

# TO BE DRUG FREE

Ally Markas  
Meadowvale

I pledge to be drug free. I know drugs aren't good for me. If you do drugs you should know how it all may go. Once drugs get in your body system you will get hurt. It makes your body not really work. If you know someone that does drugs and you love them very very much, you should encourage them to stop. Maybe it will work, maybe it will not.

People who do not do drugs are excellent. People who do drugs are not excellent. They are not excellent because drugs hurt you and make you different than your normal self. They make you not think well. So you will not get good grades and you will not behave well. If you were the "Teachers Pet" before you might now be thought of as the bad student. Your teacher will not like your behavior. Some drugs are used for medical reasons, but are only handled by professionals.

# COURAGE

By: Marisa Shively  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Courage means many things to different people. This is what it means to me.

One of the things that courage means to me is being strong enough to try new things. It also means being able to say no to something you know is wrong. Sometimes people aren't courageous enough to do the right things because they listen to the wrong person. Another courageous thing is being able to continue doing the right thing even though someone is hurting your feelings.

My mom is very courageous because she often wakes up to my family screaming at each other. Her feelings are hurt, but she stays strong and is always trying new things to make us get along. She is also full of courage at work. My mom has to always make people happy with how they look. Sometimes it's not easy, but courage gets her through.

Having courage isn't always easy but it helps people become strong and get through difficult days. And that's what I think courage is about.

# GRATITUDE

Madison Fix-Wernert

Here at my wonderful school, Wernert Elementary, our thoughtful teachers do other things for us students, like at the end of the day they will take us outside for a little extra time to play and hang out with our friends and have fun! And one other thing they will do for us is that they will give us little pizza party's or ice cream party's! they will also take us on awesome, fun field trips to all kinds of places that are fun and educational! And sometimes, they will do cool holiday or any kind of activity's with us. So, do u think your school has the most gratitude? Well, you will change your mind when you come to Wernert! I am sure of it!

Gratitude is being respectful to people and giving compliments to others. It is being thankful for what you have! You should be thankful for someone or something you have or know.

I am thankful for my teachers, my principal, and every body else! Even the students. They all do good things for me and my classmates. The teachers teach us good things, the principal makes sure everything is running smoothly, and the rest of the staff does other little things like speech and our specials like music and gym and art. They do awesome and fun things like that. We should be so, so, so thankful for all those people at Wernert!

Gratitude is represented at Wernert by all of us students saying, "Hi", to random people just walking down the hall or playing alone on the playground. I have seen kids on the playground walk up to other kids and say, "Hi, do u want to come walk with me and my friends?" I love it when I see that kind of thing! And when you come to Wernert, you will see that every day and all day!

At Wernert, you will get party's, fun assembly's, cool activity's, special launches, and much, much more! And remember, the reason all of that happens, is because of the Gratitude in all of our teachers and staff! I love my school!

# HONESTY

By Miah Malak

*Honesty.* We've heard it before. We know that it's good to be *it*. We might even think we truly know what it is. But do we really know what honesty is?

In relationships, honesty is always something you need to have. You want your friends and family to be honest with you, so you need to be honest with them. In a friendship, honesty brings out the best in you and your friend by building trust and a stronger relationship. Families have closer bonds knowing everyone is always honest. Our teachers will always know they can count on us for important tasks, if we are always truthful and honest with them. Having honesty in relationships is a big deal.

I also think about mistakes I have made in my life. Mistakes give us the opportunity to realize our mistakes and be honest. When you make a mistake, you have to be honest, tell nothing but the truth, apologize, and accept the consequences.

Honesty leads back to all the core values. Being honest shows people you can handle bigger responsibilities. You have to have courage to be honest. Peers will have more trust in you, if they know you are always honest. So, I guess our parents are right, *honesty is the best policy.*

# LOYALTY

Drew Bengela

Grade 5

Jackman Elementary

Loyal to me means being a good friend. You can be a good friend by always being there for a person and being trustworthy. Loyalty is a very good thing to have. When you are younger and you are loyal, you are a good and trusting person as you get older. Being loyal to yourself is a good thing too because that means you are going to be a good person and not let people influence you in doing bad things. If you are a loyal person, people will trust you more because you will show that they can count on you. Loyalty is very important because it shows you to believe in being a good and trusting person when someone needs you.

