |
| | • CUP’s Envisioning Development Toolkits | • Sketchup | • Cultural awareness and empathy |
| | • Smithsonian Learning Labs | • Exhibition skills | • Partnering with reciprocity and respect |
| | • US Census | • Leading public meetings | • Improving the landscape |
| | • Urban farming collaboration | • Environmental lab reports | • Recycling |
| **UPPER SCHOOL** | | | |
| | • CUP’s Making Policy Public and City Studies projects | • GIS (Geographic Information Services) | • Systems thinking |
| | • US Census | • Advanced interactive and AR mapping | • Photojournalism |
| | • USGS Geological Survey | • Researching in municipal and university archives | • Social geography (race, ethnicity, class) |
| | • Student-led urban history/policy walking tours | • Interviewing policy makers and activists | • and navigating different cultures |
| | • Collaborative community resilience projects and design charrettes | • CAD and urban setting | |
| | • Public policy memos | • 3D printing and advanced model-making | |
| | • GIS interactive mapping projects | • Community design charrettes | |
| | • Census and newspaper data analysis | • Solo hiking, bike touring, and rock climbing | |
| | • Regular reading and analysis of newspapers and journals | | |
| | • Urban policy, history, and resilience texts | | |
| **GLOBAL CITY TOOLKIT** | | | |
| | • Lynchian cognitive mapping | • Lying as a catalyst for growth | • Willingness to take intellectual risks |
| | • Mapping the city/orientieering | | • Traveling around the world with self-possession and humility |
| | • ABCD Asset Mapping | | • Neighborhood leadership |
| | • Creating virtual 3D maps | | • Managing power and influence responsibly and ethically |
| | • STEM fieldwork (City as a lab) | | • Open-mindedness |
| | • Place-booking | | • Considering consequences |
| | • Sketchup | | • Mobilizing others |
| | • Exhibition skills | | • I-You and I-It experiences |
| | • Leading public meetings | | • Global multicultural awareness |
| | • Environmental lab reports | | • Respect for cultural difference |
| | • GIS (Geographic Information Services) | | • Being an ally |
| | • Advanced interactive and AR mapping | • Interviewing policy makers and activists | • Assessing your impact on the environment |
| | • Researching in municipal and university archives | • CAD and urban setting | • Empathy for the nonhuman natural world |
| | • Interviewing policy makers and activists | • 3D printing and advanced model-making | • Asset-based community engagement |
EXAMPLES OF CITY CORE EXPERIENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>EARLY LEARNING</th>
<th>LOWER SCHOOL</th>
<th>MIDDLE SCHOOL</th>
<th>UPPER SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATH)</td>
<td>Bird study based on observations at a local preserve that becomes a bird museum in the classroom.</td>
<td>Understanding the effects of early industrialization on humans and animals in the region.</td>
<td>Studying logarithms in math class supporting pH in STEM, leading to water quality testing of local waterways to investigate local resilience.</td>
<td>Sustainability policy paper and exhibition based on an overnight canoe trip down a local waterway, discussions with environmental policy-makers, housing experts, and officials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMANITIES (HISTORY, LITERACY, LANGUAGE)</td>
<td>Creating a town in the classroom based on interviews with students’ family and local stores.</td>
<td>Historical fiction project on a local neighborhood, using archival research, historical maps, primary source documents, diaries, and interviews.</td>
<td>Wayfinding Project: students and teachers design an urban history scavenger hunt, then follow clues using maps, compasses, and mass transit to navigate the city safely.</td>
<td>Students research a neighborhood to design and lead a historic walking tour with place booking and architectural analysis connected to community outreach and a participatory planning project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN (MAKER FLOOR, 2D AND 3D ARTS, PERFORMING ARTS)</td>
<td>Creating models of birds in their local habitat; building a town in the classroom.</td>
<td>Creating personal narratives of local historical figures, captured in various media: film, 2D, 3D, AR, and VR.</td>
<td>Building a model of the local neighborhoods and transportation network using all media in the workshop floor.</td>
<td>GIS, interactive mapping, and 3D modelling projects for urban analysis and community-based participatory planning project in STEM and humanities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CITY CORE EXPEDITIONS ON X-DAY

The City Core program applies all of a student’s skills, knowledge, and traits to the task of understanding how we live together, solve problems collectively, affect our landscape, and how it affects us. As students mature, they address increasingly complex topics and begin to engage in design, problem-solving, and collaborative service work in the city. In ELC, the City Core activities might include building maps of a student’s home, class, and school; and identifying parts of a neighborhood (streets, parks, home) to begin to orient them in their city. In Lower School, students begin urban skill building (numeracy, communication, city mapping, making observations) through architecture tours, transportation studies, urban storytelling, neighborhood research, interviews with residents, and in-class urban simulations. Middle School students build on the toolkit (through archival research, policy memos, urban orienteering, environmental analysis) by exploring city physics through bridge design or car velocity analyses; urban planning and design by studying in-progress construction; policy analysis through stakeholder interviews; and cultural exploration through student-designed walking tours and scavenger hunts.

