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THE
MARITIME
ACADEMY OF
TOLEDO



THE WELCOME ABOARD PROGRAM

"I Request Permission to Come Aboard Sir/Ma'am."

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Section 1: Introduction

The Mission of Character Education

TMAT is dedicated to providing a foundation for personal and social growth in order to develop students of exemplary character who become responsible, productive, and caring citizens.

What is Character Education?

- A tool for parents, guardians, staff, and community members to help students understand, appreciate, and internalize positive character traits.

What is the Purpose for Character Education?

The Maritime Academy of Toledo, in partnership with the home and community, has a critical role to play in helping our youth develop into responsible citizens. Character education prepares our youth to address life's moral and ethical problems. Students develop character through interaction with family, peers, teachers and community members. A person of character is a good person, someone to look up to and admire, knows the difference between right and wrong and always tries to do what is right. In the words of Ben Franklin, "Acquiring the qualities of virtue requires a good plan and consistent effort." Living by these values - understanding them, caring about them and acting upon them - sets a good example for everyone and makes the world a better place. It is our goal that, by infusing these character values into our curriculum, these qualities will manifest themselves in the daily lives of our students, teachers, parents and community.

(From the Princeton Independent School District)

The Eleven Principles of Character Education

According to the Character Education Partnership, there are eleven principles of character education.¹ *The Eleven Principles* serve as criteria that schools and groups can use to plan character education programs and to evaluate available programs and materials:

Character education promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character. Character education's fundamental principle is that there are ethical values that form the basis of good character. A school (and/or system) that is committed to a character education program explicitly names and publicly upholds these values. In a school dedicated to developing character, the core values are treated as a matter of obligation; they assert that the values are valid, and it is everyone's responsibility to uphold them.

"Character" must be comprehensively defined to include thinking, feeling, and behavior. In an effective character education program, students, as well as all other members of the educational community, know and appreciate the key values. As students grow in character, they will develop and increasingly refine their understanding of the core values. They will also cultivate a deeper commitment to living and behaving in accordance with those values.

Effective character education requires an intentional, proactive, and comprehensive approach that promotes the core values in all phases of school life. Schools committed to character education look at themselves and see how virtually everything that goes on in school affects the values and character of students.

The school must be a caring community. The school itself must embody good character. It must progress toward becoming a smaller version of society. The school can do this by becoming a moral community that helps students form caring attachments to adults and to each other. These caring relationships will foster both the desire to learn and the desire to be a good person. All children and adolescents have a need to belong, and they are more likely to internalize the values and expectations of groups that meet this need.

To develop character, students need opportunities for moral action. Students learn best by doing. To develop good character, they need many and varied opportunities to apply values such as responsibility and fairness in everyday interactions and discussions. By working with real-life challenges, students develop a practical understanding of the requirements of fairness, cooperation, and respect. Activities such as working in

cooperative learning groups, reaching consensus in a meeting, carrying out service learning projects, reducing fights and friction between individuals, and intervening with others give students the opportunity to develop and practice these moral skills and behavioral habits that make up the action side of character.

Effective character education includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners and helps them succeed. Character education and academic learning must not be perceived as separate entities; rather they must be understood as two parts of a whole. In a caring classroom and school where students feel liked and respected by their teachers and fellow students, students are more likely to work hard and achieve. Likewise, when students are enabled to succeed at the work of school, they are more likely to feel valued and cared about as persons. A character education school makes effective use of active teaching and learning methods such as cooperative learning, problem-solving approaches, and experience-based projects. One of the most sincere ways to respect children is to respect the way they learn. Academic achievement is traced in the following way: six percent to teaching techniques and lesson presentations; sixteen percent to factors over which the school has no control; and seventy-eight percent to the quality of human interaction in the school.²

Character education should strive to develop students' intrinsic motivation. As students develop good character, they develop a stronger inner commitment to doing what their moral judgment tells them is right. Schools, especially in their approach to discipline, should strive to develop this intrinsic commitment to core values. They should minimize their reliance on extrinsic rewards and punishments that distract students' attention from the real reasons to behave responsibly: the rights and needs of self and others. Responses to rule breaking should give students opportunities for restitution and foster the students' understanding of the rules and willingness to abide by them in the future. Within the academic curriculum, intrinsic motivation should be fostered in every way possible. This can be done by helping students experience the challenge and interest of subject matter, the desire to work collaboratively with other students, and the fulfillment of making a positive difference in another person's life or in their school or community.

