

# **River Dell Regional School District Peer Leadership Curriculum**

**2017**



**Mr. Patrick Fletcher  
Superintendent  
River Dell Regional Schools**

**Ms. Lorraine Brooks  
Principal  
River Dell High School**

**Mr. Richard Freedman  
Principal  
River Dell Middle School**

**Mr. William Feldman  
Assistant Superintendent of  
Curriculum and Instruction**

**Curriculum Committee  
Maureen Kiel  
Marissa Vantol**

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## INTRODUCTION

Health Literacy, as defined by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, is defined as “an integral component of 21st century education. Healthy students are learners who are ‘knowledgeable, productive, and emotionally and physically healthy, motivated, civically engaged, prepared for work, economically self-sufficient, and ready for the world beyond their own borders.’” This standard reflects our Mission Statement.

The Peer Leadership Curriculum promotes and encourages positive attitudes related to the issues of school climate, 21st century learning, independent thinking, decision making, and community service. The Freshman class learn about the importance of building a positive school environment, the impact of their digital footprint, and character building through planned activities and community service.

The Peer Leadership Curriculum is designed to make an impact on first year high school students. Implemented by junior and senior peer leaders the curriculum will focus on creating positive attitudes toward school life and providing realistic perceptions of our ever-changing digital world.

Students will be randomly assigned to a peer group that meets every Thursday at lunch from September to May. Led by three peer leaders, each group will have the opportunity to meet classmates outside of their friend group or team/club experience. A sense of team building while addressing the stresses and challenges of high school life is the goal of each group.

Finally, freshmen students will benefit from experiences outside the classroom as each group will participate in a service project within the Oradell and River Edge communities or address an unforeseen state or national need, which will solidify membership in our River Dell community and/or our community at large.

## PEER LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM

### UNIT ONE: BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE (8 Weeks)

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#### STATE STANDARDS

- 2.1.8.E.1** Social and emotional development impacts all components of wellness.
- 2.1.8.E.2** Respect and acceptance for individuals regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, religion, and/or culture provide a foundation for the prevention and resolution of conflict.
- 2.1.8.E.3 &4** Stress management skills impact an individual's ability to cope with different types of emotional situations.
- 2.5.12.C.1&2** Self-initiated behaviors that promote personal and group success include safe practices, adherence to rules, etiquette, cooperation, teamwork, ethical behavior, and positive social interaction.
- 2.5.12.C.3** Cultural practices regarding physical activity, sports, and games reflect a microcosm of society.
- 2.5.12.B.3** Individual and team execution in games, sports, and other activity situations is based on the interaction of tactical use of strategies, positive mental attitudes, competent skill levels, and team work.
- 2.2.12.C.1** Individual and/or group pressure to be successful in competitive activities can result in a positive or negative impact.
- 2.2.12.C.2&3** Core ethical values impact behaviors that influence the health and safety of people everywhere.
- CRP1** Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
- CRP4** Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
- CRP5** Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
- CRP6** Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
- CRP7** Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
- CRP8** Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- CRP9** Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
- CRP12** Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

#### BIG IDEAS/COMMON THREADS

Feeling isolated, unsafe, or unwelcome in a school environment has a negative impact on learning.

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Character education contributes to a positive school environment and the community.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

- Collaborative Poster
- Student Responses/Letter Writing
- Peer Leader Reflections
- Advisor Observations

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- What is character ed?
- What is humility?
- What is grit?
- How does one develop grit?
- Why is it important to feel connected to your learning environment?
- How does being a part of a Peer Group help build school spirit?
- Why is it important to be part of a community?
- How does the blending of cultures help to build a community?
- How do stress and anxiety impact learning?
- What stressors can one identify that impact learning and being part of the community?

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to...