Upper School students become active agents in the city, applying all they have learned to cultivating leadership, civic engagement, urban design, resilience planning, social entrepreneurship, community outreach, service learning, and collaboration with community partners.

CITY EXPERIENCE

The core global exchange program, City Experience is an interdisciplinary city immersion program permitting students to engage with their local city and with cities across the Whittle School & Studios network. Upper School students will have the opportunity to spend a full trimester or more, deeply studying either their host city (9th and 10th Grades) or another city in the Whittle School & Studios network (11th and 12th Grades), integrating all of their required disciplines through urban exploration and sharing their discoveries across campuses. The home version of the City Experience program combines the adventure of an away program with a deep connection to a student’s home city and campus. In 11th and 12th Grades, students may go abroad for a Global City Experience at any of our other campuses. Students can combine their City Experience studies with a deep dive into Centers of Excellence.

COLLEGE PLACEMENT AND OUR GLOBAL CITY EXPERIENCE

The Whittle School & Studios College Office is a full participant in the Global City program. College counselors will teach in the program, giving them a unique insight into its value and the best way to tell a child’s story as part of the college process. Early conversations with college admissions officers and directors about the Global City program have been overwhelmingly positive: study abroad experience tells a compelling story about a student’s unique interests, intellectual adventurousness, and willingness to think “outside the box.” Without a doubt, this challenging educational experience will help Whittle School & Studios students stand out among an increasingly competitive pool of college applicants.
Each of our schools will have its own Center of Excellence (COE) in which students work with mentors (including Whittle School & Studios parents) to explore an area of interest with unprecedented depth and focus, developing portfolio projects that address some of the greatest challenges our planet faces. In state-of-the-art COE labs located at the entrance of our campuses, students will work in cohorts guided by COE directors to develop their expertise in topics such as international relations and diplomacy at our COE in Washington, DC, and robotics and engineering innovation in Shenzhen. COE themes of inquiry are selected to align with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Global Goals.

Through their COE work, students will learn advanced communication, active listening, and presentation skills in our DC COE as they build global awareness and cultural competence. They will build robust portfolio projects that showcase their verbal, written, and multimedia dexterity. Classroom learning will be enhanced with guidance from accomplished diplomats, foreign and domestic policymakers, and mediators. Our older students will have opportunities for meaningful field study and internships with select cultural and governmental organizations.

All student projects will respond to global issues and opportunities and will showcase each student’s individual interests and passions within this field. We will share advanced student work with the wider global community through published papers, blog pieces, and archived multi-media presentations, all guided by Whittle School & Studios faculty and by mentors in the field. At the Upper School level, personalized COE portfolio projects will support the college application process. In the future, our older students will obtain meaningful college credit for their advanced project-based work.

“Modeled on research institutes at leading liberal arts colleges and universities, COEs will connect the Whittle School & Studios learning community with the world beyond our classrooms.”

— ELIZABETH SCHMIDT, PH.D.
GLOBAL HEAD, CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
AND VICE-PRESIDENT, STUDIOS

We are in the final stages of securing strategic partnerships with diplomatic and foreign policy institutions, think tanks, top liberal arts colleges and universities, and cultural institutions in order to create valuable research opportunities and internships for Upper School students, as well as theme-related visits and projects for our younger students.
## WHITTLE SCHOOL & STUDIOS CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARLY LEARNING</strong></td>
<td>COE work integrated into classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOWER SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>COE work in COE classroom and integrated into course work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>Study of skills related to international cooperation and diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPPER SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>Deep study of DC-specific history, culture, language, and skills related to international cooperation and diplomacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course Work
- Study of international cooperation and diplomacy
- Project-based learning methods

### Fieldwork (real-world experiences)
- Integration of international cooperation and diplomacy work into daily projects
- Guided class field trips to cultural institutions
- Field work in cultural institutions, observing best practices
- Field work in foreign policy companies and cultural institutions
- Mentorships
- Internships
- Study abroad

### Project Work (hands-on collaborative learning)
- Early stages of project work through play and exploration
- Theme-based project work in class
- Feedback cycle
- Theme-based project work through internships
- Feedback cycle with mentors

### Dissemination Work (sharing of projects with wider community)
- Work shared through Whittle School & Studios digital platform
- Work posted around school
- Work shared through presentations locally and globally
- Tutoring and mentoring of youth in community to build additional projects
- Work posted around school
- Work shared through presentations locally and globally
- Tutoring and mentoring of youth in community to build additional projects

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**Division Overview**

Our focus and emphasis on the advisory process ensures that each student is personally guided, cared for and understood from the day he or she arrives until graduation. Advisories are built into the daily schedule, guaranteeing time for our educators to engage with students to keep track of progress, identify where they might need extra help, or be ready to engage with a topic on a deeper level.

