

Work Ethic

Introduction to the Work Ethic Standards

Hardin County Schools' faculty and staff are committed to producing an emerging workforce prepared to face the challenges of a global marketplace. To assist with this goal, work ethic standards are embedded in the expectations of our students. In addition, high school seniors can elect to participate in the Work Ethic Certification Program. As a participant, they must demonstrate proficiency in the work ethic standards in order to earn the certification. The certificate will serve as validation that students possessing this credential have successfully displayed strong work habits fostering success in higher education and the workplace.

All schools promote high expectations of our students which includes the components of the work ethic standards. These standards raise awareness of solid work ethic practices and encourage students to develop personal habits in these areas. During the month of March, we encourage our staff to bring additional focus to work ethic and how the work ethic we expect at school is directly connected to practices that lead to success in life.

HOW ADULTS CAN SUPPORT TEACHING WORK ETHIC

Standard #1: Attendance and Tardiness

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Whenever possible, plan doctor and dentist appointments outside the school day.
- Schedule family vacations so they do not conflict with the school calendar.
- Talk with your child about the importance of regular attendance in your job.
- Parents model excellent attendance in their workplace.
- Celebrate at home the accomplishments of your student's attendance.
- Notify school any time the student will be absent.
- Provide your child with some type of alarm clock and demonstrate how to use it.
- Set and maintain consistent bed times that allow for proper amounts of sleep.
- Make sure that your child has everything needed for school ready the night before
 - This could include laying out school clothes, as well as organizing homework and book bag.
- Talk to children about the correlation between attendance and success in school and in the workforce.
- Remind your child frequently of the importance of regular school attendance.
- Establish family guidelines on acceptable reasons for absence that are consistent with your school's policies.
- If you work outside the home, talk with your child about acceptable reasons for absence established by your employer.
- If your child must miss school for an acceptable reason, enforce that school work is made up in a timely manner.

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Provide an inviting and safe classroom climate where children want to come and learn.
- Monitor school attendance daily and report the percentage of students present to the staff and students.
- Teachers can help parents reinforce the importance of regular attendance with students.
- Communicate to parents the correlation between attendance and success in school and in the workforce.
- Develop intervention strategies for students with poor attendance.
- Recognize students who have no excused or unexcused absences/ tardies each quarter or at the end of the school year.
- Send quarterly reminders of upcoming days when school is not in session to parents.
- Establish and consistently enforce a district's policy on tardiness.

Standard #2: Personal Responsibility and Accountability

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Read the school's student handbook with your child and talk about the school's guidelines for behavior.
- Be consistent with your expectations of your child's behavior.
- Discuss taking responsibility for own actions on a consistent basis with your child.
- Be supportive of teachers and of classroom guidelines.
- Maintain regular communication with classroom teachers by using e-mails, voicemail, letters, etc.
- Communicate with your child about their discipline and behavior on a regular basis.

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Develop and implement a school-wide behavior management program with clear expectations and guidelines for desirable behavior
- Implement a school-wide program to recognize students who consistently demonstrate appropriate behavior
- Regularly communicate with individual parents about appropriate and inappropriate behavior of your students and possible solutions/suggestions
- Send home consistent positive feedback on good behavior
- Implement school-wide programs for regular communication with parents via agenda books, student planners, web pages, etc.
- Be sure to emphasize times where appropriate on taking responsibility for own actions within the school day.

Standard #3: Academic Performance

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Provide a regular time and place at home for your child to do homework uninterrupted by distractions
- Make homework and academic tasks a family priority
- Communicate a positive attitude toward school and homework
- Communicate clearly to your child that you value school and academics
- Help your child understand the relationship between good academic performance and success at the next level of school
- Attend parent/teacher conferences and keep close/consistent communication with your child's teacher
- Join your school's parent/teacher association and regularly attend meetings and events
- Encourage your child to take on challenging class work and assignments

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Teach students a process for keeping track of school work and homework assignments
- Provide extra materials and resources that help parents support learning in areas where their student may struggle
- Determine several methods of communicating with parents and use them consistently
- Emphasize the relationship between good academic performance and success at the next level
- Develop a peer support or homework buddy system in your classroom

Standard #4: Work Habits and Persistence

What parents can do to support development of this standard...

- Talk with your child about the importance of a strong study skills and work ethic in a variety of settings including home, school, and other organizations
- Model a strong work ethic, keeping your work honoring commitments, and always doing your best
- Provide opportunities to develop a strong work ethic at home through chores and other responsibilities
- Talk with the child about projects they are involved with at school or elsewhere and reinforce good work habits
- Recognize and celebrate when chores and projects are completed in a timely manner

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard...

