

## Chapter 120. Other Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

### Subchapter A. Character Traits

#### §120.1. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Positive Character Traits.

- (a) The provisions of this subchapter shall be implemented by school districts beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.
- (b) School districts and open-enrollment charter schools are required to provide instruction in the essential knowledge and skills for positive character traits outlined in this subchapter at least once in the following grade bands: Kindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12.
- (c) School districts may provide the required instruction in a variety of arrangements, including through a stand-alone course or by integrating the positive character traits standards in the essential knowledge and skills for one or more courses or subject areas at the appropriate grade levels.

*Source: The provisions of this §120.1 adopted to be effective August 1, 2021, 45 TexReg 7423.*

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §120.1 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4), 28.002(a) and (c), and 29.906.*

#### §120.3. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Positive Character Traits, Kindergarten-Grade 2, Adopted 2020.

- (a) Introduction.
  - (1) Character education introduces students to character traits that empower them to be good citizens who are trustworthy, responsible, and caring. The character traits reflect positive beliefs, attitudes, and mindsets; provide opportunities for self-reflection; and permit students to apply effective strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and behave responsibly.
  - (2) The standards for positive character traits are comprised of four strands: trustworthiness, responsibility, caring, and citizenship. Each strand consists of the following character traits.
    - (A) Trustworthiness: loyalty, integrity, reliability, and punctuality.
    - (B) Responsibility: accountability, perseverance, diligence, and self-control.
    - (C) Caring: kindness, empathy, charity, generosity, patience, consideration, and compassion.
    - (D) Citizenship: respect, courtesy, concern for the common good and the community, fairness, freedom from prejudice, justice, patriotism, school pride, respect for authority and law, and gratitude.
  - (3) Students are expected to develop an awareness of self-identity as well as recognize multiple perspectives, difference and diversity, biases, and the social and cultural context in which they live.
  - (4) The knowledge and skills for positive character traits are organized in the following grade bands: Kindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12. However, due to the complexity of the concepts, student expectations and knowledge and skills statements cannot be taught, discussed, or viewed in isolation.
  - (5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (b) Knowledge and skills.
  - (1) Trustworthiness. The student understands how personal choices and actions relate to character building. The student is expected to:
    - (A) describe how personal choices lead to personal actions;

- (B) explain what it means to be trustworthy; and
- (C) identify personal actions that build trustworthiness, including being honest and punctual.
- (2) Responsibility. The student understands the concept of responsibility and how personal actions demonstrate responsibility. The student is expected to:
  - (A) describe and give examples of how feelings and beliefs influence personal actions;
  - (B) describe how to make personal choices before speaking and acting; and
  - (C) define self-control and identify instances in which self-control is important.
- (3) Caring. The student understands how personal actions demonstrate characteristics of caring. The student is expected to:
  - (A) define patience and identify actions that demonstrate patience; and
  - (B) explain and identify examples of how actions can demonstrate kindness to others.
- (4) Citizenship. The student understands how personal actions can demonstrate good citizenship. The student is expected to:
  - (A) define fairness and identify examples of fairness in a variety of situations;
  - (B) define and identify examples of patriotism;
  - (C) explain what it means to demonstrate respect and courtesy and why it is important to demonstrate respect and courtesy to others; and
  - (D) define good citizenship.

*Source: The provisions of this §120.3 adopted to be effective August 1, 2021, 45 TexReg 7423.*

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §120.3 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4), 28.002(a) and (c), and 29.906.*

#### **§120.5. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Positive Character Traits, Grades 3-5, Adopted 2020.**

