

## Core Values

The core values of an organization are those values we hold which form the foundation on which we perform work and conduct ourselves. We have an entire universe of values, but some of them are so primary, so important to us that throughout the changes in society, government, politics, and technology they are STILL the core values we will abide by. In an ever-changing world, core values are constant. Core values are not descriptions of the work we do or the strategies we employ to accomplish our mission. The values underlie our work, how we interact with each other, and which strategies we employ to fulfill our mission. The core values are the basic elements of how we go about our work. They are the practices we use (or should be using) every day in everything we do.

### CORE VALUES:

- Govern personal relationships
- Guide business processes
- Clarify who we are
- Articulate what we stand for
- Help explain why we do business the way we do
- Guide us on how to teach
- Inform us on how to reward
- Guide us in making decisions
- Underpin the whole organization
- Require no external justification
- Essential tenets

### CORE VALUES ARE NOT:

- Operating practices
- Business strategies
- Cultural norms
- Competencies
- Changed in response to market/administration changes
- Used individually

**Core Values** from other schools identified in their literature:

- **Scholarship, Citizenship, Community, and Personal Growth** – Needham Public Schools
- Students at Arlington High School focus on five core values and habits of mind as they pursue their secondary education: **integrity, accountability, communication, kindness, and teamwork** – Arlington, Massachusetts
- Student-centered education, excellence, economic sustainability, passion, courage, a safe, Healthy, and Caring environment. – Montpelier Public Schools
- Academic Excellence, Respect for Human Differences, Cooperative and Caring Relationships, and Commitment to Community) – Wellesly High School, Wellesly, MA

- Contribution, Diversity, Engagement, Integrity, Opportunity – Northeastern University
- Expects academic excellence and encourages independence of thought within a culture of collaboration. Dartmouth Faculty are passionate about teaching our students and are at the forefront of their scholarly or creative work. Dartmouth embraces diversity with the knowledge that it significantly enhances the quality of a Dartmouth education. Fosters lasting bonds...which encourage a culture of integrity, self-reliance, and collegiality and instill a sense of responsibility for each other and for the broader world. Dartmouth supports the vigorous and open debate of ideas within a community marked by mutual respect. – Dartmouth College
- Cultivating an ethos of academic excellence characterized by a community of scholars dedicated to their students and the furthering of knowledge. Promoting an expectation of civic engagement, environmental responsibility and global awareness. Encouraging respect for human diversity and celebrating its enrichment of our common experience. Developing habits of mind and being that promote lifelong learning and service to others. Providing knowledge and skills required to lead a responsible professional life.
- At Prospect Hill Academy, the prevailing belief is that with hard work, effective effort, perseverance through adversity, committed teachers, and invested parents, all students are capable of academic, intellectual, social and moral excellence. Fueling this conviction are seven core values that guide the daily life and culture of the school: **High Expectations for all, collaboration, balanced approach, data-driven decision making, equity, accountability, and personalization.**
- Respect, integrity, justice, compassion, and service
- Relentless pursuit of results, sense of possibility, disciplined thought, respect and humility, and integrity – Teach for America

Exercise for identifying core beliefs....

I believe that....

1. A school should teach...
2. A good school is one that...
3. A successful student is able to...
4. An effective classroom is one in which...
5. A good school staff member (teacher, principal..) is one who...
6. An effective school faculty is one that...
7. a quality instructional program includes...

## Examples

*The ABC High School learning community is committed to the enhancement of student learning. We believe that understanding must enable students to become complex adult thinkers, learners, workers, and community contributors.*

*We must prepare students to be active, self-directed, inquisitive learners and researchers. Instruction must provide students with the opportunity to tackle authentic problems; to use their skills appropriately within and across disciplines; to learn to work alone, cooperatively, and collectively in realistic settings; to communicate effectively; to participate in varied assessments, thus ultimately becoming willing and productive thinkers who develop a passion for learning.*

*Albert Miller, Teaching and Learning Solutions*

### Core Values and beliefs about learning

- Students learn best when instruction ensures they are active, self-directed, inquisitive learners and researchers.
- Students learn best when instruction provides students with the opportunity to tackle authentic problems.
- Students learn best when instruction provides students with opportunities to use their skills appropriately within and across disciplines.
- Students learn best when instruction ensures they have equal opportunities to work alone and to reflect on their learning, to work cooperatively and collaboratively in realistic settings.
- Students learn best when their assessments are varied and allow them to become willing and productive thinkers.

## PRHS Faculty Input on Core Values

Academic Excellence / Scholarship  
Effective Communication  
Accountability  
Responsibility  
Collaboration / Independence  
Citizenship/Service  
Global & Local connections  
Honesty  
Integrity / Honor  
Ethical  
Equity/Consistency  
Respect  
Empathy/Compassion  
Trust  
High Expectations  
Safety  
Supportive  
Caring  
Personalized  
Rigorous  
Challenging  
Intellectual Curiosity