

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The Massachusetts Common Core of Learning sets forth the broad goals for education identifying what students should know and be able to do. The goals reflect what citizens highly value and see as essential for success in our democratic society. The purpose of the Common Core of Learning is to provide a focus for improving education in the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Common Core of Learning and the curriculum frameworks reflect the Board of Education's mission statement about PreKindergarten to Grade 12 Education:

"The mission of public education in Massachusetts is to provide each and every student with the values, knowledge, and skills needed to achieve full potential in his or her personal and work life and to contribute actively to the civic and economic life of our diverse and changing democratic society."

The Westfield Public Schools believes that all children can become lifelong learners and meet high standards. This guiding belief is the basis for establishing high expectations for teaching and learning in our schools. If students are to succeed in the 21st century and meet the future's challenge, then students, parents, educators and our entire society must all share responsibility to ensure that:

- Students are in school ready to study and learn.
- Students recognize the importance of education throughout their lives.
- Families and Educators encourage curiosity, love of learning and pride in a job well done so that children can be active seekers of knowledge and dedicated learners throughout their careers and lives.
- Families and Educators nurture confident children, so they are able to face the challenges of a rapidly changing world.
- Families and Educators cultivate integrity and respect so that children can contribute to their families and society.
- Educators provide opportunities for students to learn and apply knowledge in everyday situations and assist students in developing good work and study habits to prepare them for the transition to the world of work.
- Educators strengthen the ability of students to understand and communicate effectively with others by providing daily opportunities to develop communication skills and apply them to real-world problems and issues.
- Educators encourage the involvement of families, business and community members by fostering active education partnerships, including mentoring.
- Education and Community Leaders develop climates of safety in schools and environments that encourage high achievement and reward hard work.
- Schools are models for democracy and order, exemplifying the principles of equality and justice, and the fair application of rules.

- The Community fulfills its joint obligation to support the public schools, libraries, other educational resources and services for children at a level and with a commitment to ensure equal educational opportunities.

The Westfield School System continually strives to provide the youth of the city with the best possible education, one that will lay the groundwork for an enriching and productive future. The educational goals of the system express this philosophy more clearly in the following broad goal statements.

1. Basic Skills

Education should develop in each learner the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, visual, and computational skills. Beyond this it is important that students use these skills in the application of knowledge to practical problems and in all situations requiring conceptual and higher order thinking skills.

2. Capacity and Desire for Lifelong Learning

The educational program will include skills that enable students to utilize techniques that will enhance and stabilize their ability to learn independently so that they may be continually involved in lifelong learning. It will also include skills that will enable students to make decisions about their impact upon and their relationship to the social, physical, and biological environments and how such decision relate to the present and the future.

3. Citizenship in a Democratic Society

Education should provide each learner with a knowledge and understanding of how our society functions in theory and in practice; education must also foster individual commitment to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and to protect the rights of others in our culturally diverse society.

4. Occupational Competence

Education should provide the learner with the competencies required to obtain entry level jobs or admission to formal educational programs and apprenticeships. Beyond this, students will develop the skills necessary to learn independently and to adapt to changing life and occupational situations.

5. Establishment of Moral Values and Attitudes

Education should assist in the development of values that will enhance the quality of life for the individual and society. The school program will stress qualities of character such as honesty, loyalty, perseverance, compassion, and the development of the ability to choose right over wrong.

6. Physical and Emotional Well-Being

In addition to the more traditional athletic and sports activities provided in public schools in which students learn to engage and appreciate, education should provide students with the skills necessary to continually engage in physical

activities for a lifetime, such as swimming, golf, tennis and such other physical activities necessary for physical and emotional health. Maintaining physical fitness and academic competencies provides all students with the greatest assurance of achieving and maintaining physical and mental health.

7. Appreciation for and Competence in the Arts

Education should provide students with experiences in and appreciation for different forms of music as well as such artistic media as sculpture, painting, drawing, and other art forms. These experiences will provide students with different forms of lifetime entertainment as well as the opportunity to participate and/or work in these different artistic fields.

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