

Schools of the Future: Campaign for Ethical Excellence



ARTICULATION

Articulation means our school's core values are something that:

- we've decided on as a group
- we buy into as a community
- we speak of often

Can our students explain our goals and values as well as faculty?

INTEGRATION

Integration means our school's values are addressed:

- in literature, as we read
- in language arts, as we write
- in historical and current events, as we discuss

How many faculty can we enlist to guide students in careful consideration of our goals?

ASSESSMENT

Assessment means that:

- we reflect on our ethical education endeavors
- we solicit views of those not always heard
- we use the data we gather

Can we gather appropriate information to see where we're succeeding and make decisions about areas to improve?





#1 Articulating Goals

Articulation: more than definition

Schools of the Future goals can be met. We can create cultures of compassion, of integrity. We can create schools where kids (and adults) grow to hold the well-being of the larger community in mind. Such a culture starts with knowing what our goals are, with defining what our goals are, with articulating goals.

1. Mission statement

Start with your school's mission statement.

Identify the goals for character/ethical development in your mission or vision statement, since these documents represent the very essence of your school's existence.

2. Identify core values or virtues for your community

If specific values are not identified in the mission or vision, pick some. Aim for 3 to 6 values. It's best practice these days, in part because core values give a community more concrete targets to aim at than the generic "citizenship," "leadership," or "ethical life" that some mission statements refer to. What are the ethical characteristics you most want in the citizens, or leaders, your school develops? Empathy? Respect for others? Integrity?

3. Overlap goals

Look at where your mission goals and values coincide with Schools of the Future goals and values. Schools of the future goals include empathy, compassion, integrity, honesty, fairness, respect, courage, and responsibility. Is there a set of values in common? If so, that's the bullseye for your aim.

4. Define

Define the core values from these overlapping goals in language that all can understand.

We cannot expect that students understand respect, integrity or compassion as well as we do. We need to teach them via both words and experiences. Begin with defining each in language that all students (and faculty) can understand.

5. Articulate

Are you sure your third graders, or sixth graders, or tenth graders can articulate what your community means by integrity, or respect? There should be consensus (not necessarily unanimity) among both adults and kids at school on a definition for all your school's core values.

Articulating can be the litmus test for your chances for success. If asked, can a "typical" student at your school 1) tell a visitor what the school's core values (or other character goals) are, *and* 2) explain somewhat articulately what the school means by those goals? There are schools where this is the norm. This should be the goal for all of us.

Good definition and articulation will pave the way to later progress. Good definition and articulation also pave the way to integrating values into the culture of the school, and assessment of progress.

See more at www.csee.org/future.html