- define character ed.
- define humility and understand how it affects a group.
- feel connected to one's learning environment.
- receive positive reinforcement and acknowledgment from their peers and peer leaders.
- acknowledge that they belong to the Freshman class, River Dell and the River Dell Community.
- have the opportunity to feel a sense of pride in their peer group participation and the River Dell Community.
- identify stressors and their impact on learning.
- develop coping techniques to deal with particular stressors.
- recognize the differences between stress and anxiety.
- identify situations that produce anxiety.
- locate resources available in the school to reduce anxiety.
- analyze how personal assets and resiliency support healthy social and emotional health.
- analyze factors that influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and employ techniques to enhance individual and team effectiveness.
- analyze the impact of competition on personal character development.
- judge how individual or group adherence, or lack of adherence, to core ethical values impacts the local, state, national, and worldwide community.

## **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Field Day
- Decorating the Hall
- Peer Group Challenges
- Identifying Stress Activity

## **RESOURCES**

- Online databases and web-resources.
- Koehler, Michael D& Karen E. Royer. *First Class Character Education Activities Program*. "Ready to Use Lessons & Activities for Grades 7-12."
- Toner, Patricia Rizzo. *Just for the Health of It! Health Curriculum Activities Library*. Stress Management and Self-Esteem Activities. The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993.

# PEER LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM

## UNIT TWO: 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY LEARNING (10 weeks)

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### STATE STANDARDS

- 9.1.8.D.3** Use effective communication skills in face-to-face and online interactions with peers and adults from home and from diverse cultures.
- 8.1.8.A.5** Select and use appropriate tools and digital resources to accomplish a variety of tasks and to solve problems.
- 9.1.12.C.4** Demonstrate leadership and collaborative skills when participating in online communities and structured learning experiences.
- 9.1.12.A.1** Apply critical thinking and problem solving strategies during structured learning experiences
- 9.1.12.E.1** Create messages for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender, and age diversity, using various digital media outlets.
- 2.1.12.E.1&2** Respect and acceptance for individuals regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, religion, and/or culture provide a foundation for the prevention and resolution of conflict.
- 2.1.12.E.4** Stress management skills impact an individual's ability to cope with different types of emotional situations.
- 2.2.12.B.1&2** Developing and implementing an effective personal wellness plan contributes to healthy decision-making over one's lifetime.
- 2.2.12.D.1** Effective advocacy for a health of social issue is based on communicating accurate and reliable research about the issue and developing and implementing strategies to motivate others to address the issue.
- 2.4.12.A.6** Technology impacts the capacity of individuals to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships.
- 9.2.8.B.7** Evaluate the impact of online activities and social media on employee decisions.
- CRP11** Use technology to enhance productivity.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.9**  
Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

### BIG IDEAS/COMMON THREADS

Social Media and the internet have changed the way that we communicate and gather information. Inappropriate use and lack of knowledge regarding the risks related to social media can result in far reaching negative consequences on the individual user.

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

One's digital footprint has far reaching consequences therefore, appropriate use in constructive activities assures that a use of social media will not have a negative impact in the future.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

- Teacher Feedback
- Peer Leader Reflections
- Constructive Planned Activities using Social Media
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*- Activities

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- What are the different types of social media that teenagers use?
- What are the differences between each type of social media?
- What types of posts are positive/ or considered appropriate? What types of posts are negative/inappropriate?
- What is a digital footprint?
- What is cyberbullying?
- In what ways can one communicate effectively?
- How can one create a social media post that communicates a message effectively?
- How can a message be posted in a manner that is informational, rather than offensive or emotional?
- How does one avoid creating a digital personality based on your internet history?
- How can sharing information on social media be dangerous?

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to...

- identify between different types of social media and their purpose.
- decipher between negative and positive posts.
- discuss their individual digital footprint.
- understand the ramifications of cyberbullying as the perpetrator and the victim
- critique various examples of communication, discerning which methods are most effective.
- understand how outside influences shape who you are.
- analyze text which is designed to generate emotional responses versus informational responses.
- work as a contributing member of a team to achieve specific outcomes.
- show respect for divergent points of view by acknowledging them.
- recognize how digital media impacts a person's perspective.
- Predict the short- and long-term consequences of unresolved conflicts.
- show the self-discipline to do your best, reach a goal or perform an assigned task with good work quality.
- apply technology to enhance meaning, communication and productivity.
- understand the current dangers inherent to sharing information in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Analyze how social media may positively or negatively impact the incidence of conflict or crisis.



