

**CORE BELIEFS, MISSION STATEMENT
AND OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION**

1.0 Purpose

Recognizing the need for effective organizations to identify and develop a clear, concise, and shared meaning of values/beliefs, priorities, and direction that everyone understands, the Mercer County Board of Education hereby institutes this policy in an effort to establish core beliefs of Mercer County Schools regarding student learning.

2.0 Procedure

- 2.1 The statements listed below express the core beliefs of Mercer County Schools. Key elements to a student's success are a skilled and caring staff that practices the following:
 - 2.1.a Respect personal worth
 - 2.1.b Provide opportunities for the development of problem-solving abilities
 - 2.1.c Provide for individual differences
 - 2.1.d Foster the love of learning
 - 2.1.e Promote decision-making skills that result in the wise use of leisure time and the development of social skills
 - 2.1.f Seek to develop a respect for the dignity of work
 - 2.1.g Enhance positive attitudes toward school and the process of lifetime learning
 - 2.1.h Promote good mental, emotional, and physical health
 - 2.1.i Foster belief in the democratic process
 - 2.1.j Seek to develop an appreciation of the aesthetics
 - 2.1.k Teach students to accept responsibility for their decisions and behaviors
 - 2.1.l Develop lessons that engage students and promote questioning, thinking, collaboration, and communication.
- 2.2 All students can learn: all students have potential that can be developed.
- 2.3 Education is a shared responsibility - achievement requires the commitment and participation of students, staff, family, and community.
- 2.4 High expectations yield high achievement.
- 2.5 School climate contributes to achievement: learning occurs best in an environment of mutual respect.

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3.0 Administration

- 3.1 The values and belief of an organization come together to form the organizational culture that impacts student learning. In addition to the identification of shared core beliefs, the overall direction and focus of the district is defined through the development and adoption of a statement that communicates the specific mission of the district.

The following statement defines our mission for Mercer County Public Schools.

Mission Statement
of the
MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

To provide students of all ages equitable opportunities
to achieve their full potential by offering
the highest quality education utilizing all
available resources efficiently and effectively.

- 3.2 To fulfill this mission, the following overarching principles of operation are established:
- 3.2.a The instructional program will be designed and implemented so that students will possess the knowledge and skills, including technology skills, essential for success in a competitive, dynamic society.
 - 3.2.b For the well-being of all students and staff, schools will strive to achieve an environment that is safe, free from drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and harassment.
 - 3.2.c Schools will provide equal opportunities to meet the educational needs of all students in an efficient and economical manner.
 - 3.2.d Students will be encouraged to develop an appreciation for community involvement and a desire to work for community improvement through volunteerism and civic participation.
 - 3.2.e School personnel will be provided opportunities on a continual basis to improve their knowledge and skills that will help students succeed.
 - 3.2.f Communication between and among students, staff, parents, and the community will be a priority.

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- 3.2.g Morale of students and staff will be enhanced by fostering an environment conducive to teaching and to learning.
- 3.2.h Students will be encouraged to develop an understanding, appreciation, and/or tolerance for people of different genders, races, ethnic origins, religious beliefs, and lifestyles.
- 3.2.i The curriculum and extra-curricular activities will be designed to develop the values of respect, courtesy, honesty, responsibility, fairness, caring, diligence, and patriotism.
- 3.2.j Schools will become centers for life-long learning and a community resource that supports teaching and learning.
- 3.2.k Responsiveness to the business and professional community will be demonstrated by determining the skills necessary for productive employment and by adapting the curriculum to provide those skills.
- 3.2.l Teachers across the curriculum will engage all students in activities that foster an appreciation for reading and encourage students to become life-long, independent readers.

4.0 Severability

If any portion of this policy or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.

Authority: W.Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2, and W.Va. Code §§16-9A-4, 16-9A-9, 17A-1-1, 18-2-5, 18-2-5a, 18-2-7b, 18-2-9, 18-2-33, 18-2C-1 et seq., 18-5-1, 18-5-13, 18-16-1, 18A-1-1, 18A-5-1, 18A-5-1a, 60A-1-101, 60A-7-11a, 61-2-15, 61-7-2, and 61-7-11a.

Source: Board of Education Minutes

Date(s): 2/25/82, 11/29/84, 6/10/85, 8/23/94, 9/94, 1/25/05, 8/13/13