The school staff must become a learning and moral community in which all share responsibility for character education and attempt to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students. ALL school staff—teachers, assistants, administrators, secretaries, coaches, cafeteria workers, bus drivers—should be involved in

learning about, discussing, and taking ownership of the character education effort. All of these adults must model the core values in their own behavior and take advantage of the opportunities they have to influence the character of the students with whom they come into contact. The same values and norms that govern the life of students must govern the lives of the adult members of the school community. If students are to be treated as constructive learners, then so must the adults. They must have extended staff development and many opportunities to observe and practice ways of integrating character education practices into their work with students.

Character education requires moral leadership from both staff and students. For character education to meet the criteria given to this point, there must be leaders (administration, lead teacher) who champion the effort and focus on long-range planning and program implementation. Students should also take roles of moral leadership through student government, peer conflict mediation programs, cross-age tutoring, etc.

The school must recruit parents and community members as full partners in the character-building effort. A school's character education mission statement should state explicitly that parents are the first and most important moral educators of their children. The school should make extra efforts to communicate with parents about the school's goals and activities regarding character development, and how families can help. To build trust between home and school, parents should be represented on various committees, and should actively reach out to those disconnected parents to give them an opportunity to give input into the school's core ethical values.

Evaluation of character education should assess the character of the school, the school staff's functioning as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character. Effective character education must include an effort to assess progress. Development of surveys, to be given at the beginning of the character education initiative, and then again at the end, is just one way to evaluate the character education effectiveness within the academic environment. (<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/1081>)

Section 2:
Implementation of the Welcome Aboard Program

1. Implementation: The "Welcome Aboard" Character Education Program shall be implemented school-wide during the 2015-2016 school year.
2. Positive Character Traits / Universal Values: The Maritime Academy of Toledo, if this program is selected, shall adopt the Six Pillars of Character:



A	Accountability- An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.
B	Buoyancy- Optimism/ positive disposition; resilience
O	Observant- Attention to Detail/ paying careful attention; keenly watchful; perceptive or alert
A	Altruism- Unselfishly concerned for, or devoted to the welfare, of others; community service
R	Respect- a way of treating or thinking about something or someone.
D	Discipline- Orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior; self-control

3. Curriculum Integration: Because character education is not a separate subject but rather connects to all of life, it shall be integrated into the daily curriculum in a meaningful way through selected teachable moments that correspond with the content being taught throughout the course of the year.

4. School-wide Activities: TMAAT shall include character education in activities outside of the classroom such as assemblies, contests, and announcements.

5. Student Involvement: TMAAT shall provide opportunities for students to participate in the planning and implementation of campus & district-wide character education activities.

6. Student Recognition: TMAAT shall adopt a process for recognizing students who display good character traits.

7. Parent and Community Involvement: Campuses will pursue partnerships with parents, local businesses, community, and city agencies to help promote positive character education and support school-wide implementation. The school shall adopt a method to inform parents and the community about character education activities at school such as newsletters, calendars, websites, and student handbooks and suggest ways in which parents can become involved in the home or at school.

Section: 4
Tips and Suggestions

Classroom Applications:

100 WAYS TO PROMOTE CHARACTER EDUCATION

1. Hang pictures of heroes and heroines in halls and classrooms.
2. Institute a student tutoring program.
3. Promote service clubs with real missions for the school community.
4. Be vigilant about preventing and stopping scape goating of one child by other children.
5. Create recognition programs that acknowledge something besides academic, athletic, or artistic achievement.
6. Seriously and thoughtfully grade student behavior and contribution to the community.
7. Create a code of behavior for your classroom (and school) to which students and teacher agree.
8. Invite parents to observe and contribute to your classroom.
9. Choose a personal motto and share it with your students.
10. Promote a "virtue of the month," study it and give an award to the student who makes the greatest progress in that virtue.
11. Share a personal hero and tell the students why he or she is your hero.
12. Regularly weave into your discussion of stories and history and other subjects asking, "what's the right thing to do?" and follow up with a discussion.
13. Help students to see that the "good" in students is more than academic success.
14. Treat ethical issues like other intellectual issues -- get the facts, gather evidence, weigh consequences, make a decision.
15. Structure opportunities for your students to do service in the community.
16. Lead by example. For instance, pick up the discarded piece of paper in the hall. Clean the chalkboard out of respect for the next teacher.
17. Don't allow unkindness of any kind in your classroom.
18. Don't permit swearing, vulgar or obscene language in classrooms or anywhere on school property.
19. Involve parents in student misbehavior through notes, calls, and visits.
20. Write, call, or visit parents to praise their child.
21. Make it clear that students have a moral responsibility to work hard in school.
22. Use ethical language with faculty colleagues... "I have a responsibility to...," "the courage of her convictions caused her to...," "my neglect led him to..."
23. Include the study of "local heroes" in your social studies classes.
24. Institute an honor system for test-taking and homework assignments.
25. Create a charity. Collect donations and have the students decide on their distribution.
26. Reinforce the moral authority of parents, urging students to take their moral problems to their parents. Discuss with students why this is sometimes difficult.

