

Oxford Community Schools

Portrait of a Graduate

Competencies

Characteristics

Balanced

Students will:

- ... use positive thinking to self-motivate.
- ... develop resiliency and fortitude when meeting challenges.
- ... learn to balance their needs with the needs of others through service to the community.
- ... investigate personal strengths and career interests to set post-secondary goals.
- ... utilize effective time-management strategies in order to meet deadlines.

Communicator

Students will:

- ... communicate information and ideas effectively to intended audiences using a variety of speaking and writing techniques.
- ... actively listen and effectively communicate to manage conflict and work collaboratively.
- ... give and receive meaningful feedback through thoughtful communication.

Inquirer

Students will:

- ... read a variety of sources for information and enjoyment.
- ... collect and analyze data to identify problems and solutions and make informed decisions.
- ... use creative thinking to generate new ideas and inquiries.
- ... seek a range of perspectives from multiple and varied sources.
- ... use inquiry to generate predictions and hypotheses.

Principled

Students will:

- ... take responsibility for their own actions and behaviors.
- ... make fair and equitable decisions to serve themselves and others.
- ... use technology responsibly and contribute positively to digital environments.
- ... understand, respect and implement intellectual property rights.

Thinker

Students will:

- ... ethically obtain and use information from a variety of relevant and appropriate sources and media.
- ... read critically for comprehension.
- ... connect conceptual understandings across multiple disciplines.
- ... apply existing knowledge to thoughtfully generate new ideas, products or processes.

Reflective

Students will:

- ... process their learning through reflection.
- ... revise their understanding based on new information and evidence.
- ... evaluate and learn from their mistakes.
- ... develop new skills, techniques and strategies for learning through reflection.

Knowledgeable

Students will:

- ... use appropriate strategies for organizing complex information to utilize across a range of disciplines.
- ... gather, evaluate and organize relevant information to formulate an argument.
- ... seek, interpret, judge and synthesize information and use this knowledge to inform others.
- ... use critical thinking to analyze and solve problems.

Caring

Students will:

- ... demonstrate empathy through understanding and open-mindedness.
- ... contribute positively to the lives of others through a commitment to service and community.
- ... value the rights, privileges and responsibilities associated with citizenship.
- ... work effectively with peers and help all to succeed.

Open-Minded

Students will:

- ... engage as responsible citizens in a global society.
- ... develop multiple opposing and complementary arguments that propose a variety of solutions.
- ... consider ethical, cultural and environmental implications and recognize biases.
- ... negotiate ideas with peers to build consensus.

Risk-Taker

Students will:

- ... demonstrate persistence and perseverance in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.
- ... apply skills, knowledge and experiences to undertake new situations.
- ... self-advocate respectfully for individual rights and needs.
- ... exercise effective leadership practices and undertake a variety of roles within groups.
- ... create innovative solutions to authentic problems.

Conditions for Learning

To support our students in acquiring the characteristics and competencies within our Portrait of a Graduate, it is necessary for Oxford Community Schools to cultivate the proper conditions in our learning spaces, culture, curriculum, pedagogy, technology integration, and community.

Learning Space

Learning space refers to the physical setting in which teaching and learning occurs. To achieve a culture where deeper, authentic, and more engaged learning takes place, best practice instructional methods must be supported by our learning spaces. Therefore, our learning spaces must exhibit the following characteristics:

- be safe and secure (socially, emotionally and physically)
- be clean
- be flexible enough to promote collaboration and meet the developmental needs of all students
- be accessible to all students, staff, and community

Culture

School culture refers to the way teachers, staff, parents, and students all work together around a common set of beliefs, values, and assumptions. A positive school culture promotes a student's ability to feel safe and supported so he or she can learn. To shape our working relationships with our stakeholders, Oxford Community Schools has established the following core beliefs about culture:

- Positive relationships and trust are essential to a culture that values all.
- Learning is maximized when learners utilize a growth mindset.
- Learning is best in a safe and supported environment that upholds our **district values** of **integrity, honesty, trust, accountability, collaboration, and commitment.**
- A positive culture is maintained through ongoing and honest reflection.

Curriculum

When a “Guaranteed and Viable” curriculum is established, all students have an equal opportunity to learn. “Guaranteed” indicates that each student has access to the same content, knowledge, and skills so all students have the same opportunity for success in school. “Viable” ensures that students have been allocated enough time to learn the guaranteed curriculum. In addition, essential or non-negotiables are established for student learning. Oxford Community Schools will establish a “Guaranteed and Viable” curriculum through the following practices:

- Utilizing a “backward design” process to develop district curriculum
- Collaborating with teachers to establish coherence in essential standards, skills, resources, assessments, and instructional methods
- Establishing a highly visible and written curriculum that guides classroom instruction and pacing
- Adjusting instructional strategies based on assessment data and reflection
- Agreeing to standardized performance criteria to establish proficiency on summative assessments
- Monitoring implementation of the written curriculum for consistency and quality

Pedagogy

Pedagogy refers to the act of teaching and how knowledge and skills are exchanged in the educational context; it is the dynamic relationship between teaching, learning and culture. The pedagogy adopted by teachers shapes their actions, judgments, and teaching strategies by taking into consideration theories of learning, student backgrounds and needs, and the interests of individual students. To encourage and support student achievement, Oxford Community Schools has established the following core beliefs about pedagogy:

- All students can learn through the use of thoughtful planning and intentional instructional strategies.
- Students are at the center of our research-based instruction that considers all of their unique, developmental needs.
- Teachers are facilitators of learning who consistently model thinking and inquiry.
- A balanced approach to assessment gives our students opportunities to share what they have learned and provides our teachers opportunities to check in on learning and adjust instruction as needed.

Technology Integration

Technology integration is the use of technology resources – computers, mobile devices like smart-phones and tablets, digital cameras, social media platforms and networks, software applications, the Internet, etc. – in daily classroom practices and in the management of a school. When technology integration is at its best, a child or a teacher doesn’t stop to think that he or she is using a technology tool, it is second nature. Successful technology integration exhibits the following characteristics:

- Usage is routine and transparent.
- Devices are accessible and readily available.
- Technology is used to support curricular goals, thereby, helping the students to effectively reach their potential.
- Professional learning is used to enhance teacher understanding and usage.
- Technology is used by teachers to supplement or extend learning.
- A dynamic infrastructure adequately supports the usage of devices.
- It is used responsibly by all users.

Community

When we work to leverage the unique characteristics, resources, strengths and expertise of our Oxford Community, we are able to respond more effectively to the needs of our students. Our community is our partner in education. We will seek to engage our community through the following actions:

- Engaging in two-way communication that includes disseminating and seeking feedback
- Actively seeking the engagement of the community in our schools
- Actively supporting the engagement of our students and staff in our community
- Implementing relevant learning opportunities for our stakeholders
- Encouraging volunteerism, donations, financial contributions, and work experiences

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Mission
To provide an education that challenges all students to achieve their maximum potential in academics, arts, and athletics and prepares them to succeed in a global society

Vision
To create a world-class education today to shape tomorrow's leaders



Oxford Community Schools
www.oxfordschools.org