

The Fourth and Fifth Rs

Respect and Responsibility

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New Hampton School: A National School of Character

Dr. Jeffrey Pratt Beedy, Headmaster

New Hampton was one of ten schools named a 2002 National School of Character in the annual competition sponsored by the Character Education Partnership (www.character.org).

New Hampton School is an independent boarding school of 330 students in the small New England community of New Hampton, New Hampshire. In the late 1980s, the school was in serious trouble. Enrollment

had dropped significantly, and faculty morale was low.

As New Hampton's new headmaster in 1992, I challenged the staff to transform the school into a community where relationships come first.

Dancing With the Natives

I believe that relationships have to come first in a high school because adolescence is a stage where kids want to be understood by adults. They need a lot of adult interaction time. Many of them have grown up in a world of drive-through relationships.

Adolescents today are as bright and talented as ever, but there's been a breakdown of respect. Adults have to gain their trust. The only way to do that is through caring and meaningful relationships. They have to see that you're real. I refer to this mutual interaction as "dancing with the natives."

All of this has to be done with a sensitivity to this developmental period. That often means listening, understanding, and respecting the adolescent perspective before offering guidance and direction.



NEW HAMPTON'S MISSION STATEMENT

We enhance the emerging potential of our young people as successful students, caring people, and responsible community members. New Hampton School employs a Total Human Development approach to teaching and learning which includes the intellectual, emotional, moral, physical, and spiritual lives of our students. Adults and young people engage actively and compassionately in developing their sense of purpose and diverse talents with the ultimate goal of building a better world.

In a world that expects you to fit in, we teach you to stand out.

To develop the whole person within the whole community, we . . .

- ***Provide a healthy learning environment in which all community members treat one another with dignity and respect.***
- ***Embrace scholarship, the arts, athletics, and community service as equally important mediums for learning.***
- ***Expect community members to accept responsibility for their personal growth and the positive growth of others.***
- ***Respect and capitalize on authentic relationships.***
- ***View teaching and learning as lifelong passions.***

New Hampton is a community. Never before have I been in a school environment where my teacher invited me to dinner with his family.
—A New Hampton student

Total Human Development Education

At New Hampton, we have come to define a good

school as one that educates the whole person within the whole community. This vision is reflected in our Mission Statement (see box, p. 1).

The whole person includes the intellectual, psychological, moral, physical, and spiritual aspects of the person. The whole community includes our academic programming, athletics, arts, community service, and residential life.

Guiding our efforts to develop this community is a philosophy we call the *Total Human Development (THD)* model of education. This is a holistic approach that draws on thinkers such as Kurt Hahn, John Dewey, and Lawrence Kohlberg. The model provides a philosophy of teaching and learning, a psychology of teaching and learning, and programs that translate this philosophy and psychology into practice.

Our Philosophy of Teaching and Learning

The philosophy of a school provides the foundation that guides all the important decisions—including how people treat each other and how resources such as time and money are allocated.

Central to our philosophy is the idea that *learning always occurs within the context of a relationship*. Research shows that the relationship between the student and the teacher or coach impacts learning more than any other factor.

Also central to our philosophy is the belief that our learning community rests on two universal values: *respect* and *responsibility*. Respect, as defined in *Educating for Character*, means showing regard for the worth of someone or something. It takes three forms: respect for self, respect for others, and respect for all forms of life and the environment that sustains them.

We have found it helpful to use a rubric—a “*Leader-Detractor Scale*”—that defines respect and responsibility in terms of five levels of behavior. Teachers use these levels to evaluate students’ efforts in all areas of school life. A teacher might say to a student, “Are you being a 5, or are you being a 1?” If you ask students, “What does character mean to you?”, they’re likely to say, “Being a 5 and not a 1.” Parents often report that they find their children’s rating on this rubric more meaningful than their grades.