- (a) Introduction.
  - (1) Character education introduces students to character traits that empower them to be good citizens who are trustworthy, responsible, and caring. The character traits reflect positive beliefs, attitudes, and mindsets; provide opportunities for self-reflection; and permit students to apply effective strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and behave responsibly.
  - (2) The standards for positive character traits are comprised of four strands: trustworthiness, responsibility, caring, and citizenship. Each strand consists of the following character traits.
    - (A) Trustworthiness: loyalty, integrity, reliability, and punctuality.
    - (B) Responsibility: accountability, perseverance, diligence, and self-control.
    - (C) Caring: kindness, empathy, charity, generosity, patience, consideration, and compassion.
    - (D) Citizenship: respect, courtesy, concern for the common good and the community, fairness, freedom from prejudice, justice, patriotism, school pride, respect for authority and law, and gratitude.
  - (3) Students are expected to develop an awareness of self-identity as well as recognize multiple perspectives, difference and diversity, biases, and the social and cultural context in which they live.
  - (4) The knowledge and skills for positive character traits are organized in the following grade bands: Kindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12. However, due to the complexity of the concepts, student expectations and knowledge and skills statements cannot be taught, discussed, or viewed in isolation.

- (5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (b) Knowledge and skills.
- (1) Trustworthiness. The student understands how personal responsibility relates to being trustworthy. The student is expected to:
- (A) identify and define traits of trustworthiness, including reliability and loyalty;
  - (B) identify and practice strategies for being honest and punctual; and
  - (C) define and identify examples of unethical behavior.
- (2) Responsibility. The student understands how personal choices are associated with responsibility. The student is expected to:
- (A) explain what it means to be responsible for personal decisions and actions;
  - (B) describe positive and negative consequences of personal decisions and actions;
  - (C) identify and demonstrate ways to practice self-control; and
  - (D) describe the relationship between being responsible and being accountable.
- (3) Caring. The student understands how personal actions demonstrate characteristics of caring. The student is expected to:
- (A) describe how feelings impact decision making and behaviors;
  - (B) explain how one can show patience, consideration, and compassion; and
  - (C) define empathy and discuss the connection between empathy and charity.
- (4) Citizenship. The student understands that personal responsibility is associated with citizenship. The student is expected to:
- (A) describe the differences and similarities among gratitude, respect, and courtesy;
  - (B) compare fairness and justice; and
  - (C) discuss the importance of obeying laws and rules.

*Source: The provisions of this §120.5 adopted to be effective August 1, 2021, 45 TexReg 7423.*

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §120.5 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4), 28.002(a) and (c), and 29.906.*

### **§120.7. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Positive Character Traits, Grades 6-8, Adopted 2020.**

- (a) Introduction.
- (1) Character education introduces students to character traits that empower them to be good citizens who are trustworthy, responsible, and caring. The character traits reflect positive beliefs, attitudes, and mindsets; provide opportunities for self-reflection; and permit students to apply effective strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and behave responsibly.
- (2) The standards for positive character traits are comprised of four strands: trustworthiness, responsibility, caring, and citizenship. Each strand consists of the following character traits.
- (A) Trustworthiness: loyalty, integrity, reliability, and punctuality.
  - (B) Responsibility: accountability, perseverance, diligence, and self-control.
  - (C) Caring: kindness, empathy, charity, generosity, patience, consideration, and compassion.
  - (D) Citizenship: respect, courtesy, concern for the common good and the community, fairness, freedom from prejudice, justice, patriotism, school pride, respect for authority and law, and gratitude.

- (3) Students are expected to develop an awareness of self-identity as well as recognize multiple perspectives, difference and diversity, biases, and the social and cultural context in which they live.
  - (4) The knowledge and skills for positive character traits are organized in the following grade bands: Kindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12. However, due to the complexity of the concepts, student expectations and knowledge and skills statements cannot be taught, discussed, or viewed in isolation.
  - (5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (b) Knowledge and skills.
- (1) Trustworthiness. The student understands how personal choices and actions build trustworthiness. The student is expected to:
    - (A) describe what it means to be reliable and loyal;
    - (B) define and give examples of integrity;
    - (C) examine the benefits of being trustworthy; and
    - (D) describe personal actions that demonstrate trustworthiness at school, home, with peers, and within the community.
  - (2) Responsibility. The student understands how personal beliefs and feelings influence our sense of responsibility. The student is expected to:
    - (A) examine how personal beliefs, thoughts, and feelings about self can build responsibility;
    - (B) identify and describe personal role models who demonstrate what it means to be accountable for words and actions;
    - (C) discuss the benefits of practicing self-control; and
    - (D) compare the benefits of responsible behavior with the consequences of irresponsible behavior.
  - (3) Caring. The student understands how characteristics of caring impact personal relationships. The student is expected to:
    - (A) evaluate one's personal attitudes and mindsets about self and others;
    - (B) discuss how feelings, decision making, and personal behaviors can influence relationships with others; and
    - (C) explain and identify examples of how a person can demonstrate empathy through kindness, charity, generosity, and courtesy.
  - (4) Citizenship. The student understands how the character trait of citizenship impacts personal relationships. The student is expected to:
    - (A) discuss the roles and responsibilities of citizens;
    - (B) explain how one's personal actions can impact the perception of others;
    - (C) describe how justice, fairness, and freedom are related; and
    - (D) identify and practice a variety of conflict-resolution skills and strategies.

