

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 32

WHEREAS, the teaching of universal themes such as honesty and integrity benefits the community as a whole by accomplishing change in ways that strengthen, support, and reflect the local community's values; and

WHEREAS, having good character demonstrates understanding, caring, and acting upon core ethical values such as honesty, respect and responsibility and is an essential attribute of a successful individual; and

WHEREAS, schools that reach out to families and include them in character-building efforts greatly enhance their chances for success with students; and

WHEREAS, traits such as kindness and caring, respect and responsibility, fairness and honesty are critical to the overall health and safety of a school; and

WHEREAS, a school must be a caring community which motivates and challenges students to have good moral character and requires moral leadership from both staff and students; and

WHEREAS, polls have shown that 90% of those surveyed support the teaching of values, like responsibility, respect, courage, and caring in schools; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, CHARACTER*plus*, a statewide collaborative effort that reaches more than 600 schools, 25,000 teachers, and 300,000 students, and based on a grass-roots community project in the St. Louis region, was established in Missouri by parents, educators, and business leaders and is now our nation's largest community-wide response to the challenges of character education; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) Standard 6.5, a comprehensive intentional character education process helps schools create a positive climate for learning and promotes teacher and administrative responsibility; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the MSIP Standard 6.6, a comprehensive intentional character education process provides the strategy to promote and maintain orderliness in schools and creates a safe environment; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with MSIP Standard 6.6, the CHARACTER*plus* process provides an assessment tool that gathers data, provides comprehensive and comparative data reports, and furnishes consultation for analyzing and setting up a yearly plan to modify and improve programs and strategies; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with MSIP Standard 6.7, the CHARACTER*plus* process provides professional development for school character education teams and for the entire school staff as an integral part of the character education process; and

WHEREAS, the principles taught by the CHARACTER^{plus} process are consistent with "Goal 4" of the Show-Me Standards, as approved by the Missouri State Board of Education on January 18, 1996, which states, "Students in Missouri public schools will acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society"; and

WHEREAS, at least fourteen states have passed legislation requiring character education be taught in schools, while an additional fourteen states encourage the teaching of character education; and

WHEREAS, character education initiatives in Missouri have received support from the U.S. Department of Education in the form of federal grants to our schools to support local character education efforts as has the State of Missouri:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Second General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby challenge each school district in our state to develop a character education process that involves school, home, and community, and if it already has such a process in place, reevaluate such process in order to make certain the resources that best benefit the students of this state are being utilized; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education be instructed to copy this resolution and distribute one to each school district for distribution to its school board members.

Resolution

Copy