

Standards of the Heart

Together
We
Are...



Standards of the heart help children become caring, contributing, productive, and responsible citizens. Schools that foster standards of the heart have high expectations for students' behavior. They provide a variety of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that build strong personal and interpersonal skills. The result is a school climate where all students feel safe and valued.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Good Values, Positive Relationships, & High Expectations

The Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Search Institute's research found that high school students who report positive values along with social support and high expectations from schools, parents, and the community are much more likely to avoid risky behaviors and do well in school.

MORE OF THESE...

- Teachers really care about and encourage students
- Students try hard in school
- Students value helping others
- Students stand up for their beliefs
- Students care about others' feelings
- Students follow through on good decisions
- Students have hope for future success
- Families provide love and support
- Families have clear rules and behavior expectations
- Many adults are available to help students

...MEANS LESS OF THESE.

- Academic failure
- Truancy
- Tobacco use
- Other drug use
- Suicide
- Risky sexual behaviors
- Violence



“Improving the school learning environment means creating an atmosphere of respect for students and sharing with them the responsibilities of maintaining a high-quality learning environment. Staff and teachers need to work to get to know their students and form caring relationships of mutual respect. Only then can learning take place.”

— Turning Around Low-Performing Schools: A Guide for State and Local Leaders (USDOE 1998)

Why...

THE NEW WISCONSIN PROMISE

Through leadership, advocacy, and accountability DPI will help schools to reduce the achievement gap by utilizing the following strategies:

- Early Learning Opportunities: successful learning experiences for the youngest children.
- Quality Educators: providing students highly skilled school staff to facilitate their learning.
- An Emphasis on Reading: ensuring that all children are reading at grade level.
- Family and Community Involvement: building meaningful partnerships with parents and other local resources.
- Career and Technical Education: ensuring that all students are equipped to transition successfully to the world of work.

should we promote standards of the heart?

The top priority of State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster is closing the achievement gap. She identified reading, early learning opportunities, family and community involvement, quality teachers and career and technical education as key strategies to ensure success. Positive school climate and positive relationships contribute to the effective implementation of each of these strategies. Clearly, developing standards of the heart is fundamental to academic success.

In a 1997 study of high scoring, high poverty schools, researchers at the University of Texas at Austin found that caring, supportive staff and students was one of seven key factors in achieving academic success. They called this element a “sense of family” and described the schools in this way: “Beyond inclusivity we observed a powerful sense of family. Teachers were concerned with the child’s total development, not simply with student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. As such, we saw considerable attention to areas of endeavor beyond traditional academics, in areas such as music, art, or physical education. Similarly, attention was given to the social and emotional needs of students. One of the characteristics that make these schools seem more like big families is the absence of an “us” versus “them” attitude. All of the members of the school family worked to support each other. There was a powerful sense of belonging evidenced by students, parents, teachers, support personnel and administrators.” (Levin, Johnson and Ragland, 1997)

HOW...

do we continue to build Standards of the Heart?

The following ideas illustrate ways educators can help young people become caring, contributing, healthy, productive, and responsible citizens. Educators can incorporate these activities throughout the curriculum, into the school environment, and within the community. If we are to succeed, many opportunities are needed for school and community partners to share in developing and implementing strategies that foster positive youth development.

What can an individual do?

- Know each student by his or her first name.
- Be genuinely concerned about students, ask them about their weekend, or how their day has been.
- Foster a collegial atmosphere in your school.
- Let students and colleagues know that you appreciate them.
- Intervene when you observe teasing, bullying, or harassment.
- Contact the family of every student at least once during the school year to introduce yourself and provide genuine feedback about their children.
- Advocate for youth-development, prevention, and health-promotion programs.
- Volunteer in your community, and bring students with you.
- Be an advocate for all curricular areas including vocational education and the arts.
- Recognize and appreciate diversity of abilities, backgrounds, and talents of all students.

What can a school do?

- Provide conflict resolution training for students and staff.
- Implement a student or staff member of the week program.
- Train students as peer mediators/tutors.
- With families and the community, identify core values to be taught at home, reinforced in the schools, and modeled in the community.
- Revise school policies to reflect those core values.
- Recognize students and staff that model those core values.
- Start a mentoring program.
- Start a wellness program.
- Provide a variety of extracurricular opportunities for all students.

Resources

The DPI has developed a variety of resources to help school-communities support the development of their youth. The publications are designed to be individually useful and to complement one another. Most are available at no charge (though quantities may be limited) by contacting the Student Services/Prevention and Wellness Team at (608) 266-8960.

FOR FURTHER HELP...

Contact the Student Services, Prevention and Wellness consultants at:
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
(608) 266-8960 or (800) 441-4563
www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/sspw/

***Citizenship: Building a World of Good**

This tool kit explains the seven characteristics of effective schools, provides an inventory to locally assess perceived strengths in each of these characteristics, and gives practical ideas to help schools implement the characteristics in their building. 1998. 74 pp.