*Source: The provisions of this §120.7 adopted to be effective August 1, 2021, 45 TexReg 7423.*

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §120.7 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4), 28.002(a) and (c), and 29.906.*

**§120.9. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Positive Character Traits, Grades 9-12, Adopted 2020.**

- (a) Introduction.
- (1) Character education introduces students to character traits that empower them to be good citizens who are trustworthy, responsible, and caring. The character traits reflect positive beliefs, attitudes, and mindsets; provide opportunities for self-reflection; and permit students to apply effective strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and behave responsibly.
  - (2) The standards for positive character traits are comprised of four strands: trustworthiness, responsibility, caring, and citizenship. Each strand consists of the following character traits.
    - (A) Trustworthiness: loyalty, integrity, reliability, and punctuality.
    - (B) Responsibility: accountability, perseverance, diligence, and self-control.
    - (C) Caring: kindness, empathy, charity, generosity, patience, consideration, and compassion.
    - (D) Citizenship: respect, courtesy, concern for the common good and the community, fairness, freedom from prejudice, justice, patriotism, school pride, respect for authority and law, and gratitude.
  - (3) Students are expected to develop an awareness of self-identity as well as recognize multiple perspectives, difference and diversity, biases, and the social and cultural context in which they live.
  - (4) The knowledge and skills for positive character traits are organized in the following grade bands: Kindergarten-Grade 2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12. However, due to the complexity of the concepts, student expectations and knowledge and skills statements cannot be taught, discussed, or viewed in isolation.
  - (5) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
- (b) Knowledge and skills.
- (1) Trustworthiness. The student understands how trustworthiness is viewed in society, politics, and the local and global community. The student is expected to:
    - (A) examine how the power to make decisions relates to personal actions;
    - (B) analyze how the decisions and actions of leaders in society, politics, and the local and global community demonstrate integrity; and
    - (C) examine the legal and social consequences of unethical behavior.
  - (2) Responsibility. The student understands how leaders demonstrate responsibility in relationships, families, societies, politics, and the global community. The student is expected to:
    - (A) identify and describe personal role models who demonstrate what it means to be accountable for words and actions;
    - (B) identify and discuss real-world examples of taking personal responsibility for one's words and actions;
    - (C) identify and evaluate strategies for practicing self-control in a variety of situations; and
    - (D) define perseverance and identify strategies for demonstrating perseverance.
  - (3) Caring. The student understands how characteristics of caring influence society and impact the global community. The student is expected to:
    - (A) evaluate one's personal attitudes and mindsets about self and others;
    - (B) discuss how feelings, decision making, and personal behaviors impact relationships within society; and

- (C) identify strategies for how a person can show empathy through one's actions.
- (4) Citizenship. The student understands how character traits of citizenship influence our personal view of society and the local and global community. The student is expected to:
  - (A) explain the impact of personal actions on the family, school, and local and global community;
  - (B) practice the roles and responsibilities of citizenship in a variety of settings;
  - (C) apply conflict resolutions skills; and
  - (D) participate in constructive dialogues with those of differing viewpoints.

*Source: The provisions of this §120.9 adopted to be effective August 1, 2021, 45 TexReg 7423.*

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §120.9 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§7.102(c)(4), 28.002(a) and (c), and 29.906.*