The Board of Education Criteria for Character Education

Character education promotes expanded opportunities to learn, emphasizing civic virtues and community-mindedness. Section 22.1-208.01 A. of the *Code of Virginia* requires each local school board to establish a character education program and Section 22.1-208.01 B. requires the Board of Education to establish criteria for character education programs consistent with the *Code*. On February 24, 2000, the Board of Education approved the following criteria for character education programs, which were developed by a committee of parents, teachers and administrators. The 2012 General Assembly, through HB 1179, amended Section 22.1-208.01 of the *Code* to expand character education programming to include summer youth development academies.

At its meeting on July 26, 2012, the Board of Education amended the character education criteria to include provisions of this legislation and also to incorporate middle schools.

The Board of Education has established the following criteria for character education programs.

Each local character education program shall:

1. be developed in cooperation with the students, parents, and the community-at-large;

2. specify those character traits to be taught, selecting from those which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups and meeting the requirements of Section 22.1-208.01 of the *Code*;

3. avoid indoctrination of any religious or political belief;

4. be implemented at the elementary, middle, and high school levels;

5. complement the state Standards of Learning, be interwoven into existing curriculum or established as a separate program, and taught primarily by example, illustration, and participation;

6. provide for relevant professional development and adequate resources;

7. include a method for program evaluation; and

8. be held during the regular school year and/or summer to include programming in a youth development academy, or both, and to be sustained and carried out throughout the year.