

# **Certification Report Advanced Learning Posted 2004**

**School** Whitman Middle School

**Program** Spectrum

Whitman Middle Schools has a diverse and talented group of learners (2003-2004 enrollment of 1,100 students) who bring global and local experiences to the building. They create a community through celebrations and commitment to “take care of ourselves, take care of each other, and take care of this place.” They hold high expectations for students, both academically and behaviorally. Their students have consistently met these expectations.

The *Spectrum* program at Whitman Middle School is standards based and designed to ensure rigor, depth, breadth, and quicker pacing. The program follows best practices for individualized learning to facilitate intellectual growth and preparedness for further advanced placement once the student leaves the middle school setting. In addition, our staff works collaboratively in support of student learning using both technological and nontechnological modes of learning. We strive to align 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> connections to elementary and high school standards. These components are continually developed and refined during shared planning times and early release days.

Our *Spectrum* classes are attended by district-identified Spectrum students, and in space allows, teacher-identified students (i.e., students teachers believe are best served under *Spectrum*'s rigorous and accelerated standards). At grade level six and seven, Language Arts and Social Studies are blocked. Grade level eight uses the self-contained single class model to facilitate the transition to high school.

Student and parent involvement with the program fosters strong support for academic success and the overall success of the program. Students within the program actively and eagerly participate in the rigor the program expects. As advocates for the learner, parents typically exhibit a high level of teacher contact, and this provides students with a strong sense of community involvement in their success. At the eighth grade level, students and parents start the search for high school programs and placements that will continue rigor and intellectual challenge.

## **Strengths/Commendations**

Robust student numbers

Clear dedication to the program by staff and administration

Clear program and curricular offerings for students (established schedules)

## **Areas to be Strengthened**

Greater articulation of accelerated standards

Greater articulation of rigor as it presents itself in curricula and on-going student tasks