

Character Development

Moral and/or character development occurs both affectively and cognitively. For purposes of providing a focus for a school that strives to enhance character development, the following attributes of a morally mature person as defined by the ASCD Panel on Moral Education are offered as targets for a school that wishes to facilitate a program of character development:

The morally mature person habitually:

1. **Respects human dignity**, which includes:
 - a. Showing regard for the worth and rights of all persons;
 - b. Avoiding deception and dishonesty;
 - c. Promoting human equality;
 - d. Respecting freedom of conscience;
 - e. Working with people of different views; and
 - f. Refraining from prejudiced actions.
2. **Cares about the welfare of others**, which includes:
 - a. Recognizing interdependence among people;
 - b. Caring for one's country;
 - c. Seeking social justice;
 - d. Taking pleasure in helping others; and
 - e. Working to help others reach moral maturity.
3. **Integrates individual interests and social responsibilities**, which includes:
 - a. Becoming involved in community life;
 - b. Doing a fair share of community work;
 - c. Displaying self-regarding and other-regarding moral virtues — self- control, diligence, fairness, kindness, honesty, civility — in every day life;
 - d. Fulfilling commitments; and
 - e. Developing self-esteem through relationships with others.
4. **Demonstrates integrity**, which includes:
 - a. Practicing diligence;
 - b. Taking stands for moral principles;
 - c. Displaying moral courage;
 - d. Knowing when to compromise and when to confront; and
 - e. Accepting responsibility for one's choices.
5. **Reflects on moral choices**, which includes:
 - a. Recognizing the moral issues involved in a situation;
 - b. Applying moral principles when making moral judgements;
 - c. Thinking about the consequences of decisions; and
 - d. Seeking to be informed about important moral issues in society and the world; and

6. **Seeks peaceful resolution of conflict**, which includes:
 - a. Striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts;
 - b. Avoiding physical and verbal aggression;
 - c. Listening carefully to others; and
 - d. Encouraging others to communicate.