The fact that we are a school for day students, weekly boarders, and full boarders adds another appealing dimension. It is no coincidence that many of the world’s greatest schools have a boarding aspect. Such institutions know that the school community is all the more vibrant and vivacious when there is a strong residential element. Our boarders will enjoy a family-style environment in which they feel safe, nurtured, and appreciated. The opportunities to take part in organized evening and weekend activities will be carefully balanced with time to read, rest, and relax. Students will build strong friendships and enjoy the cultural experiences of their local city.

Each grade will have around 150 students—a size that allows for flexibility in our educational activity, but is neither unwieldy nor unfriendly. Furthermore, our advisory groups and house system will create intimate communities within the wider community, and enable smaller groups of students to interact and build the kinds of relationships that will sustain them and help them grow.

One of Whittle School & Studios’s great advantages is our full age-range approach. From Early Learning through university and college entrance, we will have the joyful experience of seeing the growth and development of children who are given the time, space, opportunity, and stimulation to become young people who know how to learn, think, and relate to others, and who are superbly equipped to take their next steps beyond Whittle School & Studios.

Each Whittle School & Studios campus is organized into four divisions: Early Learning, Lower School, Middle School and Upper School. Each is led by a division head, an expert educator and manager who brings experience, passion, and creative talent to the role. All four division heads work together as a team, leading the outstanding faculty members, and diligently working in partnership with Whittle School & Studios families.

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**— DENNIS BISGAARD**

**HEAD OF SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, DC CAMPUS**
Early Learning Center

At Whittle School & Studios, we believe that children have limitless potential and seek to belong, learn, solve problems, and create. Joyous exploration, creative expression, personalized pathways, and community contribution are the key features of our program. It is our wish that ELC students love learning and continue to develop their ability to care—to care for truth and learning; to care for their health and well-being; and to care for others, for the world around them, for nature, and for the good that they can bring.

Our ELC curriculum is based on the Reggio Emilia philosophy, which views children as infinitely capable, teachers as co-constructors of learning, and families as close partners. A Reggio-based approach follows the interests of children. For example, a teacher who noticed that students loved moving their bodies in creative ways could build a series of learning opportunities out of that interest: that teacher might show students videos of acrobats or modern dancers in action, bring in a specialist to lead a creative movement class, or ask the children to make acrobatic shapes out of clay. Each experience builds upon and reacts to the developing needs of the students.

**ELC SAMPLE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00-8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Studios Care Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Mind &amp; Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45-9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Project Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45-11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Outside Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch &amp; Storytime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Rest (three- &amp; four-year-olds) or Workshop Time (five- &amp; six-year-olds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Special Classes (Gardening, Movement Music or Physical Literacy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15-2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Community Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Dismissal and Extended Day Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ESSENTIAL PRACTICES**

**CHILDREN FOLLOW PERSONALIZED LEARNING PATHWAYS**

We focus on the holistic development of the child-guiding a personalized connection to World of Knowledge, World of Self, and World of Humanity.

**CURRICULUM EMERGES FROM THE CHILDREN**

With Reggio Emilia inspiration, we use emergent, project-based curriculum to co-create with children, observing and listening to them, and constantly evolving learning experiences. Students and teachers together self-reflect and iterate.

**TEACHERS ARE STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS**

We value teacher learning as much as student learning. We encourage teachers to construct personalized professional development pathways and encounter the world with the same curiosity, interest, and wonder as the children they teach.

**GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP STRENGTHENS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE**

At this age, the primary emphasis is on the spoken language and its cultural context, with a view to enabling students to participate actively and comfortably in a Chinese cultural environment. Students will have daily exposure to spoken Chinese through activities, stories, rhymes, songs, and games.

**THE CLASSROOM IS EVERYWHERE**

The physical environment teaches. Daily, we use the broader physical and digital world as our classroom for inclusive and culturally dynamic learning.

**FAMILIES ARE CLOSE PARTNERS**

We engage families as partners to develop joyous learning at school and at home, and to help strengthen the network of support.
Students who participate in the extended day program (a flexible option for parents who may need additional care hours before or after the traditional school day) will join their classmates arriving from home at this time. When the day begins outside, they will engage in a variety of activities of their choosing, such as climbing, building, or drawing. When the day begins inside, they will have time to explore—perhaps returning to a book in the library area or engaging with new materials related to a current project. Children will talk with friends, reconnect with the teachers, and begin to settle into their day. Upon entering the classroom, students will put away their belongings, including their coat, and backpack.

The community meeting will begin. A well-structured morning allows children to create their own pathways for success by activating the curiosity, creativity, and sense of comfort needed for the rest of the day. During the morning, children will have time to talk about yesterday’s experiences, mainly in Chinese, based upon a rotating schedule. This may include immersive conversation with friends in a family-style atmosphere. Depending upon the final schedule, this may include immersive conversation in Chinese. We plan to invite older students, Chinese speaking parents, and our Chinese language teachers to join us for lunch. English-speaking parents will be welcome as well—they will just have to join in the Chinese-language learning. At the end of lunch, there will be an opportunity for story time as a way to transition before rest time.

