



# Alternatives in Action High School

PREPARING YOUTH FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND COMMUNITY

## **Habits of the Mind, Habits of the Heart, and Habits of the Hand**

### **Thinking: Habits of the Mind**

- *Perspective*: Youth will understand multiple perspectives and be able to seek out, critique, defend, and value differing points of view.
- *Supposition*: Youth put forward a point of view based on current understanding of the world. Youth are aware of the assumptions and limitations of their own perspectives.
- *Connection*: Youth will identify the connections between their concepts, thoughts, feelings and actions, constructing their own "big picture" understanding of the world. Youth will understand how their course content has meaning in the real world.
- *Meta-cognition*: Youth will understand not just what they learn, but how and why they learn, and the growth in their learning abilities over time.

### **Feeling: Habits of the Heart**

- *Responsibility*: Refers to the expectation that each member will hold themselves and others personally accountable for the achievement of their goals, the success of their projects, and the success of their education. At Alternatives in Action High School this responsibility is described in the often repeated idea that "there is no it or they, there is only us." Success or failure is in each individual or group's hands, not the responsibility of some other youth or coach.
- *Relationships*: Refers to the primacy of interpersonal exchanges, expectations, accountability, and respect. In order to do great work in the world, we must know and be known by other people.
- *Respect*: For one another in our work and our actions.
- *Rigor*: Refers to the expectation that youth and adult members of our high school will apply strenuous effort towards the attainment of the personal and community goals embodied in their endeavors in school. Learning for each member should be a stretch and goals should always be set beyond the realm of comfortable attainment.
- *Risk*: refers to the real chance of failure or loss as a result of practicing the other "R's." It is a firm principle that without risking failure, learners (which include both youth and adults) cannot truly become daring leaders.
- *Realness*: Refers to the expectation that both the youth and adults of Alternatives in Action High School are their authentic selves; and that they commit themselves to genuine work in the community.

## **Acting: Habits of the Hand**

- *Critical reading*: ELA Reading Comprehension Standard 2.8 - Evaluate the credibility of an author's argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationship between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., in professional journals, editorials, political speeches, primary source material).
- *Persuasive Writing*: ELA Writing Application Standard 2.4 - Write persuasive compositions which: a) Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained and logical fashion, b) Use specific rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., appeal to logic through reasoning; appeal to emotion or ethical belief; relate a personal anecdote, case study, or analogy), c) Clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinions, quotations, and expressions of commonly accepted beliefs and logical reasoning, and d) Address readers' concerns, counterclaims, biases, and expectations.
- *Persuasive Speaking*: ELA Speaking Application Standard 2.5 - Deliver persuasive arguments (including evaluation and analysis of problems and solutions and causes and effects) which: a) Structure ideas and arguments in a coherent, logical fashion, b) Use rhetorical devices to support assertions (e.g., by appeal to logic through reasoning; by appeal to emotion or ethical belief; by use of personal anecdote, case study, or analogy), c) Clarify and defend positions with precise and relevant evidence, including facts, expert opinions, quotations, expressions of commonly accepted beliefs, and logical reasoning, and d) Anticipate and address the listener's concerns and counterarguments.