The following is our Leader-Detractor Scale for *respect*:

LEVELS OF RESPECT

5.0 *Communicates very deep concern and caring for the other person's worth; commits to enabling the other person's growth. (Leader)*

4.0 *Communicates deep caring and concern for the other person—who now feels free to open up and experience being valued as an individual. (Contributor)*

3.0 *Expresses adequate acknowledgment of or concern for the other person's feelings, experience, or potential. (Participant)*

2.0 *Shows little respect for the feelings, experience, and potential of the other person. (Observer)*

1.0 *Shows lack of respect; hurts another's feelings. (Detractor)*

We define *responsibility* as the action side of respect. Responsibility means “the ability to respond.” The following is our Leader-Detractor Scale for *responsibility*:

LEVELS OF RESPONSIBILITY

5.0 *Clarifies self's role in being accountable in life, plus models and teaches a step-by-step process of being accountable. (Leader)*

4.0 *Clarifies own role in situations, plus seeks opportunities to be responsible/accountable. (Contributor)*

3.0 *Clarifies own role in being responsible/accountable in a situation. (Participant)*

2.0 *Assumes responsibility/accountability "because I'm stuck with it." (Observer)*

1.0 *Avoids being responsible/accountable. ("Here it comes, there I go.") (Detractor)*

Our Psychology of Teaching and Learning

How do our students learn the core values of respect and responsibility? Here we draw on insights from three theories.

Social learning theory says that human beings learn through modeling. Students learn by watching their parents, teachers, coaches, and each other.

Behavior learning theory says we learn through constructive reinforcement, which includes rules, rewards, and consequences. Rules support the core values. Young people need structure and boundaries. The rules of an athletic game offer a good model to follow because they

New Hampton's Developmental Curriculum

FRESHMAN YEAR	<i>FOCUS: Healthy Habits of Learning.</i> Freshmen focus on becoming respectful and responsible students—acquiring the skills of organization and time management, note-taking, word processing, writing for communication, reading and writing for pleasure, problem-solving, presentation, speaking, and interpersonal relations.
SOPHOMORE YEAR	<i>FOCUS: Cooperative Learning.</i> Sophomores focus on becoming respectful of other students, faculty, and their environment—acquiring the skills of doing research, completing group research projects, defending arguments, reading and writing for content, and collecting and interpreting data.
JUNIOR YEAR	<i>FOCUS: Independent Learning.</i> Juniors focus on becoming responsible for their own learning—acquiring the skills of completing and presenting independent research projects, reading and writing for critical thinking, investigating multiple frames of reference, and studying for mastery.
SENIOR YEAR	<i>FOCUS: Demonstration of Learning.</i> Seniors focus on becoming respectful and responsible through sharing and leading—demonstrating organizational, cooperative, and independent learning skills; reading and writing for demonstration of critical thinking; making interdisciplinary connections; and applying innovative problem-solving.

are clear, consistent, and, ideally, have immediate consequences.

Cognitive-developmental theory says that learning occurs through respectful dialogue. Dialogue stimulates thinking and strengthens relationships.

Our Programs

The programs that translate our philosophy and psychology into practice fall into five areas: *academic, leadership, co-curricular, service, and residential life.*

Our academic program is developmental, each year having a different focus that we think is a good developmental match. The freshman year focuses on acquiring healthy habits of learning; the sophomore year on acquiring the skills of cooperative learning; the junior year on acquiring the skills of independent learning; and the senior year on demonstration of learning (see box).

Service Learning

Service learning can be a transformative experience—something that facilitates the crucial developmental shift from focus on self to focus on others. But community service is sometimes no more than fluff and resume-building. If it's going to have transformative power, it has to involve sustained face-to-face work with another human being. That's the kind of thing that gets under your skin and stays there.

At New Hampton, we believe that engaging in meaningful community service cultivates a sense of civic vir-

tue and democratic citizenship. All our students are expected to give of their time to the community throughout the academic year. Service projects are wide-ranging and accommodate varied student interests. Eight Saturday mornings throughout the fall and spring terms are devoted to these service efforts. Students who do not satisfactorily complete their community service commitment are not eligible for promotion to the next grade level.

The Sports-Character Connection

Sports are a big part of how we try to develop character at New Hampton. We've been fortunate to earn national recognition for football, basketball, hockey, and skiing. But for us, character and winning *both* matter.

You can't fail here unless you want to. And yet you are constantly challenged. Over the years, I've tried six different arts and five different sports.