Children will play a game to get to know one another better, talk about yesterday’s experiences, and make plans for what we will do together today. At the beginning of the school year, the focus of the day might be getting to know a new area of the classroom, such as the mini-atelier, which features a variety of tools for expressing themselves creatively. They could also venture out on a tour of the building—perhaps to meet the food service team and learn how they prepare the delicious lunches.

**Community Meeting**

At approximately 9:00 a.m., the morning community meeting will begin. A well-structured morning allows children to create their own pathways for success by activating the curiosity, creativity, and sense of comfort needed for the rest of the day. During the meeting, children play a game to get to know one another better, talk about yesterday’s experiences, and make plans for what we will do together today. At the beginning of the school year, the focus of the day might be getting to know a new area of the classroom, such as the mini-atelier, which features a variety of tools for expressing themselves creatively. They could also venture out on a tour of the building—perhaps to meet the food service team and learn how they prepare the delicious lunches.

**Project Work**

During project work time, children spend time deeply exploring the world and are immersed in rich language learning either in English or Chinese. Let’s assume that the first project takes advantage of the school’s unique building and is related to construction and architecture. The blocks building area, there will be photographs of the Whittle School & Studios building and neighboring structures, in addition to a wide variety of materials with which to build. In the classroom library, there will be books about construction, architecture, homes, neighborhoods and more. In the mini-atelier there will be projections of different buildings from around the world on a wall with tracing paper, a light box with clay, and measuring tools. Children will be able to choose where they want to work.

**Outside Exploration**

We believe that connection to the natural world, free play and collaboration time with peers, and learning outside of the classroom are all integral to holistic development. We will be going outside every day and will make sure that every child has the necessary boots and gear so that outdoor exploration is fun, warm, and safe, no matter the conditions. The typical outdoor time will include a variety of options—group games in the Chinese language, free play, nature exploration, gardening and more. Some days we will take walks into the neighborhood, exploring Rock Creek Park or the University of the District of Columbia rooftop garden.

**Lunch and Story Time**

Lunch will be a great time of day for social emotional learning and enjoying conversation with friends in a family-style atmosphere. Depending upon the final schedule, this may include immersive conversation in Chinese. We plan to invite older students, Chinese speaking parents, and our Chinese language teachers to join us for lunch. English-speaking parents will be welcome as well—they will just have to join in the Chinese-language learning. At the end of lunch, there will be an opportunity for story time as a way to transition before rest time.

**Rest and Reflection**

We anticipate an approximately one-hour rest period for our three- to four-year-olds. This time will be personalized to meet the needs of the children.

**Workshop Time**

This will be the time of the day when our specialized teachers, including music, movement, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math combined), will provide a variety of experiences, mainly in Chinese, based upon a rotating schedule.

**Arts and Making Block**

This will be the time of the day when our specialized teachers, including music, movement, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math combined), will provide a variety of experiences, mainly in Chinese, based upon a rotating schedule.

**Closing Meeting**

For about 15 minutes at the end of each day, teachers and students will reflect on the day, sing a closing song, and discuss the exploration we will continue the next day.

— Stephanie Fitzgerald
Head of Early Learning Center
Washington, DC Campus
Lower School

Throughout this formative period in a child’s development, the Lower School is committed to supporting the growth and development of rigorous scholars, intrepid explorers, creative builders and resilient, self-aware individuals. Skills and abilities are meaningless without the disposition to use them well. Our students’ innate curiosity will be nurtured, and their perseverance encouraged. Students will develop not just literacy, but a love for reading and researching the things they are passionate about. They will be able to solve complex math problems and understand how math can be used as a tool to address larger issues.

LOWER SCHOOL SAMPLE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Social/Planning Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Mind &amp; Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 - 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Arts and Making Block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Integrated Project Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30- 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Outdoor Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15 - 12:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 - 1:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Language and Culture Mastery Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 - 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Math Mastery and Project Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 - 3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Literacy Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 - 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Community and Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 - 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Studios (optional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social/Planning Time
FOCUS
Community
Integrated Project Work
Outdoor Play
Language and Culture Mastery Band
Math Mastery and Project Work
Literacy Workshop
Community and Reflection
Studios (optional)

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

CHILDREN FOLLOW PERSONALIZED LEARNING PATHWAYS

Personalized learning allows teachers to meet students’ needs based on their readiness, interests, and learning profile. It also allows students to be agents of their own development, working with teachers to co-create assessments and rubrics, reflect on their own learning, and decide upon next steps.

TEACHERS ARE STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

All of our teachers are students and all of our students are teachers. Our teachers will engage in ongoing, personalized professional development to enable them to be lifelong learners. Our students will conclude projects and studies with documentation, and sharing their learning with and teaching the larger community. In order to promote the kind of learning environment that develops rigorous scholars and intrepid explorers, teachers and students will learn together through projects and experiences.

BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCY IS CRITICAL TO DEVELOP TRULY GLOBAL CITIZENS

Our students will see diversity as a strength, and will be proof that diversity of background, languages, races, experiences, and perspectives makes us smarter. Students will learn about the problems we face worldwide and develop dispositions and skills to address them. They will learn how to communicate effectively in order to build understanding and collaboration. Facility with at least one other language and culture is central.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IS AT THE CENTER OF OUR PROGRAM

Social and emotional competencies are increasingly recognized as critical for children’s success in school, as well as in other settings in later phases of life, and into adulthood. As children move through the elementary years, aptitude in social and emotional abilities are critical to each child’s overall well-being and success.

DISPOSITIONS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Skills and abilities have very little use without the disposition to use them well. Our students will develop not only literacy, but the desire to read for pleasure and to find things out. They will be able to solve math problems but, more importantly, they will see how math becomes a tool or language to solve other problems. Our students’ innate curiosity will be nurtured and their perseverance encouraged.

CHILDREN LEARN BEST THROUGH MEANINGFUL, INTERDISCIPLINARY, PROJECT-BASED EXPERIENCES

Students should be at the center of their own learning experience, developing deep content knowledge through the investigation of problems within their lived experiences. At Whittle School & Studios, these interdisciplinary projects will be centered around the United Nation’s Sustainable Goals, and will provide opportunities for students to engage and present to members of their local community as well as their peers on other campuses. Students will not only learn by doing, but also by reflecting upon their learning.
SOCIAL/PLANNING TIME
As students arrive at school, they will spend time in the classrooms or common areas, working on puzzles, playing games, chatting with friends, and meeting with their teachers to discuss the day ahead.

MIND & BODY
This could be a PE Mind & Body class, a movement or mindfulness class, game play, or a walk outside.

COMMUNITY
Students and teachers gather for a meeting in a classroom or common space. Morning Meeting is designed to help students transition from home to school. This time serves to build the classroom community, give students a sense of belonging and ownership, and bring everyone to a shared understanding of the rest of the day.

LITERACY
During the literacy mastery band workshop, students work independently and in small groups on reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. They may also spend this time learning or studying their second language.

MATH
During the mathematics mastery band, students work independently and in small groups on math investigations and problem-solving, as well as consolidation of skills and understanding based on their level of development.

OUTDOOR PLAY
Students will play outside or in a space in the building.

LUNCH
Lunch is served family-style, and will be a time to enjoy each other’s company, practice social emotional learning skills, and try new foods.

ARTS AND MAKING BLOCK
Students will go to visual and performing arts classes. These will cycle throughout the year and could include studio art, music, drama, and makerspace lab time.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MASTERY BAND
Students will have Chinese or Spanish class.

INTEGRATED PROJECT BLOCK
Students will work as a whole class, in small groups and independently on thematic projects inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and connected to global themes across our network. This work will take place in the classrooms, common areas, art studios, and makerspaces, and will weave together science, math, social studies, language arts, and SEL. It will be closely tied to both City Core projects and Center of Excellence work on X-Days.

PERSONAL PROJECT TIME
Students will have a chance to develop, independently or in groups, projects that align with, and help to nurture their passions. Documentation of process and product will be an important part of a student’s portfolio.

COMMUNITY REFLECTION
Although reflection is incorporated into most of the day’s activities, we believe it is important for the school community to gather at the end of the day for a closing meeting and reflection time.

“Through their studies in the Lower School, students will make connections among the disciplines and apply the skills and understandings to investigations in their lived experiences. With our campus in Shenzhen, students have the opportunity to share their learning and engage in projects across the globe. Our students will learn that with knowledge comes responsibility, and a part of every project will be a forward-looking, outward-facing question: How can we use what we know to make the world a better place?”

— SUSANNA STOSSEL
HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, DC CAMPUS
Middle School

Middle School students are beginning to make critical and complex life choices and are forming the attitudes, values, and dispositions that will direct their behavior as adults. They deserve an education that will enhance their healthy growth as lifelong students, ethical and democratic citizens, and increasingly competent, self-sufficient individuals who are optimistic about the future and prepared to succeed in our ever-changing world.

Our Middle School approach is based on the pedagogy that every child:

- Has the capacity to learn, grow, and develop into a knowledgeable, reflective, caring, ethical, and contributing citizen.
- Must have access to the very best programs and practices.
- Must be engaged in learning that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory.
- Faces significant life choices and needs support in making wise and healthy decisions.
- Thrives academically, socially, and emotionally in a democratic learning environment where trust and respect are paramount, and where family and community are actively involved.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL SAMPLE SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30-9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20-10:05 a.m.</td>
<td>Language &amp; Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:05-10:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:20-11:20 a.m.</td>
<td>STEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:25-12:05 p.m.</td>
<td>Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:05-12:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:50-1:35 p.m.</td>
<td>Acceleration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:40-2:40 p.m.</td>
<td>Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45-3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Middle School students have three hours of physical education per week

“The Middle School years are focused on unlocking human potential. Our goals are ambitious and are centered around cultivating empathy, emotional intelligence, self-motivation, global awareness, social justice, confidence, and optimism within every student.”