- Talk with your students about the importance of a strong study skills and work ethic
- Provide a variety of settings where students learn to work together and complete tasks
- Teach your students how to manage their time when completing long-term assignments
- Provide opportunities for your students to engage with people that have different ideas and views
- Develop a recognition program for students displaying a strong work ethic in the classroom and throughout the school setting

Standard #5: Punctuality, Preparedness, and Organization

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Make sure your child has all necessary school supplies and help your child learn ways to organize and manage these supplies
- Set aside a place at home to keep supplies and school materials
- Encourage you child to organize everything needed for the next school day the evening before
- Checklists can help your child self-manage tasks
- Set positive examples at home by being prepared and punctual

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Teach organization and time management skills
- Remind, or post on the bulletin board, what students need to do to be prepared for the next day
- Periodically update material and supply lists for students and parents
- Involve parents when you see signs of poor organizational skills that are causing difficulty for individual students
- Establish and maintain classroom procedures for handing in homework and assignments
- Set positive examples for students in your classroom by being prepared and punctual
- Build time into your classroom routine for organization of materials
- Communicate clearly to parents and students what it means to be prepared for class
- Provide organizational tools to assist students in keeping tasks in line (i.e., planner, calendar). Model the use of these tools with the students.

Standard #6: Respect Interactions/Communication

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Demonstrate positive ways to show respect for others as a model for students
- Talk with your child about appropriate behavior in a variety of settings (model and reinforce this behavior at home)
- Require family members to show respect for each other
- Discuss with your child the different ways that one can show respect (through actions, words, respect for time, etc.)
- Always show respect toward your family members and avoid sarcasm
- Reinforce suggestions/comments sent home by any teacher – teach your child how to apply the teacher’s suggestions
- Model proper etiquette when interacting with others: This includes behaviors such as introductions, calling people by appropriate name and title, shaking the hand of someone they are introduced to, and looking at the people to whom they are speaking.

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Teach basic etiquette as part of the practical living/vocational studies curriculum
- Always show respect and avoid sarcasm
- Model and reinforce this behavior in the classroom
- Develop a classroom environment based on respect towards others
- Find ways to coach students in these behaviors
- Help students learn how to behave respectfully when adults or visitors are in the classroom
- Prepare students in advance for proper behavior in certain situations (i.e., field trips, hallways, cafeteria, etc.)
- Teach sensitivity to others' ideas, especially in group settings
- Model proper etiquette when interacting with others: This includes behaviors such as introductions, calling people by appropriate name and title, shaking the hand of someone they are introduced to, and looking at the people to whom they are speaking.

Standard #7: Cooperation and Teamwork

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Demonstrate cooperation and teamwork at home and in outside environments
- Be intentional about creating opportunities for family cooperation
- Provide opportunities for sharing and teamwork
- Reward unsolicited acts of cooperation

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Teach the different roles and responsibilities in work groups
- Provide numerous opportunities for students to cooperate (through problem based or project based learning).
- Recognize acts of cooperation and good teamwork
- Model cooperative behavior to students
- Utilize curriculum materials displaying models for cooperation and teamwork
- Work with students to explore the world outside of the classroom
- Incorporate team building activities into your class curriculum
- Give tasks to each person in a group activity, so that everyone has an active role

Standard #8: Community Service

What parents can do to support development of this standard:

- Provide your child with a list of regular chores that can be done to help out around the house

- Model this behavior by participating in community service projects and talking with your child about the experience
- Help your child to develop an awareness of community needs
- Encourage and facilitate opportunities for your child to volunteer
- Discuss with your child the rewards of being involved with the wider community
- Recognize and point out examples of other individual and group efforts that have benefited the community

What schools and teachers can do to support development of this standard:

- Sponsor at least two community service activities or service learning projects per semester in which students can participate
- Make a list of community service opportunities and agencies that sponsor these activities available to students and parents
- Have a bulletin board near the office or announce service opportunities in the daily bulletin or over the loud speaker
- Co-sponsor community service activities with community organizations (i.e., Rotary Club, Lions' Club, Kiwanis Club, YMCA, Scouts, 4-H, church groups, etc.)
- Emphasize community needs within the curriculum of the classroom

REFERENCES

Hill, Roger B. Ph.D. University of Georgia: *Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills Curriculum Materials*, 2004.

Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce: *WorkEthic K-8 Program*, 2004.

State of Indiana. Department of Workforce Development: *WorkEthic Certification*, 2006

WEB SITES

www.in.gov/dwd/partners/workethic_bpm.html

www.doe.state.in.us/we_workethic_general_audience-august-06.pdf

www.coe.uga.edu/workethic

www.coe.uga.edu/workethic/on_linelesson.htm

www.coe.uga.edu/workethic/researchsub.html