27. Have sayings on the wall that encourage good character, such as, "don't wait to be a great person; start now!"
28. Share stories of ethical conflict, especially ones involving students in their present setting. Don't hesitate to write it and have them struggle to put their views on paper.
29. Celebrate birthdays of heroes and heroines with observance and/or discussion of their accomplishments.
30. Have students write their own sayings of significance and display on walls.
31. Reward students for bringing in articles about ethics and moral issues. Use them in class discussion.
32. Discuss campus "issues of character" on a regular basis (vandalism, good deeds, etc.)
33. Make classroom expectations clear, and hold students accountable for them.
34. Strive to be consistent in dealings with students; avoid allowing personal feelings to interfere with fairness.
35. Admit mistakes and seek to correct them. Expect and encourage students to do the same.
36. Read aloud a "Two-Minute Story" everyday to begin or end the school day. Choose stories that are brief, yet value-centered.
37. Consider ethical implications when establishing classroom and school policies and procedures; be aware of what messages they send to students.
38. Explain the reasons for a particular school or classroom policy, action, or decision. Help students to understand "why", not just "what".
39. Have students discuss the ethical and character-developing elements of being a good student.
40. Teach your students about competition, helping them to see when it is valuable and when it is not.
41. Talk to your students about why you're a teacher. Explain how you understand the responsibility and importance of teaching.
42. Let your students know about your community service. Tell them about volunteering in a food bank, coaching Little League, or teaching religion at your temple or church.
43. Teach students to analyze the media critically. To what extent do their messages encourage living a life of character?
44. Bring recent high school graduates back to talk about their successful transitions to college, work, or the military. Ask them how good moral habits have helped in their adjustment.
45. Invite local adults to talk about how they have integrated the concept of character into their adult lives.
46. Help reinforce students' empathy. Ask them questions like, "how would you feel if no one would play with you?" or "How would you feel if someone made fun of your name because they thought it was strange sounding?"
47. When conflicts arise at school, teach students the importance of respect, openmindedness, privacy and discretion. Do not allow conversations that are fueled by gossip or disrespect.

48. Overtly teach courtesy. Teach students how to listen attentively to other students and adults, and to avoid interrupting people.
49. Read and discuss biographies of accomplished individuals. For students in upper grades; encourage them to be discerning, seeing that an individual may have flaws but still be capable of much admirable action.
50. Assign older students to assist younger ones, such as seniors paired with freshman, to show them the school.
51. Emphasize from the first day of class the importance of working hard and striving for certain standards of achievement.
52. Encourage high school students to become more active in their community by attending city, town, or school board meetings.
53. During the election season, encourage students to research the candidates' positions.
54. Encourage high school students to volunteer for voter registration drives, and, if eligible, to vote.
55. Teach students how to write thank-you notes. As a class, write thank-you notes to people who have done thoughtful things for the students.
56. Give students sufficient feedback when evaluating their work. Demonstrate to students that you are making an effort to communicate to them how they are succeeding and how they can improve.
57. Have older students sponsor a pot luck supper for their parents. Have students cook, decorate, serve and clean up.
58. Begin a monthly "gift-giving" from your class. Have the class perform some service to the school, such as decorating a hallway.
59. Work together as a class or school to clean classrooms or school grounds on a regular basis.
60. Demonstrate your respect for other religions and cultures. Talk to students about the moral imperative to act justly toward others.
61. Stand up for the "underdog," when he or she is being treated unfairly. Use this as a teaching moment.
62. Have children in self-contained classrooms take turns caring for their class pets, taking them home on weekends or holidays. Talk to them about the need to care for other living creatures.
63. Start or expand a class or school recycling program. Talk about the general principles of carefully using what you have, and not wasting.
64. Highlight certain programs in your school, such as S.A.D.D. or the National Honor Society, that may already be emphasizing character.
65. Have students volunteer to clean up their community. With parental support, encourage students to build a community playground, pick up litter, rake leaves, grow plants, paint a mural on the side of a building, or clean up a local beach.
66. Dust off the school song (alma mater). Teach students, especially the newest ones, the words; talk about their meaning, and include it in every school activity.