― MAREK BECK, PH.D.
HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, DC CAMPUS

**ESSENTIAL PRACTICES**

- **PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION**
  Teachers meet each student’s needs based on readiness, interests, and learning profile.

- **DESIGN THINKING**
  Develops empathic thinkers who can take increased ownership over their learning.

- **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**
  Students are allowed to learn by doing while reflecting and refining their processes and products.

- **CULTURAL COMPETENCIES**
  Acknowledgment that the way to prepare our students to be global citizens is to recognize, incorporate, and nurture the unique differences and similarities of our cultures.

- **MASTERY-BASED LEARNING**
  A focus on essential content and skills, allowing for deeper mastery within and across disciplines.

- **PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**
  Learning is more engaging, collaborative, and meaningful, allowing students to develop deep content knowledge through the investigation of real-world problems.
Identity and community are central themes in the minds of young adolescents and are central themes present in our Middle School humanities courses. Other humanities themes are inextricably linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: 6th Grade-Good Health & Well-Being, 7th Grade-Reduced Inequalities, and 8th Grade-Peace, Justice, & Strong Institutions. Throughout our studies, students are engaged in deep inquiry by examining history, ethics, and geography through a case-study approach of analyzing topics, themes, problems, and issues. The humanities courses are also where students receive more sophisticated reading instruction within a wide variety of genre, and strengthen their skills to be highly effective communicators in both written and oral forms.

The STEM program seeks to cultivate and deepen each student’s innate curiosity about the natural and man-made world. To keep alive the spirit of inquiry, we design learning experiences around open-ended questions and exploration of phenomena. We believe that the purposeful integration of science disciplines, technology, engineering, and mathematics creates the conditions for deep exploration of the world, and that hands-on engagement with the skills and practices of these disciplines is essential for our students. We further believe that interrogating the world through the concepts and tools of STEM is but one mode of inquiry, and that truly authentic and meaningful learning must be interdisciplinary and foster students’ abilities to make connections across the many domains of human experience. Above all, we believe that the investigation of the world by students and teachers must be suffused with joy, rigor, critical thinking, and optimism.

Today’s students must be prepared to thrive in a constantly evolving technological landscape. Academic technology at Whittle School & Studios supports our mission by providing students with the digital resources to think critically about the world as it is, and to imagine the world as it could be. Technology provides our students with a platform to pursue their innovative and creative instincts, and the means to collaborate and work together to solve local and global challenges. In addition, new digital tools allow for a more personalized and experiential education that utilizes students’ diverse learning styles and curiosities. Our school will encourage students to consider the responsibilities and obligations of the use of technology globally, and the notion of “digital citizenship.” Our students will develop a set of social, emotional, and cognitive abilities to achieve a healthy balance to the demands of digital life.

Our arts program emphasizes visual arts, performing arts, and media arts. Students will be able to take up to three different elective courses within the same academic year. Each student will have three hours of Creative Arts and Design Studio (CAD) per week. In addition to having full-time art teachers, we are collaborating with some of the best arts and design organizations throughout Washington, DC to further enhance our program, giving our students unique access to world-class professionals.

Our mastery-based program seeks to develop sophisticated and flexible mathematical thinkers who understand both the power and limitations of mathematics as a tool to describe and make sense of the world. True mathematical sophistication requires creative, critical, and logical thinking. Students in our program go beyond basic skill development and fluency to master computational thinking, mathematical modeling, problem seeking and solving, data analysis and visualization, reasoning and logic, financial literacy, and creative expression through mathematics. Above all, they partake of the joy and wonder of using math to create, collaborate, communicate, and think critically about the world around them.

Cultural competencies are central to our mission. Our program is designed to teach children about world languages and culture, using language as a tool for gaining insight into cultural beliefs and practices as well as for communication. The goal is to enable students to actively and comfortably participate in a world language cultural environment. In addition to Spanish or Chinese, students may also take any other language of choice in coordination with our Studios offerings. Opportunities for full cultural immersion exist through our Global Rotation program that will be available for students starting in the eighth grade. Course offerings provide a range of experience and exposure to languages, from novices to heritage speakers.

With the exception of X-Days, students gather in Advisory every day for 35 minutes per meeting. The emphasis of this time focuses on academic support coupled with an intentional social-emotional curriculum. Advisory time includes one-on-one meetings with the advisor, self-reflection through journaling, team-building exercises, open conversations on topics related to social and emotional development, personal interest projects, goal setting and monitoring, and coordinating best uses for our daily personalized Acceleration classes.

