



Early Childhood Professions

Career-Technical Education Program News from the Six District Educational Compact

Success Story



These students jumstarted their senior year by starting their internships in the summer! L to R: Mars Vasko (Tallmadge), Hailey Mullen (Tallmadge), Serenity Nicholas (Tallmadge) and Mackenzie Gaines (Kent Roosevelt)

Level II students equipped for internship opportunities

During the first year of the Early Childhood Professions program, students gain a wide-range of academic and skill development, participate in in-depth hands-on field experiences and explore a variety of career pathways through guest speakers and field trips. The program's location at a local preschool allows for students to immerse themselves into the necessary requirements of an early childhood professional.

This level of preparation allows for local businesses to confidently hire Level II students as paid interns. Many students start these paid internships the summer before their second year of the program and gain hours toward earning their Child Development Associate credential before the school year even begins. Internships take place at businesses such as *Small Steps Big Strides Child Care Center* and *ChildScape Learn and Grow*, where students have the opportunity to work in classrooms with children ages six weeks to twelve years old. Interns assist teachers and assistants with daily classroom happenings as well as supervising field trips within the community. **Mars Vasko** (Tallmadge) shares, "Starting an internship during the summer made the transition into my senior year easier and made me feel more confident in my abilities to be successful in this career field!"



Courtney Burchett

Courtney Burchett is a 2015 graduate of Kent Roosevelt High School and an Early Childhood Professions completer. Courtney is currently the School Coordinator at the *Young Explorers Montessori* school in Aurora and is also attending the University of Cincinnati for Early Childhood Education and Administration. Courtney shares, "The hands-on experience you gain from the Early Childhood Professions program is unmatched to any program out there! During my time in the program I learned childcare theories and put them to practice by leading a classroom during my internships. This gave me a huge advantage to my peers without prior training when I entered the workforce. Within my first year of graduating I became a lead teacher of my very own classroom! Attending the program gave me the confidence I needed to work my way up to an administrative position where I now get to help other teachers learn and grow!"



Six District Educational Compact

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Students listen intently to staff from Young Explorers Montessori as they gain knowledge of the Montessori philosophy.

Students learn about the Montessori approach to teaching

Early Childhood Professions students gain knowledge of a variety of different instructional techniques. Field trips to local centers and schools provide students with a unique opportunity to see firsthand how different instructional strategies are put into practice.

One such field trip was a visit to *Young Explorers Montessori* in Twinsburg where they took a deep dive into the fascinating world of the Montessori philosophy. During the visit, students were introduced to the fundamental principles that guide this philosophy, including the emphasis on child-centered learning, independence, and respect for each child's unique development. This experience allowed students to witness the transformative power of self-directed learning and the profound impact it has on a child's motivation.



Tallmadge Elementary prepares future educators

Early Childhood Professions students have the incredible opportunity to engage in student teaching activities in the Tallmadge Elementary kindergarten and first grade classrooms. These hands-on experiences provide them with valuable knowledge about the developmental differences between these age groups, and also gives them a comprehensive understanding of the responsibilities and demands associated with a career as a public school teacher.

Throughout their time in the classrooms, the students actively participate in various classroom activities, assisting the teachers in creating a conducive learning environment for the young learners.

Additionally, the students have the opportunity to engage in small group activities and assist with facilitating collaborative learning experiences. This allows students to gain insight into the importance of differentiation and personalized instruction in an early childhood setting.

By actively participating in these student teaching activities, the Early Childhood Professions students will not only enhance their theoretical knowledge, but they will also develop practical skills that are essential for a successful career in education.



FCCLA state competition winners from L to R: Audrey Gopp (Woodridge), Mackenzie Gaines (Kent Roosevelt), Linda Hughes (Cuyahoga Falls) and Mars Vasko (Tallmadge)

Students compete and win at state competition

Early Childhood Professions students are members of the professional student organization, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). As members, students prepare projects and presentations to demonstrate program standards and competencies and then compete at various levels.

Several students advanced from the regional competition to the FCCLA State Leadership Conference during the spring of 2023. **Audrey Gopp (Woodridge)**, placed 1st in Early Childhood Education where she developed and presented an early childhood STEAM lesson. **Mackenzie Gaines (Kent Roosevelt)**, placed 1st in Language and Literacy for her presentation of the story of *Pete the Cat and the Perfect Pizza Party*, where she taught the sound the letter "P" made with her Pete the Cat prop. **Linda Hughes (Cuyahoga Falls)** and **Mars Vasko (Tallmadge)**, presented a lesson on upper and lowercase sorting through ice fishing and earned a 2nd place finish.

Audrey Gopp shares, "My experience in FCCLA made me a better student and teacher. It sharpened my ability to be able to think on my feet when teaching and in the classroom."

Playground jumpstarts great conversation and insight on development and supervision

An educational field trip to the SKiP Stow Playground provided students with a fun opportunity to explore the world of play as well as engage in insightful discussions regarding various aspects of the playground and considerations related to childcare. Students delved into the topic of supervision, recognizing the importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of children while they utilize the playground equipment. Students recognized the various accessibility features of the equipment and appreciated how the different components supported the overall development of children.



Through exploration and discussion, students gained a deeper understanding of how playgrounds are designed and factors to consider during supervision.

Students gained great insight from a trip to the SKiP playground!