

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) provides, within its existing programs and practices, student character education. The purpose of these programs and practices are to foster civic virtues and personal character traits so as to improve the learning environment, promote student achievement, reduce disciplinary problems, and develop civic-minded students of high character. These programs and practices are cooperatively developed with students, parents, and the community.

Character education is interwoven into school procedures and the environment so as to instruct primarily by example, illustration, and participation in a way that complements the Standards of Learning. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program. The character education program also addresses the inappropriateness of bullying, as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01. Parents/guardians have the right to review any audio-visual materials that contain graphic sexual or violent content used in any anti-bullying program. Prior to the use of any such material, the parent/guardian of a child participating in such a program is provided written notice of the parent's/guardian's right to review the material and the right to excuse the child from participating in the part of such program utilizing such material.

In alignment with Virginia Board of Education criteria, the program:

- Specifies those character traits to be taught, selecting from those which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups. Specific character traits emphasized may include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship;
- Is implemented at the elementary and secondary levels;
- Complements the state Standards of Learning; s interwoven into existing curricula and is taught primarily by example, illustration, and participation. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program;
- Provides for relevant professional development and adequate resources; and
- Includes a method for program evaluation.

Character education is intended to educate students regarding those core civic values and virtues which are efficacious to civilized society and are common to the diverse social, cultural, and religious groups of the Commonwealth. It does not include indoctrination in any particular religious or political belief. Consistent with this purpose, ACPS may teach Virginia's civic values, which are the principles articulated in the Bill of Rights (Article I) of the Constitution of Virginia and the ideals reflected in the seal of the Commonwealth, as described in Va. Code 1-500, as representative of such civic values.

In interpreting the ideals in the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the ACPS School Board believes that high-quality character education includes establishing programs and practices that

48 work to eliminate all forms of tyranny, including racism and bullying, from our schools while
49 helping students to learn the ideal of “*Perserverando*” (to persevere) expressed in the seal in a
50 society where the work to eliminate tyranny is not complete.

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52 Adopted: July 1, 2005

53 Amended: June 1, 2006

54 Amended: January 22, 2015

55 Amended: October 27, 2016

56 Amended:

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59 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-23.3, 22.1-207.2:1, 22.1-208.01.

60 VAC 1-500

61 Constitution of Virginia Article 1

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63 Cross Refs.: IKF The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements

64 IKF-R The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements
65 Regulations

66 INB Teaching About Controversial Issues

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68 INDC Religion in the Schools

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Commented [1]: Policy updates reflect 2019 enactment of Va. Code § 22.1-207.2:1 by HB 2107.

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) provides, within its existing programs and practices, a student character education program in its schools. The purpose of these programs and practices are to foster civic virtues and personal character traits so as to improve the learning environment, promote student achievement, reduce disciplinary problems, and develop civic-minded students of high character. These programs and practices may be cooperatively developed in cooperation with students, parents, and the community at large, and shall conform to the following

Character education is interwoven into school procedures and the environment so as to instruct primarily by example, illustration, and participation in a way that complements the Standards of Learning. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program. The character education program also addresses the inappropriateness of bullying, as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01. Parents/guardians have the right to review any audio-visual materials that contain graphic sexual or violent content used in any anti-bullying program. Prior to the use of any such material, the parent/guardian of a child participating in such a program is provided written notice of the parent's/guardian's right to review the material and the right to excuse the child from participating in the part of such program utilizing such material.

In alignment with criteria established by the Virginia Board of Education criteria, the program: The program must:

- Specifies those character traits to be taught, selecting from those which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups. Specific character traits emphasized may include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship;
- Address the inappropriateness of bullying as defined in Va. Code § 22.1-276.01;
- Be implemented at the elementary and secondary levels;
- Complements the state Standards of Learning;
- Is interwoven into existing curricula, and be taught primarily by example, illustration, and participation. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program;
- Provides for relevant professional development and adequate resources; and
- Includes a method for program evaluation.

Character education shall be intended to educate students regarding those core civic values and virtues which are efficacious to civilized society and are common to the diverse social, cultural, and religious groups of the Commonwealth. It shall not include indoctrination in any particular religious or political belief. Consistent with this purpose, ACPS may teach Virginia's civic values, which are the principles articulated in the Bill of Rights (Article I) of the Constitution of Virginia and the ideals reflected in the seal of the Commonwealth, as described in Va. Code 1-500, as representative of such civic values.

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In interpreting the ideals in the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the ACPS School Board believes -that high-quality character education includes establishing programs and practices that work to eliminate all forms of tyranny, including racism and bullying, from our schools while helping students to learn the ideal of “*Perserverando*” (to persevere) expressed in the seal in a society where the work to eliminate tyranny is not complete.

Commented [2]: Board belief statement.

Adopted: July 1, 2005
Amended: June 1, 2006
Amended: January 22, 2015
Amended: October 27, 2016
[Amended:](#)

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-23.3, [22.1-207.2:1](#), 22.1-208.01.
VAC 1-500
Constitution of Virginia Article 1

Cross Refs.: IKF [Standards of Learning Assessments, Verified Units of Credit, and Diploma Classifications](#)
[The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements](#)
IKF-R [The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements](#)
[Standards of Learning Assessments, Verified Units of Credit, and Diploma Classification-Regulations](#)
INB Teaching About Controversial Issues
INDC Religion in the Schools