All Middle School students will have three 60-minute physical education classes per week. In addition, students may participate in our athletics program. A diverse range of athletic offerings will be available to students. Based on interest and enrollment, we will offer the following: soccer, fencing, rock climbing, badminton, cross country, squash, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, basketball, track and field, personal fitness training and more.

Beginning in the 8th grade, students are eligible to take advantage of our residential life program. Our five- and seven-day boarding options give students the opportunity to immerse themselves fully within the culture of the school. They will have opportunities to develop deep relationships with their peers and the residential faculty through social activities during the evenings and weekends.
Upper School

The Upper School is a time when students will develop not just their independence, but also their interdependence as they learn, live (via the 5- and 7-day boarding program), and fellowship with peers from all over the world. Just like the other divisions at Whittle School & Studios, the Upper School is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach which puts the students’ intellectual, social, and emotional growth at the center. In short, it is a program that prepares them not only for college, but for life beyond as well.

The Upper School daily schedule includes team-taught periods that are either 70-minute interdisciplinary “blocks” or 50-minute mastery “bands.” Aligned with the school’s mission to provide student-driven, interdisciplinary, project-based and experiential opportunities for students, courses are not taught to the requirements of any external assessment (e.g. SAT, ACT, AP). Even so, the curriculum will position students for success with these external measures, as well as help them develop a robust portfolio.

For each grade, course content will be guided by a central developmental theme. Ninth Grade is a “pivot” year, smoothing the transition from Middle School by moving students toward addressing questions of increasing complexity, demanding more ambitious critical thinking, and greater degrees of student choice and agency within the teacher-designed curriculum. Tenth Grade is about “foundations” that establish the knowledge and skills necessary for students to be well-rounded scholars and empathetic global citizens, and to make more independent choices in 11th and 12th Grades. Students will also have the opportunity to choose from a diverse menu of teacher and student-designed elective courses on topics ranging from creative writing to model diplomacy.

INTERDISCIPLINARY BLOCKS
- **HUMANITIES**
  A two-year core program integrates history, geography, politics, economics, English language and literature, ethics, and religion. Ninth Graders will engage in thematically oriented, project-based study of modern world history and literature, culminating in a capstone project. Tenth Graders will study modern United States history and literature, using Washington, DC as a lens to examine the national history. In 11th and 12th Grades, students will also have the opportunity to choose from a diverse menu of teacher and student-designed elective courses on topics ranging from creative writing to model diplomacy.

- **STEM**
  A two- or three-level core sequence (completion of the third level is required for study of advanced topics) integrates traditional science disciplines (life sciences, physical sciences, earth and environmental sciences) with technology, engineering, and applied math. After completing the first two levels of the STEM sequence, students will be able to enroll in STEM electives and/or pursue independent study in STEM topics. Enrollment in advanced electives and study of advanced physics, chemistry, or biology requires completion of the third level of the core STEM sequence.

- **CREATIVE ARTS & DESIGN STUDIO**
  We are collaborating with some of the best arts and design professional institutes in DC to create a four-year sequence that builds from artistic exploration to application, acquisition, and integration across visual and performance arts disciplines as well as study of media arts and design.

MASTERY BANDS
- **MATH**
  A two- or three-level mastery-based sequence (completion of the third level is required for study of advanced topics) that integrates algebra, geometry, precalculus, and statistics topics, leading to advanced study in calculus or statistics, independent study, and/or electives (basic and advanced). Math study in the Upper School will be problem-based and will also integrate focused work on computational thinking and financial literacy alongside the acquisition of more traditional math skills and knowledge.
• **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**
  Students choose between an immersive study of either Spanish or Chinese, leveraging our global network for authentic experiences and cross-cultural connections. Opportunities for full cultural immersion exist through our Global Rotation Program. Course offerings provide a range of experience and exposure to languages, from novices to heritage speakers.

• **ACCELERATION**
  This is dedicated time for students to work one-on-one with teachers, either to address gaps in foundational knowledge and practice core skills, or to enrich learning and pursue individualized study of topics in greater depth.

• **ADVISORY**
  Four times per week, students meet with an advisor, with whom they will work closely to guide their academic, travel, and extra-curricular activities and to plan for college and their careers. For example, 9th Graders might choose to use an advisory period to develop goals for each class, including how they will use their Acceleration periods that week.

• **COLLEGE ADVISORY**
  Using a combination of both local and global resources, college counselors will use a holistic approach to support students, throughout the college process starting in 9th Grade. This will lead to admission to a college or university that is the best fit for each student.

• **ATHLETICS**
  Although participating in athletics is not a requirement, there will be an emphasis on physical literacy within the school. As a result, based on interest and enrollment, an exciting and diverse range of athletic offerings will be available to students, including soccer, fencing, rock climbing, badminton, cross country, squash, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, basketball, and track and field.

• **RESIDENTIAL LIFE**
  Our five- and seven-day boarding options give students the opportunity to immerse themselves fully within the culture of the school. They will have opportunities to develop deep relationships with their peers and the residential faculty through educational and social activities during evenings and weekends.

