Character Development

Moral and/or character development occurs both affectively and cognitively. For purposes of providing a focus for a school that strives to enhance character development. the following attributes of a morally mature person as defined by the ASCD Panel on Moral Education are offered as targets for a school that wishes to facilitate a program of character development:

The morally mature person habitually:

A.   Respects human dignity, which includes
    1   showing regard for the worth and rights of all persons.
    2.   avoiding deception and dishonesty,
    3.   promoting human equality,
    4.   respecting freedom of conscience,
    5.   working with people of different views, and
    6.   refraining from prejudiced actions.

B.   Cares about the welfare of others, which includes
    1.   recognizing interdependence among people,
    2.   caring for one's country,
    3.   seeking social justice,
    4.   taking pleasure in helping others, and
    5.   working to help others reach moral maturity.

C.   Integrates individual interests and social responsibilities, which includes
    1.   becoming involved in community life,
    2.   doing a fair share of community work,
    3.   displaying self-regarding and other-regarding moral virtues--self- control, diligence, fairness, kindness, honesty, civility--in every day life,
    4.   fulfilling commitments, and
    5.   developing self-esteem through relationships with others.

D.   Demonstrates integrity, which includes
    1.   practicing diligence,
    2.   taking stands for moral principles,
    3.   displaying moral courage,
    4.   knowing when to compromise and when to confront, and
    5.   accepting responsibility for one's choices.

E. Reflects on moral choices, which includes
    1. recognizing the moral issues involved in a situation.
    2. applying moral principles when making moral judgements.
    3. thinking about the consequences of decisions, and
    4. seeking to be informed about important moral issues in society and the world.

F. Seeks peaceful resolution of conflict, which includes
    1. striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts.
    2. avoiding physical and verbal aggression.
    3. listening carefully to others, and
    4. encouraging others to communicate.