

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Albemarle County Public Schools (“ACPS”) provides, within its existing programs or as a separate program, a character education program. The character education program may occur during the regular school year, during the summer in a youth development academy offered by the ACPS, or both. The purpose of the program is 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. The program is cooperatively developed with students, parents, and the community. Specific character traits emphasized may include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Character education curriculum should align with policy ACC, *Anti-Racism*, and include multiple perspectives. Character education will also align with the strategic plan.

Character education is interwoven into the school procedures and environment so as to instruct primarily by example, illustration, and participation to complement the Standards of Learning. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the character education program. This 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. Accordingly, prior to the use of any such material, the parent/guardian of a child participating in the anti-bullying program is provided with written notice of their rights to review the material and excuse the child from such program utilizing this material. In addition, in accordance with policy IIA, *Instructional Materials*, and other local policies, parents/guardians may inspect any instructional material used as part of their student’s curriculum upon request.

The character education program:

- is implemented at the elementary and secondary levels;
- specifies those character traits to be taught, selecting from those which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups;
- 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 shall not include indoctrination in any particular religious or political belief. Consistent with this purpose, 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, may be taught as representative of such civic values.

Adopted: October 11, 1999
 Amended: November 30, 2000; September 13, 2012; September 22, 2016; March 20, 2022
 Reviewed: September 9, 2004
 Equity Review: March 10, 2022

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §1-500, 22.1-23.3, 22.1-207.2:1, 22.1-208.01, 22.1-276.01.

Cross Refs.:
ACC, Anti-Racism
IIA, Instructional Materials
IIAA, Learning Resources/Textbook Selection and Adoption
IKF, The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements
INB, Teaching About Controversial Issues
INC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Learning Resources
INDC, Religion in the Schools