# RESPECT

Jenna Thomas

Grade 6

When you hear the word respect what pops into your mind? I'll tell you what pops in mine. This commercial pops into my mind. It's about this lady she was getting on a bus and she left her purse sitting on the bench. This boy saw it and ran about a block away to the next stop where she got off the bus and he gave the lady her purse back. Respect is something you do to show someone you're listening and you care about what they have to say. I respect my parents, friends, and teachers. One way I respect my parents is by doing things right away when they ask me to. One way I respect my friends is by showing them I care and by helping them if they are sad. One way I respect my teacher is by paying attention in class and by following directions. That's what pops into my mind when I hear the word respect. The world without respect would be a terrible place. An example of this would be if someone one was in a wheelchair and they were trying to open a door and no one would stop and help them. That would be disrespectful! If more people would show respect for others people would feel happier and this would make the world a better place to live.

# RESPONSIBILITY

Jacob Harris  
5<sup>th</sup> grade

Responsibility is a duty or a job. Responsibility is also the state, quality, or fact of being responsible. To me responsibility is when you balance what you have to do, with what you want to do. Responsibility means when someone asks you to do something, you know they are depending on you to follow through. That is what responsibility means.

Some of my responsibilities are to keep my grades up, so I can have a future. I do this by doing my homework, studying, and planning ahead. I also do chores because it is my job that my family is depending on me to complete. I give my frogs and my dog food and water, so they can live to be healthy. These are some of the things I do to be a responsible in my life.

Everyone should be responsible for their actions. It is always good to be honest about your actions. It is good to be honest about your actions because when you are not you will get caught, and then get in trouble. If your friends find out that you are not trustworthy about something you might lose some of your friends, and it is never good to lose any of your friends. If you are responsible for your actions and make good choices you will feel better about yourself because you will not go to bed knowing that you let yourself down.

When you are a responsible kid, you will become a responsible adult. You will make good choices like saying no to taking drugs or drinking alcohol and that is always being responsible. You will also be a responsible adult because you have made that choice all of your life so you are used to making the right choice. This will be seen throughout your future family and job. That is why you should be a responsible kid and making good choices is the right choice.

I have to balance my responsibilities with the things I want to do. I love spending time with my friends and family, I also love to swim and run. I know I have to complete my homework and chores before I can do the things that I want to. It is good to have responsibilities because it makes you dependable, trustworthy, and well rounded.

# Service

Service is doing a helpful activity for someone in need or for a cause (e.g. breast cancer, homeless people, and helping people in a third world country), giving up what you want, and being there with your heart wide open to help. Whether it is a big service project, or a small service project, it will still make a big impact on the people who are being serviced or the organization you are helping. It takes a lot of heart to give up what you want to help someone else with their needs, and it makes a big impact on not only that person's life, but yours too.

The heroes that emerged from the 9/11 tragedy will always hold a place in my heart for what true service is. The selfless acts each of these heroes showed during this American tragedy will always prove to be the greatest example of what service is. Service to me means to give what you can to help others with their needs. To lay down your own wants and desires to help others with basics needs. Sometimes service is serving a meal to a family in need, collecting or making blankets for the homeless that sleep on the streets on cold winter nights, giving your life as the heroes of 9/11 did, for the good of others. Serving others is a very humbling experience, it can really show you that all people have feelings and when you serve others you will feel good and help those in need feel better too.

I have been involved with many service projects, one that I have enjoyed the most was when I made blankets for the Cherry Street Mission. As I made the blankets I realized how fortunate I was to not only have a warm blanket, but a nice home and food to eat when I wanted. If everyone would slow down and take the time to participate in service projects the world would be a better place.

By: Victoria Sanders

(Bobcats/ Bosch)

# TEAMWORK ESSAY

By Melissa Durkee, McGregor 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Teamwork to me means people coming together helping someone else solve a problem or reach a goal. Not only do the staff show teamwork the students do too. Teamwork is important to show because it is a good characteristic to have. Many people should show teamwork because it helps others solve problems or reach goals.

An important time when I saw teamwork being displayed was on the 9-11 attack. While the attack was going on, the people that were in danger were helping others instead of just thinking of themselves. The most important part of the attack was that people were showing teamwork, helping others, and staying strong.

A time when I personally was in a situation where good teamwork was being displayed was when my mom's car got stuck in the middle of the road. My stepdad had to come help me and my mom try to push it into our driveway. Then our neighbor Rick came out to help when he saw that we needed more people to help. Then my two other neighbors came out. They said that they wanted to help too. We all started pushing as hard as we could. Finally we pushed it out of the road. Not only was it nice to do, it helped us solve a problem. That was a time when I saw good teamwork being displayed.

