EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the certification program in Early Childhood Special Education are to prepare personnel who:

1. Are familiar with the development of infants and young children in the areas of cognition, language, motor, self-help, and social-emotional domains and who understand the ways in which these patterns of development may differ for children with a variety and severity of disabilities ranging from mild to severe;

2. Are familiar with major theoretical positions and schools of thought regarding the development of young children (e.g., Piagetian theory, behavioral theory, attachment theory);

3. Are familiar with the effects of a variety of environments and biological risk factors on the development of young children;

4. Can design, implement, and evaluate state-of-the-art, evidenced based services for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities in local education agencies, in the state of Maryland, and throughout the nation;

5. Can develop and implement programs across a variety of natural environments including home and center-based and who value the importance of instruction and interaction in inclusive settings;

6. Can establish and maintain data-based instructional programs that are both individually and developmentally appropriate, evidenced based, and can evaluate their effectiveness;

7. Can assess children’s development and needs using a variety of assessment techniques including systematic observation, norm-referenced testing, parent report, criterion-referenced testing, curriculum-based measurement, and portfolio assessments;

8. Can work with families to identify child and family outcomes which are reflected in the development and implementation of the IFSP and IEP;

9. Can develop and implement lessons that are sensitive to children from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds;

10. Can act as service coordinators for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families;

11. Are familiar with a variety of curriculum models currently used in early childhood settings;

12. Are able to structure the classroom environments in ways that enhance the learning and development in multiple domains can apply principles of universal design for learning and assistive technology to general education curricula;
13. Are familiar with the implications of common medical and physical concerns that affect children with disabilities (e.g., HIV, drug exposure, medically fragile);

14. Can identify and access federal, state, and local agencies and organizations, in addition to school systems which provide services (e.g., insurance, medical, financial, hospital, health care, respite care) to infants and young children with disabilities and their families;

15. Can work cooperatively with professionals from a variety of disciplines serving young children with disabilities and their families;

16. Are knowledgeable about current legislation and its effect on services for infants and young children with disabilities and their families;

17. Can communicate in written and oral fashion to other professionals, coworkers, parents, and other family members; and

18. Can critically evaluate and apply the empirical literature on intervention with infants and young children with disabilities and their families.