- Predict the short and long-term consequences of good and poor decision-making on oneself, friends, family and others.
- Analyze how various technologies impact the development and maintenance of local and global interpersonal relationships.

## **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Online Surveys
- Lessons/Discussions within Peer Leadership Groups regarding Social Media
- *TEDTalks* or Public Service Announcements
- Speaker
- Time capsule to my future self

## **RESOURCES**

- Online databases and web-resources.
- *The New Jersey State Bar Foundation. Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Guide.*
- Covey, Franklin. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens.
- Whitney Cohen- Social Media/Bullying Consultant. Teaneck Police Department.

**PEER LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM**  
**UNIT THREE: HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/BULLYING**  
**DATING ABUSE/DATING VIOLENCE (8 weeks)**

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**STATE STANDARDS**

- 2.2.12.A.1** Effective interpersonal communication encompasses respect and acceptance for individuals regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, religion, and/or culture.
- 2.2.12.A.2** Effective communication is the basis for strengthening interpersonal interactions and relationships and resolving conflicts.
- 2.2.12.A.3** Technology increases the capacity of individuals to communicate in multiple and diverse ways.
- 2.4.12.A.1-5** Individuals in healthy relationships share thoughts and feelings, have fun together, develop mutual respect, share responsibilities and goals, and provide emotional security for one another.
- 2.3.12.B.4** There are immediate and long-term consequences of risky behavior associated with substance abuse.
- 2.4.12.B.1** The decision to become sexually active affects one's physical, social, and emotional health.

**BIG IDEAS/COMMON THREADS**

Dating Violence among teenagers is problematic; mainly due to not fully understanding the nuances of human interaction. Teenagers do not recognize the warning signs or understand the impact it has on development.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS**

Identifying warning signs in abusive relationships will help teens navigate future relationships and know when to assert their right to be respected.

**ASSESSMENTS**

- Role Play
- Student Responses
- Peer Leader Evaluations
- Surveys
- Peer Group Reflections
- Speaker Reflection
- Dating Violence Case Studies

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- How does the media contribute to harassment, intimidation, and bullying issues?
- What constitutes a healthy relationship?
- What are the signs of an abusive relationship?
- What is a safety plan?

- What do you do when a friend is in an abusive relationship?
- What are the different types of abuse?
- Why do people stay in abusive relationships?
- How do you prepare students to discuss racism, prejudice, and stereotypes?
- How do you develop strategies to diffuse tension?  
What is the impact of dating violence on adolescence?

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- employ skills for communicating with family, peers, and people from other backgrounds and cultures that may impact the health of oneself and others.
- demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts.
- analyze the impact of technology on interpersonal communication in supporting wellness and a healthy lifestyle.
- predict the possible long-term effects of sexual behavior on future education, career plans, and the various dimensions of wellness.
- Discern the type of abuse (i.e. Physical, emotional, sexual, financial) portrayed in skits and in case studies.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Student Generated Skits
- Case Study Research
- Student Inventories
- Self-Assessments
- Analysis and Creation of Public Service Announcements
- Illustrating a Healthy Relationship
- Brainstorming Activities

## RESOURCES

- Online databases and web-resources.
- RDHS-*Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying Policy*- File Code:51312
- Koehler, Michael D& Karen E. Royer. *First Class Character Education Activities Program*. "Ready to Use Lessons & Activities for Grades 7-12."
- Moles, Kerry. *The Teen Relationship Workbook: for professionals helping teens to develop healthy relationships and prevent domestic violence*. Wellness Reproductions & Publishers Inc., 2001.
- Walters, Elizabeth & Christopher Floor. *One by One: Teens Explore Date Rape*. HiTops, Inc./Princeton Center for Leadership Training, 2005.
- Strauss, Susan & Pamela Espeland. *Sexual Harassment and Teens: A Program for Positive Change*. Free Spirit Publishing, 1992.
- Toner, Patricia Rizzo. *Just for the Health of It! Health Curriculum Activities Library*. Relationships and Communications Activities. The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993.
- *Teaching Tolerance: A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center*. Responding to Hate and Bias at School. Teaching Tolerance, 2017.