67. If your school doesn't have a school song, sponsor some sort of contest for students to write one. As a school community, talk about what kinds of ideas should be included in the school song.
68. Emphasize and teach the significance of school rituals. Talk about the importance of recognizing certain rites as a community and properly acknowledging them.
69. Encourage students to look in on elderly or sick neighbors, particularly during harsh winter months.
70. Start a pen pal exchange between your students and students from a distant state or country. Share the information your students learn about their pen pals' lives. Encourage discussion about how life must be like living in that community.
71. Use the curriculum to teach character. For example, in language arts class, have students assume a character's point of view and write about it. Regularly ask questions requiring students to "walk in someone else's shoes."
72. Use constructive criticism, tempered by compassion. Help students do the same with each other.
73. Emphasize good sportsmanship in sports, games and daily interaction with others.
74. When making school policy, allow students participation and responsibility in some decisions. Have them research the various ramifications of different policies and present their findings to the administrators and faculty for discussion.
75. Collect interesting, thought provoking quotes worthy of reflection, discussion, and writing, such as, "the truth never becomes clear as long as we assume that each one of us, individually, is the center of the universe," (Thomas Merton). Ask students to do the same.
76. Develop a list of suggested readings in character education that teachers and administrators can use as resources.
77. Develop a school motto.
78. Institute a character honor roll.
79. Foster the development of student's self-esteem by providing opportunities for genuine academic and social challenge and achievement.
80. Include in faculty/staff meetings and workshops discussions of the school's "moral climate," and the desired goals for the moral life of the school.
81. Develop a "School Code of Ethics." Refer to it in all school activity and policy. Disseminate it to all school members. Display it prominently throughout the building.
82. Begin an "exchange network" or "bulletin board" by which teachers and administrators can share their own "100 Ways to Promote Character Education."
83. Include anecdotes of commendable student behavior in the school newsletter to parents.
84. Start a school scrapbook, with photos, news stories and memorabilia reflecting the school's history and accomplishments. Include all school members in contributing to and maintaining the collection. Show it off to school visitors.
85. Publicly recognize the work and achievements of the school's "unsung heroes--" the custodians, repairmen, secretaries, cafeteria workers and volunteers -- who keep things running every day.

86. Assign reasonable amounts of homework that stimulates and challenge students while teaching the importance of self-discipline and perseverance in learning.
87. Design a school pledge that students recite weekly. Include it in school documents, especially those intended for parents.
88. Explain the role of the dress code in promoting an educational environment conducive to learning.
89. Use homeroom periods for activities that develop community and cohesion among students, and a sense of attachment to their school.
90. Create opportunities for parents and students to work together on a school project: for example, a dance, symposium, dinner or field trip.
91. Be attentive to the physical appearance of the building. Involve all school members in the shared responsibility of general cleanliness and order.
92. Seek ways to involve businesses in the life of the school, perhaps through mentoring opportunities or partnerships with student groups.
93. Establish a newcomers' club for newly hired personnel and entering students.
94. Invite local employers to talk to students about the importance of good moral character in the world of work.
95. Have athletes and coaches collaborate to develop a code of ethics for athletics.
96. Sponsor a public forum on character education in your community.
97. Ask each school organization to design a logo symbolizing a character trait representative of the club's mission.
98. Provide a bimonthly occasion for teachers to gather with their colleagues and study a text of literature, history, philosophy or other subject area that bears on ethics.
99. Develop for parents a bibliography of books they can read with their children to stimulate conversation about good character.
100. Sponsor an after school reading club for students, with age-appropriate literature focused on enduring moral lessons.

