

MISSION STATEMENT

Here in Maurice River Township School District, "everybody is special." This is our philosophy. We believe it and we live it!

Each individual is accepted into the program as he/she is and should be provided with a stimulating environment and opportunities for learning experiences designed to promote behavioral changes that will effect continuing satisfactory adjustments to life.

The purpose of education is to facilitate the development of the potential of each child to the fullest. The staff seeks to recognize individual differences and to engender achievement and progress not only in basic skills but in the ability to think independently with higher order cognitive skills.

Education involves the caring and individual guidance of the child through learning processes so he/she becomes personally effective in a dynamic society. As each child grows, there is ongoing academic, physical, social and emotional development. Universal principles of character should also be reinforced along with the ability to apply them in daily life.

Our goal is to guide every child's growth towards becoming a self-respecting individual who can effectively function academically and socially in a democratic society.

MISSION

The mission of the Maurice River Township School District is twofold. First, we shall provide the means by which a child can learn and endeavor to succeed in today's world. This can be in the form of actualizing our philosophy of providing for individual academic, social, physical, and emotional student needs by members of the staff.

Second, we shall provide significant opportunities for learning suited to the age and abilities of the student by way of our curriculum. In so doing, we shall provide resources to be used with maximum efficiency.

The goals of our mission shall be to create an environment where all children are made to feel unique and special and where staff believe that all children can learn. This environment shall be promoted by high expectations of the staff for all pupils in a goal-oriented atmosphere with students' success as its end.

The Board of Education represents the elected representatives of the community. The Board sets policy for the chief school administrator and school business administrator to administer. Faculty and staff shall execute Board policy and shall be evaluated by the administration. Parents shall be partners in all matters germane to their children's education.

Adopted by the Maurice River Township Board of Education, 12/21/93*

ADDENDUM TO MISSION STATEMENT

The Board of Education strives to foster a common understanding by encouraging all stakeholders to exhibit a model of civility and democracy as they participate and interact in helping shape education in the school district. These stakeholders include the Board of Education, Administration, Faculty, Staff, Students, Parents and Guardians and Community Members.

The Board of Education ascribes to the following principles to guide discussion that involve school matters. These include:

- Each side in a controversy has a right to be heard and to be taken seriously and to expect that its views will be respected by other parties in the debate. Participants in public debate should promote guiding principles such as respect, listening to others, fostering mutual understanding, and cooperatively agreeing to disagree when agreement isn't possible.
- Most people and particularly parents, are motivated by a desire to achieve what is best for children.
- Vigorous debate is expected in a democratic discussion, however, epithets have no appropriate place in debate over the content and direction of public education
- Debate over public education should be legitimate and motivated by a concern for students and not for personal or partisan interests.

- Recognize that parents and other constituents, such as the community as a whole, have a real and direct stake in public education. These interests are sometimes in conflict.
- Recognition that public schools serve children and parents of a wide variety of perspectives about religion. It is neither the duty or the right of the public schools to inculcate a particular religious view. By the same token, it is neither the duty nor right of public school officials to deliberately undermine particular religious perspectives.
- Agreement that public schools should educate and not engage in narrow ideological indoctrination for the purpose of turning out cadres of identically thinking students. This principle does not prohibit the public schools from teaching character education principles.
- Recognition that some disputes, including many arising under the Establishment, Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the Constitution, have been settled by law, while some questions are as yet unanswered. The imperative of respect for the rule of law is particularly compelling in the case of school officials and staff who must set an example for the students they are charged with preparing for future citizenship.

The Board of Education also urges stakeholders to model behaviors that support the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards for students who must demonstrate mastery of self-management skills. The Standard describes that students will be expected to address issues related to personal development, such as accepting responsibility for their own learning and understanding expectations for performance. They are also expected to demonstrate positive work behaviors and ethics, the ability to work individually and cooperatively in groups, and respect for others of diverse cultural and social backgrounds. Specific behaviors include the following:

- Set short and long term goals
- Work cooperatively with others to accomplish a task
- Evaluate their own actions and accomplishments
- Describe constructive responses to criticism
- Provide constructive criticism to others
- Describe actions which demonstrate respect for people of different races, ages, religions, ethnicity and gender
- Describe the roles people play in groups
- Demonstrate refusal skills
- Use time efficiently and effectively
- Apply study skills to expand their own knowledge and skills
- Describe how ability, effort and achievement are interrelated.