- Teaching Tolerance: A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Let's Talk! Discussing Race, Racism and Other Difficult Topics with Students. Teaching Tolerance, 2017.
- Teen Prevention Education Program: Outreach Workshop Guidebook. Princeton HiTOPS, Inc. and the Princeton Center for Leadership Training, 2012
- New Jersey State Bar Foundation. *Teasing & Bullying Bully -Busting Curriculum: Six Essential Lessons for Grades K-12*. New Jersey State Bar Association 2007

# PEER LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM

## UNIT FOUR: COMMUNITY SERVICE (6 weeks)

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### STATE STANDARDS

- 2.2.12.C.12** Core ethical values impact behaviors that influence the health and safety of people everywhere.
- 9.1.8.C.1** Determine an individual's responsibility for personal actions and contributions to group activities.
- 9.1.8.C.3** Model leadership skills during classroom activities.
- 9.1.8.D.3** Use effective communication skills in interactions with peers and adults from different cultures.
- 9.1.8.C.2** Demonstrate the use of compromise, consensus, and community building strategies for carrying out different tasks, assignments, and projects.
- 9.1.8.D.3** Use effective communication skills face to face and online interactions with peers and adults from home and from diverse cultures.
- 9.1.8.F.1** Demonstrate how productivity and accountability contribute to realizing individual or group goals within or outside the classroom.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7**

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.10**

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6**

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

### BIG IDEAS/COMMON THREADS

Community service affords students the opportunity to explore and contribute to their world through selfless-acts.

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Community Service is an invaluable experience for students to learn how their individual contributions help the greater good.

### ASSESSMENTS

- Voluntary Community Service Projects
- Outreach
- Peer Leader Reflections
- *Neviance* Resume Building
- Community Service Inventory Survey

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- What are ethics?
- How do our ethical values impact our behavior?
- How can one contribute to a common goal?
- How does one model leadership and make it contagious?
- How does being involved change one's attitude towards the community?
- How can one enhance communication skills so that everyone feels included?
- What are effective communication skills?
- How can one use compromise, consensus, and community building strategies to complete a task?
- Where is there a need in my community for improvement?
- How does productivity and accounting contribute to individual or group goals?
- Why is Community Service important?
- How is my school a community?
- How can I improve my community?
- How has my involvement in community service changed through the year?
- How has community service affected my value systems?

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to...

- define ethics and the role ethical behavior plays in the community.
- evaluate how ethical behavior impacts one's community.
- brainstorm ideas in pursuit of a common goal.
- generate enthusiasm among group members for a goal oriented project.
- reflect on one's accomplishment and how it has helped strengthen the common goal.
- express concerns and ideas as well as listen to those of others to enhance togetherness.
- work together for a common goal.
- identify shortcomings and the need for improvement within the community.
- recognize that when one member of a team does not do their part, the whole group is affected.
- reflect on how community service improves society.
- identify microcosms in society.
- explore ways to improve one's community.
- analyze the benefits of a community service goal within the peer group.
- reflect how one's value system has changed over the course of a community service project.
- judge how individual or group adherence, or lack of adherence, to core ethical values impacts the local, state, national, and worldwide community.

## **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Participation in Club Day
- Volunteer Community Service Reflection

- Outreach
- Challenges/Contests

## **RESOURCES**

- Community Resources in need of Community Service
- Online databases and web-resources.