  “Tenth Grade is about ‘foundations’ that establish the knowledge and skills necessary for students to be well-rounded scholars and empathetic global citizens.”

**Designed for Learning**

At Whittle School & Studios, we believe that education is more than just time spent in a classroom—it encompasses everything students experience during their time with us. A key part of the way we consider student experience is the physical space of the school, the “where” of our vision. How we articulate our spaces intuitively communicates to students and their families how we think about their time with us. It’s a school for our students, workplace for our team, and center of community for our families.
Schools are often referred to in a series of nouns: classrooms, hallways, desks, chairs, etc. Instead, we’ve approached our design by first thinking about verbs: what our students will be doing as they learn: making, researching, collaborating, inventing, storytelling, and presenting. In articulating our verbs, we place a high value on design.

We now have two campuses under construction: Washington, DC and Shenzhen, China—well over one million square feet of learning space in total. At the heart of our design team are architects at Renzo Piano Building Workshop and engineers at Arup. Renzo Piano’s design for our campuses was inspired by the idea of an Italian piazza—the lively public squares found throughout villages and towns where people come together and share experiences.

Our DC campus, located on 13.7 wooded acres in the North Cleveland Park neighborhood, is an adaptive reuse of the former Intelsat headquarters. The Australian architect John Andrews designed the late-modern building for the international telecommunications satellite organization and completed construction in the mid-1980s. The building is organized by 13 octagonal towers, ranging from five to seven stories in height and connected by six atrium courtyards. In addition to classrooms with ample space, natural light, and high ceilings, there are approximately 30,000 square feet of makerspace workshops, over 40,000 square feet of indoor athletic space, and a four-story performance hall and smaller black box theater.

Energy conservation ideas pioneered at the Intelsat building are foundational to the sustainable design strategies deployed today. Our adaptive reuse of the campus in Washington, DC maintains and improves the sustainable strategies in areas that connect building performance and student performance. Careful attention in our design has been given to daylighting systems, acoustic control, temperature control, and indoor air quality. A growing body of research suggests that these building elements are linked to better student performance—higher test scores, better memory and concentration, better overall health, and fewer missed days.

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**KEY ATTRIBUTES OF OUR CAMPUS DESIGN**

**ORIGINAL SUSTAINABLE FEATURES**

- Exterior sunscreens to shade the façade and increase airflow around the building
- Heat recovery system that utilizes heat generated by computer systems
- Distributed chiller systems (located on top of the stair towers) that were more economical than centralized systems
- Passive controls to naturally ventilate and circulate air in the atria
- Floorplates designed to maximize daylight and views throughout the building

**NEW ADDITIONS**

- A school in the park: situated in a park setting surrounded by mature old-growth trees
- Open and inviting: design that allows the school community to see learning in action
- Courtyards and piazzas: almost 50,000 square feet in the atria as social centers for our students
- Color: adds warmth and assists with way-finding
- Light and transparency: enhances natural daylight and provides views through the campus

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“This building was designed in a spirit of openness, of optimism, of faith in cooperation between people and groups of people, and the use of modern technology.”

— ARCHITECT JOHN ANDREWS QUOTED IN THE WASHINGTON POST IN 1980, WHEN THE DC CAMPUS BUILDING’S ORIGINAL DESIGN WAS RELEASED
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OUR MISSION

Our hopes are high, and by them we are bound together. We aim to create an extraordinary and unique school, the first truly modern institution serving children from ages three to 18 and the first global one. We want to change for the better the lives of those students who attend and, beyond our own campuses, contribute to the cause of education on every continent. We measure our merit not through the narrowness of exclusivity but through the breadth of our impact.

Favoring our work is an emerging canon of best practices pioneered by educators who have come before us. They have taught us that a modern school knows how one learns will outlast what one learns; will end lock-step, one-size-fits-all education; understands that the emotional development of its students must also be given time; sees that an ingenious facility is an ongoing lesson in design; believes that a global system of schools will surpass a single, local one; harnesses the power of our new digital age; and reconceptualizes the school day and year, recognizing that learning happens everywhere and anytime.

Our graduates will stand out. Grounded by rigor and knowledge, they will be undaunted, creative, and bold, ready to lead or help in the wholly transformed and challenging world of their future. Each will shine in at least one loved, purposeful pursuit in which he or she will achieve excellence and a resulting lifelong confidence. All will speak other languages and study in other cultures yet remain deeply connected to their homeland. Surrounded by an expansive and diverse collective intelligence, they will forever be members of it. And through carefully carving their own character they will help goodness prevail.

Our faculty will be learners too, side by side with our students and other teachers. We’ll choose them because they want to guide children and have distinction in their academic discipline. They’ll choose us because our global scale brings them unequaled professional development; our growth provides them growth; and our rewards for them are more commensurate with the great good education brings to society.

We thank those who have generously supported us, and we look forward to sharing our work with all who aspire to reimagine education.