

Transitions

Creating Caring Classroom Communities ...

About the program ...

Grove School serves the educational needs of students who are unable to attend a community school because of placement in a Care, Treatment, Custody or Correctional facility. Its primary purpose is to provide students with effective individual instruction that leads to their re-integration into community schools, post-secondary institutions or employment. Grove School has undertaken an action research project to measure the effectiveness of an integrated character development program. The project focuses on establishing a professional learning community that understands, creates and implements effective character development strategies for a transient student population. By measuring the impact of these strategies in relation to changes in individual student attitudes, the project provides a model for action research that can be replicated in alternative school settings throughout Ontario.

Grove Street Character Development Survey Questions

(6 examples of the 26 questions on the full survey)

	always	sometimes	never
I treat others with respect.			
I keep my word when I make a promise.			
I set goals for myself.			
I keep trying when things are difficult.			
I learn from my mistakes.			
I know what I would be good at doing.			

Impact on student learning and school culture ...

- The implementation of an action research approach promotes self-reflection and professional discussion.
- Character development strategies are embedded in core curriculum areas so that students learn about character development while earning credits.
- The classroom is an emotionally safe space for students as the school places emphasis on both character development and safety.
- Staff and educational workers learn about effective practices and are provided with classroom-ready resources.
- Student engagement reinforces the building of positive relationships, which is one of the essential learnings necessary to improving interpersonal relationships both in and beyond the classroom.

The Voices of the Teachers ...

“As educators in segregated classrooms, we teach very vulnerable and challenging students who work concurrently with outside agencies and support workers. Research shows that classroom emphasis on character development is linked with improved academic performance. However, given widely variant classroom settings, we weren’t sure how to institute a school-wide character development initiative, especially in collaboration with such a range of support workers. Together we developed an innovative plan; we formed a professional learning community and launched an action research project seeking ways to implement character development.”

To find out more, contact ...

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