



Curriculum Chatter

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Values Education Good Practice Schools Project

Our project is investigating
the 6 pro-social values



In May we announced the success of the Maroondah North Innovations and Excellence Cluster application for federal funding to participate in this project. Our cluster (which includes Croydon Hills PS, Kalinda PS, Mullum PS, Park Orchards PS, Parkwood SC, Warranwood PS, Wonga Park PS and Yarra Road PS) was selected as one of 25 nationally and one of 5 in Victoria to successfully obtain funding.

The focus of our project is "relational learning". This term, coined by Dr. George Otero, has arisen in recognition of an ever-increasing body of international educational research. This research suggests a student's learning is enhanced when it occurs in relationship to community (rather than in isolation) and that there is a proportional connexion between the quality of relationships a student experiences and the quality of learning they achieve.

We already know that relationships have a huge bearing on the social, emotional and physical well-being of students.

The premise of our project is that the 'foundation stones' of relationships are values, and for relationships to be meaningful and mutually-beneficial they should be grounded in positive values. With this in mind, teachers across our cluster are investigating different strategies for incorporating activities into their programs which explicitly highlight values. Students across the cluster have been engaged in dialogue and reflection about what values look like, sound like and feel like. In this way we can reach a common understanding of how values translate into behaviour and agree on a common set to live, work and play by.

We believe that if we can establish commonly understood and enacted values, that interactions and relationships at school will be improved and that ultimately this will be reflected in improved academic performance for students.

As you would be aware from media coverage, the Australian government, through an initial research study, has identified 9 values for Australian schooling.

These are: **Care and Compassion, Doing your best, Fair Go, Freedom, Honesty and Trustworthiness, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility and Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion.**

Our project is investigating the six pro-social values which are **Care and Compassion, Fair Go, Honesty and Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility and Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion.**

In the extract from our charter below, you will notice that students at Croydon Hills have independently identified a very similar set of values which they believe should underpin their way in which they are treated by other students and staff.

Around four years ago our school community shared in the process of identifying the values – **Respect, Integrity, Trust, Optimism, Passion** - that we felt important to our environment. These form part of the philosophy upon which our Charter is based. They are reflected in our codes of Conduct within the Charter.

Staff are trialling activities with their classes that will further develop "dialogue" between their students. Values will be reflected throughout their units of work in 2006. The school is hopeful that this will be embedded in every aspect of our school.

Jan Bates
Assistant Principal (Student Welfare)