—A New Hampton student

For example, our athletic department, in collaboration with Dr. Matt Davidson, has developed a *Coach's Checklist for Character Development* that helps coaches keep values such as respect, responsibility, and teamwork in the forefront. (Contact us for a copy.) ■

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Character Education Strategies From America's Blue Ribbon Schools

Dr. Madonna Murphy



For more than a decade, my research has focused on character education practices used in U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools. Here is a sampling of practices from recent award winners:

Life-Skills Approach to Character Education

Both the Belmont School, a K-5 school in Belmont, Michigan, and the Patterson School, a K-5 school in Santa Maria, California, call their character qualities "Life Skills" (after Susan Kovalik's *Life Skills*). Life Skills include: caring, common sense, cooperation, courage curiosity, effort, flexibility, friendship, initiative, integrity, problem-solving, patience, perseverance, responsibility, and sense of humor. Patterson School teacher Annette Taul co-authored *Developing Character: A Classroom Approach*, a curriculum guide for teaching the Life Skills at each grade level within science, language arts, and social studies. At Belmont, Life Skills have been integrated into the state learning standards, especially social studies.

Character Traits in a Scope and Sequence

West View, a K-5 school located in Spartanburg, South Carolina, began with a list of monthly character traits but soon found that teaching the same traits each year led students to lose interest. They therefore adopted the *Core Essentials Curriculum* (www.coreessentials.org), a three-year program based on teaching 27 different character traits, 9 each year. The traits are integrated into lessons and stories. Teachers use the traits as they work with students to develop classroom rules and connect the traits to real life through daily classroom activities.

Character Education at the Movies

The Belmont School has "film nights" in which children and parents watch and discuss a character-building film. The school uses quality films with messages of family, friendship, truth, trust, or responsibility and the idea that character, rather than money or fame, is the most important thing in life. Films include:

Willy the Sparrow (Pre-K and Kindergarten), *On Our Own* (1st-grade), *Secret of Treasure Mountain* (2nd-grade), *The Buttercream Gang* (3rd-grade), *The Rogue Stallion* (4th-grade), and *Split Infinity* (5th-grade).

Creating a School Song

The McCoy School (K-5) in Carrollton, Texas, has written its own school song to include the character traits for which the school stands. The song is sung at the start of each day after the Pledge of Allegiance and at every assembly and school game. Kathy Struck, a 5th-grade teacher, wrote the song to the tune of "Home, Home, on the Range." ("*Oh, give me a school, where integrity is cool, where respect is the name of the game . . .*")

Parents as First Moral Teachers

West View Elementary believes that parents are the most important character educators. The school has parenting workshops at least once a month throughout the school year. Parent updates on the program are given in the school newsletter every six weeks and in weekly classroom newsletters. A Parent Resource Room provides books and other character education material.

Do Dads Club

The dads at Walnut Hill Elementary in Dallas, Texas, have a "Do Dads Club" that meets regularly to find ways to make a difference in the school. Every other month they hold a workday to hang curtains, build shelves, repair furniture, plant trees, lay walkways, and offer a strong back or a helping hand. All of the things they do model responsibility and caring. Each Wednesday the school enjoys inspirational messages from one of the "Do Dads," reinforcing the curriculum's character qualities. ■

Adapted from Character Education in America's Blue Ribbon Schools, 2nd edition. Scarecrow Press (2002), 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706; Phone: 800-462-6420; www.scarecroweducation.com.

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THE NEED FOR MORE ATTENTION TO HIGH SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION

- *What Works in Character Education*, a Character Education Partnership literature review, finds "very few schoolwide character education programs at the high school level."
- With few exceptions, most published character education books and curricula focus on the younger years.
- There are few rigorous evaluation studies of high school character education.
- High school teachers attend character education conferences in much smaller numbers than their elementary and middle school counterparts.
- During the five years of the Character Education Partnership's *National Schools of Character* award competition, there have been relatively few high school entries and only a handful of high school winners.

High School Project (Cont. from p. 6)

Project Methodology

Our national search will include diverse schools: public and private; secular and religious; urban, rural, and suburban; and schools representative of all regions of the country. Our methodology will include a review of the published literature, interviews with national experts, interviews with practitioners, full site visits to selected schools, and focused visits to other schools.

When the project's work is complete, we hope that:

- In the eyes of educators and the public, the high school will be seen as playing an indispensable role in character development.
- A comprehensive vision, supported by a rich range of character education practices, will be available to high school practitioners.
- High schools will have the tools to evaluate their impact on character.
- Opinion and policy leaders at all levels—federal, state, and local—will be able to advocate effectively for character education in the high school. ■

Tom Lickona and Matt Davidson of the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs are conducting the research for the High School Promising Practices Project.