25 CHARACTER EDUCATION SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

The development of good character in children requires the efforts of both home and school, as well as those of community resources, such as religious and civic organizations. In an age when youth are increasingly influenced by the media and their peers, it is critically important that parents take an especially strong role in the children's moral development. The following recommendations are offered as food for thought.

1. Be authentic. Model good character in the home.

Parents who refuse to cheat on income tax returns or take unfair advantage of their neighbors will have greater credibility when they discuss responsible citizenship or fairness with their children. Hold yourself and other family members accountable to high standards of good character.

2. Make clear statements about your values and beliefs to your children.

Let them know where you stand on important issues. Be sure they understand the principles or the "why" behind your beliefs.

3. Show respect for your spouse, your children, and other family members.

Teach your children to treat others with courtesy and respect, to practice sensitivity and empathy.

4. Model and teach your children good manners and insist that all family members use good manners. (please, thank you, etc.)

5. Demonstrate and encourage healthy ways to resolve conflict both inside and outside your home.

6. Have family meals together (without television) as often as possible.

Even if the meal is a take-out order of fast food, try to sit down as a family to eat it. Use this as an opportunity to talk with your children and to listen to their concerns.

7. Plan as many family activities as possible.

Be sure to involve your children in the planning. Let them know that you value their recommendations. Have fun together!

8. Do not provide access to drugs or alcohol for your children.

Model appropriate behavior regarding alcohol and drugs.

9. Worship together as a family.

Recent studies verify that youth who have strong religious convictions are less likely to drop out of school or engage in delinquent behavior. 17

10. Plan family service projects or civic activities.

Sample projects include volunteering at a shelter or soup kitchen, mowing the lawn for an elderly neighbor, taking a meal to a new neighbor, or working together on an environmental concern.

11. Read to your children and keep good literature in the home.

Much literature contains a rich source of material for character development.

12. Limit your children's spending money.

Help them to develop an appreciation for non-material rewards. Provide opportunities for them to work and to earn those things they desire.

13. Discuss the holidays and their history.

Use these opportunities to help your children appreciate the great figures in history and their contributions to our lives.. Have family celebrations and establish family traditions.

14. Share your heroes with your children.

Explain why you admire certain people and the specific character traits they possess.

15. Use situations that occur (an incident at school, a television news report, a movie, etc.) to spark family discussions on important issues.

Capitalize on the "teachable moment."

16. Allow your children to solve their own day-to-day problems.

Discuss options and offer encouragement, but avoid "taking over" unless it is necessary.

17. Assign home responsibilities (taking out the trash, washing dishes, etc.) for all family members.

Even very young children can be responsible for simple tasks. As children mature allow them to experience more and more opportunities to be responsible.

18. Set clear expectations for your children and consistently hold them accountable for their actions.

Make sure that they know the rules and consequences. When they break the rules, be sure that they experience appropriate consequences.

19. Look for opportunities to reward wise decisions and desirable behavior, rather than focusing on the negative.

20. Provide positive activities (sports, hobbies, music lessons, service projects, scouts, etc.) and adequate supervision for your child.

(Much of the substance abuse and inappropriate sexual behavior of adolescents occurs in homes when parents are away.)

21. Learn to say no and mean it.

Despite the child's protests, a parent's most loving act is often to stand firm and prohibit the child's participation in a potentially hurtful activity.

22. Know where your children are, whom they are with, and what they are doing.

At the risk of being accused of being "old-fashioned", insist on meeting their friends and their parents.

23. Refuse to cover for your children or make excuses for their inappropriate behavior.

For example, if your child skips class, let him or her suffer the consequences. Lying for the child sends a very powerful message about the parents' values.

24. Pay attention to the television shows, movies, and internet sites that your children views.

While there are some very fine materials available, there is also much harmful material easily accessible to our youth. If you learn that your child has viewed something that you

find objectionable, candidly share your feelings and discuss why the material offends your values.

25. Remember that you are the adult!

Children don't need another buddy, but they desperately need a parent who cares enough to set and enforce appropriate limits for their behavior. Often, being able to say, "My dad won't let me..." provides a convenient escape for a student who really didn't want to participate in a questionable activity.

These suggestions have been adapted by the Wake County public school system in Raleigh, North Carolina from lists compiled by the staffs at Burlington City Schools, Burlington, NC, and the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character, Boston University. Princeton Intermediate School District