

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY (ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEFS)

**Beliefs:** The Talbot County Public Schools have established six broad belief statements which reflect the educational philosophy of its professional staff. Each statement is followed by a series of statements which further reflect this philosophy.

- I. Effective curricula and instruction focus on outcomes
  - A. Children's learning styles vary.
  - B. Children learn better when their interest level is high.
  - C. Children learn by active involvement with their environment.
  - D. Learning is affected by a child's interaction with other children.
  - E. All areas of development are integrated.
  - F. Good instructional practices are consistent with valid, current research.
  - G. An effective disciplined environment enhances learning.
  - H. All students have a great deal of potential that can be developed given appropriate learning conditions.
  - I. Some students will require more time to learn than others.
  - J. Students who are proceeding at different rates of learning will have different needs.
  - K. Grouping is always an open and fluid process and grouping will change constantly as needs dictate.
  - L. All programs, including special education and gifted and talented, should be inclusive by nature. Our job is to find ways to include students in a variety of experiences, not exclude them.
  - M. There should be no mystery about what will be on tests. Students should know what they are to learn, how they are to learn it, and why they should learn it.
  - N. Success is best attained when materials are presented at a student's instructional level.
  - O. Educators must be optimistic about the learning capacity of all students, knowing that the very attitudes which support the optimism foster learning.
  - P. All students can and should experience success.
  - Q. It is important to take reasonable risks in order to enhance our program and progress.
  - R. Curriculum should help children learn how to learn.
  - S. Curriculum should establish a foundation for lifetime learning.
  - T. Curriculum and instruction should be designed to develop children's self-esteem, sense of competence, and positive feelings toward learning.
  - U. Learning materials and activities should be concrete, real and relevant to children's lives.

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- V. Teachers should promote the development of children's consciences and self-control through positive guidance techniques.
- W. It is effective teaching practice to perceive a classroom as a group of individuals.
- X. An appropriate curriculum for each grade should encourage social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.
- Y. Students' differing personality types react favorably to different teaching strategies.
- Z. The most important characteristics of effective schools are strong instructional leadership, a safe and orderly climate, school-wide emphasis on basic skills, high teacher expectations for student achievement, and continuous assessment of pupil progress.
- AA. All students benefit from enrichment activities.

### II. Self-esteem is enhanced by positive learning experiences

- A. Having a positive self-concept improves learning.
- B. Grouping is always an open and fluid process and grouping will change constantly as needs dictate.
- C. All programs, including special education and gifted and talented, should be inclusive by nature. Our job is to find ways to include students in a variety of experiences, not exclude them.
- D. All students can and should experience success.
- E. Retention is not an effective educational practice.
- F. Curriculum and instruction should be designed to develop children's self-esteem, sense of competence, and positive feelings toward learning.
- G. Teachers should promote the development of children's consciences and self-control through positive guidance techniques.

### III. Individual differences influence learning

- A. Children's learning styles vary.
- B. If we base instruction on how children learn, many learning errors can be prevented.
- C. Some students will require more time to learn than others.
- D. Educators must be optimistic about the learning capacity of all students, knowing that the very attitudes which support the optimism foster learning.
- E. Children should be allowed to move at their own pace in acquiring important skills.
- F. A student's experiences outside school affect that student's ability to learn.
- G. Students' differing personality types react favorably to different teaching strategies.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY (ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEFS)

V. Success is achieved through appropriate learning conditions and high expectations

- A. All children can learn.
- B. We should have high expectations for all students.
- C. There should be no mystery about what will be on tests. Students should know what they are to learn, how they are to learn it, and why they should learn it.
- D. Educators must be optimistic about the learning capacity of all students, knowing that the very attitudes which support the optimism foster learning.
- E. All students can and should experience success.
- F. Our goal is to have children succeed regardless of the time needed for success.
- G. A student's experience outside school affect that student's ability to learn.
- H. Students differing personality types react favorably to different teaching strategies.

VI. Effective organizational practices are guided by valid research

- A. Learning is affected by a child's interaction with other people.
- B. All areas of development are integrated.
- C. Some students will require more time to learn than others.
- D. Students who are proceeding at different rates of learning will have different needs.
- E. Grouping is always an open and fluid process and grouping will change constantly as needs dictate.
- F. All programs, including special education and gifted and talented, should be inclusive by nature. Our job is to find ways to include students in a variety of experiences, not exclude them.
- G. An effective organization constantly assesses its needs and changes accordingly.
- H. Retention is not an effective educational practice.
- I. It is important to take reasonable risks in order to enhance our program and progress.
- J. Credit should be granted for performance, not for time spent.
- K. Children are internally motivated to learn. Effective schools nurture the child's internal motivation to learn.
- L. Size of classrooms and the ratio of adults to children will affect the probability that a student will learn.
- M. The most important characteristics of effective schools are strong instructional leadership, a safe and orderly climate, school-wide emphasis on basic skills, high teacher expectations for student achievement, and continuous assessment of pupil progress.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY (ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEFS)

### VII. Positive interaction with parents, community, and the environment fosters success

- A. Children learn by active involvement with their environment.
- B. Learning is affected by a child's interaction with other people.
- C. All programs, including special education and gifted and talented, should be inclusive by nature. Our job is to find ways to include students in a variety of experiences, not exclude them.
- D. Teachers view parents as partners in the educational process.
- E. A student's experiences outside school affect that student's
- F. Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. What parents do to help their children learn is more important to academic success than how well-off the family is.
- G. Belief in the value of hard work, the importance of personal responsibilities, and the importance of education itself contributes to greater success in school.

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