Criteria for Promising Practices in H. S. Character Education

1. ***Research validation:*** Scientific study has shown the educational practice to be effective; students who experience this practice are superior on some character development measure(s) to those who do not experience the practice.
2. ***Extrapolation from practices validated at the middle or elementary levels:*** The promising practice has not yet been empirically evaluated at the high school level but has been shown to be effective at earlier levels.
3. ***Pre-post differences:*** Students show improvement on some character-related indicator(s) after experiencing the character education practice, although there is no comparison group.
4. ***Relevance to important adolescent outcomes:*** The practice is relevant to important adolescent outcomes (such as sense of purpose, sense of belonging, moral identity, and avoidance of self-injurious behaviors such as substance abuse and sexual activity).
5. ***Link to factors that mediate character outcomes:*** The educational practice fosters a variable, such as sense of community, that has been shown to mediate positive character outcomes.
6. ***Relevance to challenges posed by high schools as institutions:*** The educational practice addresses a problem stemming from the special institutional challenges (e.g., size) posed by the high school environment.
7. ***External recognition:*** The practice has gained external recognition from the Character Education Partnership's *National Schools of Character* program, the U.S. Dept. of Education's Blue Ribbon School program, or some other credible educational organization.
8. ***The testimony of practitioners and students:*** The practice is identified by high school principals, counselors, teachers, students, or graduates as having a positive impact on the character of students or the character of the school.
9. ***The judgments of our project's National Experts Panel:*** The practice is recommended by our panel of experts in adolescent development, character education, and high school reform.



High School Character Education: Researching Promising Practices

Tom Lickona and Matt Davidson



The Center for the 4th and 5th Rs has been fortunate to receive a John Templeton Foundation grant for an 18-month project, “*Educating for Character in the High School: Researching Promising Practices.*”

We'd like to issue an open invitation to anyone who may be able to direct us to worthy high school practices, to contact us during our information-gathering period (January 1 - December 31, 2003; davidsonm@cortland.edu or c4n5rs@cortland.edu).

We'll be using 9 criteria (see box, p. 5) to identify examples of promising practices—curricular and extra-curricular, classroom and schoolwide, school-based and community-based—corresponding to our preliminary 17-part typology (see box below). We are defining character to include *performance character* (achievement-related virtues such as a strong work ethic, goal-setting, and perseverance) and *moral character* (relationship virtues such as honesty, respect, and democratic citizenship). We'd be grateful for your leads concerning work you are doing or know of:

- *Good high schools to visit (even if they don't call their work "character education")*
- *Programs, classrooms, and practices to observe*
- *Practitioners (principals, coaches, counselors, teachers), theorists, and researchers to interview*
- *Studies, articles, and books to read*
- *Curricula to examine.*

The Need

In the past decade, character education has grown into a national movement. Thus far, however, the movement has been overwhelmingly an elementary school phenomenon with modest progress at the middle school level. By contrast, intentional character education at the high school level appears to be relatively rare—at the developmental stage when the need is arguably the greatest. In order to develop the intellectual and ethical potential of adolescents, create safe and caring school communities, and reduce teen behaviors that injure self and others, the high school must embrace character education as a central part of its mission.

Project Goals

Our project has three goals:

1. To create an integrated body of knowledge showing high schools' potential to become schools of character that develop both intellectual and moral excellence.
2. To publish a report—*Educating for Character and Community in the High School*—that offers a typology of promising character-building practices, sets forth *Principles for Effective High School Character Education*, and recommends steps to make this blueprint a reality.
3. To mount a vigorous national campaign to disseminate this report to opinion leaders, government agencies, leaders in high school education, practitioners, the media, and the public. (*Cont. on p. 5*)

Preliminary Typology: Promising Practices in High School Character Education

1. *Comprehensive, School-wide Programs*
2. *School Reform Practices Aimed at Improving Teaching and Learning*
3. *Community-Building Practices*
4. *Discipline Practices*
5. *Curricular Integration Practices*
6. *Special Character Education Curricula/Courses*
7. *Practices That Develop Healthy Lifestyles*
8. *Practices That Address Life Goals and Whole-Person Development*
9. *Service Learning*
10. *Democratic Education Practices*
11. *Recognition Practices*
12. *Leadership Training Programs*
13. *Extracurricular Activities*
14. *Youth Development Programs*
15. *Parent and Community Partnerships*
16. *Educational Change and Management Practices*
17. *Character Education Assessment Practices*