

# JS - Student Aspirations

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## STUDENT ASPIRATIONS

The Board of Directors believes that among the most fundamental concerns to be addressed by the schools -- in concert with parents and the community at large -- is providing a supportive environment in which students may develop appropriate personal aspirations. Each student deserves to feel a sense of self-worth and belonging.

The Board believes that student aspirations will be affected positively by focusing on the effectiveness of several aspects of the school program and environment. First, the schools must keep as a high priority the development of a nurturing school climate. Our schools should convey the message that the students are cared for and appreciated. The most important factor in a healthy school climate is the individual contacts between adults and students. The Board expects all school personnel to demonstrate a commitment to providing a supportive and caring school climate. The superintendent shall ensure that this policy is reviewed with all school personnel at the beginning of each school year.

Second, the relationship between the home and the school must be strengthened through frequent contact and sharing of information. This communication should extend beyond the periodic reports to the parents regarding academic achievement and include such areas as homework, social adjustment, and out-of-school enrichment activities. The school and the home should be seen as closing working partners in the process of nurturing children and preparing them for their lives beyond home and school.

Third, the guidance programs in elementary and secondary schools must facilitate the student's adjustment to the school environment and help prepare the student for career and educational choices they will face in the future. The school counselor can play an important role in ensuring that the experience of education is basically positive by working with individuals and groups on human relationships, choice making, and understanding the role of education in one's life.

The Board supports the efforts of the University Aspirations Project and the Maine Aspirations Compact in providing information, both research oriented and practical, that is designed to address student aspirations. Moreover, the Board supports the goals, shared by the aspirations programs, of raising the personal expectations of students; improving the academic performance of students; and expanding the educational, career, and personal choices of students.

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