Outside of school isn't the only time when I see teamwork being showed. Most of it is at school. I think the students, principal, and counsler show a lot of teamwork. The students at McGregor show a lot of teamwork by keeping he restrooms, and keep the cafeteria as clean as they can. The principal shows a lot of teamwork by trying to help us kids learn and have a better life at school everyday. He is a great principal. Most of our school counsler shows a bunch of teamwork by helping kids solve problems and tries to help people get a long. Not only do the staff show teamwork but so do the students. Our students and staff show great teamwork.

Teamwork is important because it makes peoples lives easier and helps solve problems. I feel so nice when I see teamwork being displayed. Teamwork is important because it helps people solve problems. That's why teamwork is important to me.

## Trust

Trust is funny. It's one of the hardest things to earn, and even harder to give, but it's the most important bond in any and all relationships. The stronger the trust is between two people the stronger the relationship is. I found that strong trust here, in Washington Local Schools, with a fellow student, Sofia Ysasi.

When I first came to Washington Local, I felt like this was going to be the worse experience of my life. I was leaving all my friends, and I had to start over. I'm 100 percent sure I was being over-dramatic back then, but I didn't care. When you're young you feel like your friends are all you have and I was leaving mine. Then I met Sofia and my opinion changed.

We met in fifth grade at Wernert, after I transferred from Toledo Public. The teacher sat me next to her on my first day there and she just started talking away, like she always does. I remember feeling like she was interrogating me and the questions were never ending, but for some reason it didn't bother me. Then I found myself telling this strange girl, I'd met two minutes before, everything about me. It was an immediate friendship and I was glad, because I felt like I had no one going into this new school. After that, it didn't take long for us to become really good friends and eventually best friends. I trusted her and it wasn't hard either, because she's an amazing person.

This was new to me. At my old school, trust came hard, and friends were made over longer time than two minutes. I learned in my first day that Washington Local was an amazing place of trust, and Sofia Ysasi was a perfect example of this core value. I've laughed, cried and grew as a person with Sofia, from fifth grade to my senior year, and our trust is still growing as I write this paper. Trust is a powerful connection that everyone should experience in life, and Washington Local helped me experience that.

# TRUST

By: Tre' Kane

Words, no matter how big or small, sentimental or trivial, have meaning. Some meanings are shallow and trivial, while others are deep and full of wonder. Words also can be expressed through action. However, there's one word that has a million ways of being interpreted, and cannot be expressed through action. Trust. Trust is not a physical action, nor does it have a concrete meaning. Trust, in its most general sense, is the reliance or faith one has in an entity. This can be a person, an object, or a religious figure.

Trust has become a main force behind the advancement of humanity. We *trust* that with every passing day, we will discover something new and exciting. We *trust* that the major problems in our world like hunger, famine, war, and intolerance, will soon be eradicated. We *trust* that our goals in life and what we set out to do as an individual will be fulfilled. We use trust every day sometimes without even realizing it!

However, trust does not always have to be on a grand scale. As previously stated, we use trust sometimes without even realizing it. When you loan someone an item, you *trust* that they will return it. In sports, you *trust* your teammates that they are working towards the same goal as you. When sharing a secret, you *trust* that the person you share it with will not repeat it to anyone else. Whether it's something as simple as a secret, or something as large as life, you use trust every day, whether you realize it or not.

In the grand scheme of life, trust has been repeatedly shown to be one of the more important virtues. But more importantly, trust has been shown to be one of the bravest things a person can do. Whether it's trusting your friend to return a pen to you, trusting your girlfriend or boyfriend to remain faithful, or trusting your God that He will protect you, placing faith and trust in someone or something is brave. Any moment, what you place trust in can backfire on you. But to trust, and to trust with confidence, is one of the bravest things anyone can do.

## Trust

“You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you do not trust enough.” –Frank Crane.

These words rang true to me when I found I trusted many people here at Whitmer High School. It was the end of my sophomore year and I had just looked at the sheet outside the band room telling me I had been moved down from second bass drum to third. I walked away downhearted and sad, but five minutes later our director, Mr. Novak, called me into our Ensemble Room. He sat me down to tell me that he was disappointed that I seemed so upset about my situation. I teared up and, in vain, tried forcing the tears back. I told him I thought I was moved down because I had done poorly on my audition and he told me no, I was moved down to third because he thought I could handle it, and that another percussionist’s health was being taken into consideration. This made me feel even more embarrassed for being so discouraged and then I really began to cry.

