



Philosophy of Teaching & Learning

Norfolk Public Schools is committed to developing students who value learning and the “habits of the mind” (*a mental discipline practiced so that it becomes a habit or natural process*) that will enable them to adjust successfully to the changing world. We will accept the responsibility for engaging the entire community in preparing life-long learners who are able to understand the world in which they live and have the skills needed to learn and succeed throughout their lifetime. We will recognize, value, and build upon both the individual differences and the similarities in our students.

Students will have learning experiences that respect and address the strengths and needs of ALL students. These learning experiences will be like those found in day-to-day life and based upon broad concepts flowing from the general to the more specific. Students will learn to make responsible choices, overcome challenges, and take responsibility for their own learning. Students will attain academic proficiency as defined by local, state and national standards. Students will have many opportunities to internalize and demonstrate their understanding of newly acquired information, skills, and processes that are tied to rigorous academic standards.

Each stakeholder has a role to play. All stakeholders will approach their relationships with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members with respect to promote a positive learning experience.

Administrators will provide support and instructional leadership by creating and maintaining a clear focus on student achievement driven by the district’s vision. Well-prepared teachers, safe and secure school facilities, sound and rigorous curriculum, adequate resources, and appropriate support services will be needed to create and maintain this focus. Administrators will be advocates for all students. Keeping the focus on

student needs will ensure that educational opportunities to meet world-class standards will always be available for all the students.

Teachers will be knowledgeable of and competent in the content areas they teach and have the ability to relate this content to the students’ past, present, and future learning experiences. Teachers will utilize effective classroom management and teaching strategies to ensure learning at high levels for all students. They will use various assessments to determine students’ understanding and to plan classroom instruction.

Students must assume responsibility for their own learning if they are to be successful. Therefore, we expect that students will come to school prepared to learn. We expect all students will follow the established rules and contribute to a disciplined learning environment. Most importantly, each student will be an active participant in the learning process.

Parents must be active partners with schools to provide the support and assistance that will ensure the success of their children. Parents’ responsibilities include supporting school rules, programs, and goals, championing homework, showing an interest in their child’s educational experiences, and never giving up on their child.

Community members must embrace and support ongoing efforts to provide rigorous academic opportunities to children. The progress and condition of the community is dependent upon the educational success realized by its citizens.

By implementing this philosophy, Norfolk Public Schools will meet its vision to provide a world-class education for all of its students —

All Means All.