Wisconsin's Framework for Comprehensive School Health Programs: An Integrated Approach

This publication describes a multistrategy approach to addressing the entire range of youth risk behaviors and promotes the health, well-being, and positive development of students and other school-community members as an integral part of a school's mission. It is a collection of research-based strategies organized into six components that are most effective and efficient when implemented in a connected and integrated manner. 1997. 24 pp.

***Offering Educational Opportunities to Expelled Students in Wisconsin**

This document includes examples from a range of programs. It provides many sound reasons and strategies to help pursue educational success for students who have been expelled or are at risk. 2001, 36 pp.

***Sharing Information Across Systems**

This resource is designed to help local school districts and their community partners develop local policies, procedures, and agreements regarding how they will share information across systems (i.e. law enforcement, the courts and juvenile justice, social services, and health). 2000, 22 pp.

Teaching Character Education Using Children's Literature

This is a for-sale publication. For ordering information, contact DPI Publication Sales at 800-243-8782 (U.S. only) or (608) 266-2188, or visit the Publication Sales web page at www.dpi.state.wi.us/pubsales. You may also download a Teaching Character Education Using Children's Literature Order Form. 2001, 72 pp.

Comprehensive School Health Programs

This three-fold color brochure provides a concise summary of Wisconsin's Framework for Comprehensive School Health Programs.

Tools for Comprehensive School Health Programs

This three-packet series provides critical information and useable checklists to help develop community health and safety councils, organize and implement effective meetings, and connect speakers in the community with schools to enhance health and safety instruction. 2000.

The Power of Teaching: Characteristics of Effective Classroom Instruction on Health and Safety Issues

This publication defines a common set of prevention characteristics contained in a variety of youth risk behavior curricula. It can assist schools in developing instructional programs and activities that are grounded in research and best practice. 1998. 18 pp.

***Human and Growth and Development Resource Packet**

This resource packet helps local school districts develop, review, or address issues related to their Human Growth and Development (HGD) program. The packet contains the applicable state statute, research on teenage sexual behavior and related issues, samples of locally developed HGD materials, and evaluation tools. 2002.

***Youth, AIDS and HIV: Resources for Educators, Policymakers, and Parents 2001-02**

A resource designed to provide information about technical assistance and educational materials that can guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) education. It also offers information about programs whose goals are to prevent the spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among school-aged youth in Wisconsin. 2001, 28 pp.

*Also available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/sspw/tadocs.html



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Together We Are...

The Wisconsin Framework for Comprehensive School Health Programs is a collection of many strategies organized into six components that are most effective when implemented in a coordinated and connected way. The framework may be used to map out the various programs and strategies a school-community team uses to institutionalize the characteristics of a successful school.

Building

the Heart of Successful Schools



1 Promote Core Values

School and community members identify and promote the character traits they believe are important to being a good citizen such as honesty, respect and responsibility.



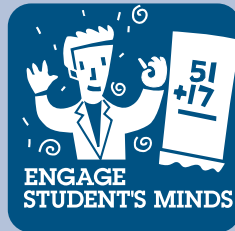
2 Have Safe School Environments

Schools have safe, disciplined, drug-free environments conducive to learning. Children and adults resolve disagreements positively.



7 Set High Expectations

All students and adults are expected to do their best and model positive behaviors that embody good citizenship.



3 Have Family/Community Partnerships

The skills and knowledge of family and community members are valued in the school, and the school encourages and helps all students to contribute to the life of the community.

4 Address Societal Issues

The school experience provides all students the opportunity to pro-actively deal with social issues that impact their well being and that of the greater community.

5 Develop Positive Relationships

All students and staff feel valued and cared for in the school setting.

6 Engage Students' Minds

Classrooms are interactive and challenging. All students have diverse opportunities to learn through classroom teaching, service learning, and extracurricular programs.

CHARACTER EDUCATION
STUDENT RECOGNITION

PLAYGROUND BUDDIES
PEER MEDIATION
CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

POLICE-SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER

SERVICE LEARNING
DRIVER EDUCATION
PARENT PROGRAMS

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

SCHOOL-LINKED HEALTH CLINICS

PROTECTIVE BEHAVIORS
SUPPORT GROUPS
HEALTH EDUCATION
SOCIAL STUDIES
FAMILY & CONSUMER EDUCATION

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE
ADVISOR-ADVISEE MENTORING PROGRAMS

STUDENT COUNCILS
CURRICULUM INTEGRATION
VOCATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

STAFF WELLNESS
RESPECTING DIVERSITY
SCHOOL POLICIES
BUILDING CONSULTATION TEAMS
STUDENT COURTS