While the Board of Education acknowledges that stakeholders may have differences from time to time, the stakeholders should not permit these differences to obscure the large areas of agreement and mutual understandings they have reached.

The Board of Education recognizes that there will be cases in which conflict is unavoidable, perhaps even desirable, but the number of these issues can and should be reduced as far as possible. Conflict may sometimes be necessary and healthy, but it should not be created unnecessarily. And when conflict occurs, how it is handled is almost as important as the substance of the disputes.

Our nation's present and future well-being depend on the health of its education system. There is much that is admirable in public education; there is much room for reform and improvement. There are as well genuine disagreements about its future course. The stakeholders should discuss how best to solve these problems and resolve disagreements. The stakeholders should not allow debate to become an end to themselves or an obstacle to effective public education. Public education is too important to be ignored and too important to be reduced to nothing more than a battlefield.

Approved January 21, 1997*

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The board accepts the responsibility for coordinating the available resources of home, school and community in a mutual effort to guide every pupil's growth towards becoming a self-respecting individual who can effectively function academically and socially in a democratic society.

The Maurice River Township Board of Education shall be consistent with State educational goals and standards and shall adopt these State educational goals as the district goals. The following goals are applicable to Maurice River Township School District.

1. All children in Maurice River Township start school ready to learn. Quality preschool opportunities be provided for all children. Parent education programs be designed and implemented to assist parents in providing readiness experiences for their preschool children. The Maurice River Township Board of Education shall strive to achieve a graduation rate of at least 90 percent; to provide the least restrictive program for those students with disabilities; and, to provide dropout prevention programs for pupils at risk.
2. Maurice River Township pupils leave grades four and eight having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies (civics, history, and geography), health, physical education, and fine, practical and performing arts. Maurice River Township shall implement State-approved curriculum content standards and their performance. Maurice River Township shall provide staff development opportunities to ensure that teachers are adequately equipped to teach challenging and up-to-date subject matter and to implement effective teaching techniques.
3. All pupils learn to use their minds well, so that they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy. Maurice River Township shall provide students with experiences in higher level thinking, information processing, the responsibilities of citizenship, and employability skills. Maurice River Township shall demonstrate competency in the subject areas of health, physical education, fine, practical and performing arts, and career education. Maurice River Township shall demonstrate respect for racial, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity.
4. Maurice River Township shall increase pupils' achievement levels in science and mathematics to contribute to our country's ability to compete academically with all other countries of the world. Maurice River Township shall revise their curriculum offerings in science and mathematics according to State standards as they are developed. Maurice River Township School District provides staff training in the teaching of mathematics and science at grades K-8 to increase teachers' understanding of and ability to teach these subjects.
5. Maurice River Township shall strive to be free of drugs and violence and offer a safe, disciplined environment conducive to learning. Maurice River Township shall develop partnerships with parents to establish the responsibilities of each to create and maintain safe and healthy educational environments for all pupils. Maurice River Township shall provide programs and staffing to deal with pupils at risk. Maurice River Township shall expand their cooperative efforts to create drug and violence-free environments. All students develop a positive view of self and learn to use effective interpersonal skills.

The Maurice River Township Board of Education shall comply with the State educational standards set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:8-4.3 through 4.10 which shall be used for the implementation of a thorough and efficient system of free public schools in accordance with NJSA 18A:7A-1 et seq. and the New Jersey Constitution.

In order to achieve these broad educational goals, the board will endeavor to provide:

- A. Instruction in study skills necessary to achieve mastery of subject matter;
- B. Specialized and individualized kinds of educational experiences to meet the needs of each pupil;
- C. Instruction which bears a meaningful relationship to the present and future needs and/or interests of pupils;
- D. Teaching staff members of high quality;
- E. Resources for education, to be used with maximum efficiency;
- F. Comprehensive guidance services;
- G. An environment in which any competition among pupils is positive;
- H. Opportunities for teaching staff members and pupils to make recommendations concerning the operation of the schools;
- I. Significant opportunities, suited to the age of the pupil, for helping the pupil to determine the nature of his/her educational experiences;
- J. Diverse forms of constructive cooperation with parents/guardians and community groups.