

New School Year Kicks off with CHARACTER*plus* Character Education and Bully Prevention Program

The West Platte School District will take new steps to integrate the CHARACTER*plus* Character Education and Bully Prevention Program throughout the school and community this year. Last year, the District explored the CHARACTER*plus* process, and this year its implementation ranks as priority number one on the District's to do list. The District has identified student safety (climate, culture, character education, and bully prevention) as a primary target for improvement this school year and beyond.

CHARACTER*plus* , a project of Cooperating School Districts of Kansas City, will serve to advance the cause of character education and sustain its impact on the lives of the students, families, and communities of West Platte by:

- designing, promoting, and facilitating processes and best practices;
- serving educators and enhancing their commitment to character education; and
- actively recruiting and developing community support.

CHARACTER*plus* will help West Platte build consensus about what values or character traits to teach and which programs to use. Using the CHARACTER*plus* process, West Platte will develop a character education curriculum and program that meets the needs of our students, parents, and community, including our approach to decreasing the instances of bullying in our schools.

Started in 1988 by a concerned group of educators, parents and business leaders who decided that something had to be done about the deterioration of basic values, CHARACTER*plus* now reaches more than 600 schools in over 100 districts, 25,000 teachers and more than 300,000 students throughout Missouri and Illinois.

Many schools that have implemented CHARACTER*plus* have seen dramatic results, including improved academic achievement and attendance, along with significant decreases in office referrals for behavior issues and incidences of school violence. Thanks to the leadership of CHARACTER*plus*, Missouri boasts more National Schools of Character than any other state in the nation.

Parents and the community should expect to receive regular information throughout this year in regard to CHARACTER*plus*. Be sure to talk to your children, neighbors, and friends about the Character Word of the Month and the information being shared through this program.

Want to be involved? West Platte is currently inviting businesses and organizations to endorse a CHARACTER*plus* word of the month. There is no cost or obligation to support this program, other than the commitment to helping promote character education at West Platte and throughout our community. Please contact Stacy Shipman, Community Manger, for details. shipmans@wpsd.net. Additional information may be accessed at www.characterplus.org.

Expect the Best,

Jerrod Wheeler,
Superintendent of Schools