Hello again and greetings from USD 467!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Last week I recognized Mrs. Misty Gardner and the WCES students who presented a great Veteran's Day program. At the school board meeting, the board had the opportunity to see and hear a small group of these students who came to the meeting and sang for the board. Thanks again! I'd like to again congratulate the WCHS Varsity Scholar's Bowl team for placing in the top three in most of their meets this year, and especially for going undefeated and in winning the WCHS Scholar's Bowl tournament last week! The JV team didn't fare as well but these students are competing well and learning what it takes to be successful. Best of Luck to Mrs. Joy Brown and the Scholars the rest of the season!

This week I'll start with a review of Character Development. First, the Core Principals: recognize, select, and ascribe to a set of core ethical and performance principles as a foundation of good character and be able to define character comprehensively to include thinking, feeling and doing; develop, implement, promote and model core ethical and performance principles; and, create a caring community. To attain these principals the students must be taught responsible decision making and problem solving skills: develop, implement and model responsible decision making skills and develop, implement, and model effective problem solving skills.

The third principal is to create a caring community. This principal is broken into three parts: consider it a high priority to foster caring attachments between fellow students, staff, and the community; demonstrate mutual respect and utilize strategies to build a safe and supportive culture; and, take steps to prevent peer cruelty and violence and deal with it effectively when it occurs whether digitally, verbally, physically and/or relationally.

Consider it a high priority to foster caring attachments between fellow students, staff, and the community is the first section. The steps for this section are: recognize characteristics of a caring relationship; recognize characteristics of a hurtful relationship; identify relationships in their family, school, and community that are caring; demonstrate and practice characteristics of a caring relationship; illustrate characteristics of a hurtful relationship; practice relationships in their family, school, and community that are caring; analyze characteristics of a caring relationship and hurtful relationship; compare and contrast characteristics of a caring relationship and hurtful relationship; analyze relationships in their family, school, and community that are caring; evaluate characteristics of a caring relationship and hurtful relationship; and, manage personal behavior in family, school, and community that contributes to caring relationships.

Demonstrate mutual respect and utilize strategies to build a safe and supportive culture is the next section; demonstrate caring and respect for others; describe "active listening"; practice empathetic statements and questions; demonstrate active listening skills; compare and contrast different points of view respectfully; practice listening effectively to understand values, attitudes, and intentions; model respectful ways to respond to others' points of views; communicate respectfully and effectively in diverse environments; evaluate active listening skills of all parties involved before, after and during conversations; analyze ways to respond to ethical issues in life as they appear in the curriculum; and utilize multiple-media and technologies ethically and respectfully, evaluate its effectiveness, and assess its impact.

The third and final section to this principal is to take steps to prevent peer cruelty and violence and deal with it effectively when it occurs whether digitally, verbally, physically and/or relationally: recognize and define bullying and teasing; illustrate or demonstrate what "tattling" is and what "telling" or "reporting" is; model positive peer interactions; differentiate between bullying, teasing, and harassment; explain how power, control, popularity, security, and fear play into bullying behavior towards others; describe the role of students in instances of bullying (bystanders, "up standers", students who bully, targets of bullying); recognize and model how a bystander can be part of the problem or part of the solution by becoming an "up stander" (someone who stands up against injustice); identify and demonstrate ways a target of bullying can be a part of the solution; differentiate behavior as bullying based on the power of the individuals that are involved; model positive peer interactions that are void of bullying behaviors; compare and contrast how bullying affects the targets of bullying, bystanders, and the student who bullies; practice effective strategies to use when bullied, including how to identify and advocate for personal rights analyze how a bystander can be part of the problem or part of the solution by becoming an "up stander" (someone who stands up against injustice); apply empathic concern and perspective taking; appraise and evaluate behavior as relational aggression and/or bullying; justify the value of personal rights and those of others to commit to ensuring a safe and nurturing environment within and outside of the school setting; conclude how to act in accordance with the principle of respect for all human beings; evaluate how bullying behavior impacts personal experiences beyond high school and in the work force; and, analyze and evaluate effectiveness of bullying intervention and reporting strategies.

Next week I will cover the responsible decision making and problem solving sections of the standard.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have specific questions or want more information about what's happening in the buildings or district, don't hesitate to contact Lori Maxwell, WCES Principal, at 375-2314, Delbert Schmidt, WCJSHS Principal, at 375-2213, or me at 375-4677. Thanks!

Keith Higgins