I told him that I was very sorry for the way I had acted and that I felt silly for crying in front of him. He smiled and said, “Do you know how many times students have cried in front of me? I’ve cried myself a couple of times.” That’s when I knew I could trust Mr. Novak. I was so embarrassed to be crying in front of my teacher because I thought he would judge me, but he simply let me cry and comforted me. He then told me he was mainly disappointed with my reaction at my placement because he had been considering me for the position of squad leader for our percussion section. That’s when I realized I not only trusted him, he trusted me. He had faith in me to lead our section and do the right thing.

I’ve always trusted and respected all of our directors because they have shown us countless times when they were willing to help us, joke with us, and get to know us not just as students but as people. The directors are each so different and I appreciate each of them for different reasons. The band students put faith in our directors to set up a good show, teach us the music, but also be there for us as role models. The directors also stay late into the night at the auditorium with us when we get back from a football game, staying until each and every student has left. To me, these directors are the most trustworthy people at Whitmer, not just because they’re my favorite teachers, but because they show us how dedicated they are to our band, how they are willing to get to know us as people, and how they support us in all we do.

The day I cried in front of Mr. Novak I felt so embarrassed for letting my guard down in front of my teacher. He didn’t judge me or say anything to embarrass me, so I let out every emotion I felt. I think that’s what trust is all about; being able to let your guard down in front of someone and knowing he or she will accept you for who you are. I’ve learned many things from my directors at school, but most importantly these teachers have shown me how to value trust.

## The Secret of Trust

The strong exhibition of trust within the Washington Local School District is a secret that needs to shine. While trust is a core value of Washington Local, it isn't often advertised or mentioned, even between the people who are affected by it frequently. However, the trust within the district is something that is always here. It is an unspoken existence that brightens the days of many people, including me. I discovered my own trust at Whitmer High School.

The tremendous existence of trust within the walls of Whitmer High School enchanted me from the very moment I stepped into Mrs. Dake's classroom. As a nervous freshman trudging through the first day of school, I fretted about not knowing anyone in my classes. When no one's face appeared familiar as I walked through the doorway into health class, I felt a spark of unease begin to rise. However, the anxiety stopped short with the welcoming smile of Mrs. Dake. She stood by her desk greeting each and every student with genuine enthusiasm. An immediate ease washed over me, and for the first time that day, I adopted the feeling of excitement about starting high school.

Since that very first day of freshman health class, Mrs. Dake has always been there for me. Through having her as a teacher for both health and physical education, not to mention as a Youth Advocates club advisor for four years, I discovered she is a person I can truly count on. I trust her immensely, in good times and in bad. Her sincere excitement is contagious; it's a true challenge not to smile when you're around her. Her encouragement continues to keep me going during stressful days, and my mood is often brightened by her pure kindness and hilarious dance moves. I truly know her counsel will be one of the things I miss most about Whitmer High School when I graduate.

I've witnessed examples of trust all throughout Washington Local School District from students, teachers, and anyone who sincerely loves or believes in the district. I consider trust a purely wonderful thing and know that it is a well-represented core value in Washington Local Schools. Trust is a concept without true definition because its meaning and importance varies from person to person. When I hear the word trust, I think not of a definition, but of a person. The meaning of trust to me is Mrs. Dake.

By Kara Vickers

# TRUSTWORTHY AND TRUST

By: Taylor Nichols  
4<sup>th</sup> grade Shoreland

It is really important to be a trustworthy person especially if you want to have friends and do things on your own. What does it mean to be trustworthy? It means to be a responsible person. For example, you want to stay home by yourself you have to show your parents that you are responsible so they can trust you. Also if a friend tells you a secret that means they trust you and you should not let them down by telling their secret to others or you will lose their trust. If someone doesn't trust you what could you do to gain their trust? Well you would have to respect them, be kind to them and maybe you could ask them if they need help and help them. For example, if someone did not trust you and that person was being bullied and you had seen it you should step in and help them out. Then maybe you would earn their trust. If you have a friend that you really like to have around and one day you lie to them you would probably lose their trust because you were being mean to them. An example of that would be if you told a friend you knew for sure you would be playing with them and you bailed on them to play with someone else they would probably be sad and no trust you anymore because you lied to them.

Also, to be a trustworthy person means to be a dependable person. To be a dependable person means that a friend can ask you a favor and they know you will do it for them. It is very important to be a dependable person so friends can know they can count on you. For example, a friend is sick on a school day and they ask you to bring their work back for them that means they think you are a dependable person. It is very important to be a dependable person especially if you want to have friends that trust you and parents that trust you if you want to be able to do things on your own.