

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:

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

3. Thinking about the consequences of decisions, and
4. Seeking to be informed about important moral issues in society and the world.

F. **Seeks peaceful resolution of conflict**, which includes

1. Striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts,
2. Avoiding physical and verbal aggression,
3. Listening carefully to others, and
4. Encouraging others to communicate.