

The HK Way: RSD17 Vision of the Graduate

The RSD17 School District has completed the process of formalizing its **Vision of the Graduate**. It is vital that our school-community is clear in what it believes to be essential in a comprehensive educational experience and define what it desires as traits in its graduates through a *Vision of the Graduate* document. It is our hope that as our students, educators and families become more immersed in the power and aspiration captured in our *Vision of the Graduate*, we will leverage our collective will to empower each one of our students to achieve their goals and improve our world.

The RSD17 *Vision of the Graduate* was created after several months of engaging with the community and a representative Steering Committee including teachers, students, Board members, school administration, parents, and town leaders. The *Vision* clarifies and unifies our goals for our students. It describes skills and dispositions across six elements which interact with each other and with curriculum content standards, facilitated by excellence in teaching, to support the development of a learner prepared to contribute and succeed. These traits have always been essential, and we can also imagine a future where preparing students to provide leadership, creativity, and ingenuity in an increasingly connected global world is as critical as it has ever been.

Regional School District 17 Vision of the Graduate



A graduate of the RSD17 School District is a compassionate critical thinker, who collaborates to solve problems, and is prepared to contribute to improving our world.

Vision of the Graduate - Skills

Contribute Productively includes the ability to:

- Take control of one's learning by planning and organizing oneself to complete tasks
- Demonstrate independence and initiative in doing one's best work
- Collaborate positively on a team project or shared endeavor
- Seek leadership or take a supportive role within a group in a manner that works best for oneself, others, and the outcome
- Think creatively and flexibly to design and develop innovative solutions, strategies, and outcomes

Think Critically includes the ability to:

- Inquire and formulate questions to gather information and expand upon ideas
- Research and distill information from reliable resources representative of multiple perspectives
- Evaluate information for credibility, bias, and point of view
- Analyze and interpret information and data to generate solutions to problems
- Reflect upon the accuracy or viability of solutions or conclusions

Communicate Effectively includes the ability to:

- Organize thoughts to articulate and justify one's position or perspective with clarity
- Construct, refine, and present arguments supported by evidence
- Actively listen to understand and interpret the ideas and reasoning of others
- Use a variety of verbal, written, or visual methods appropriate for the message and audience

Vision of the Graduate - Dispositions

Maintain a Growth Mindset involves believing in oneself, having an open-mind, and demonstrating perseverance and resilience. Examples of demonstrating a Growth Mindset include:

- Apply sustained effort to understand concepts, acquire skills, and achieve to one's greatest potential
- Reflect upon feedback or mistakes as opportunities to adapt and improve upon learning
- Show determination to accomplish one's goals
- Explore ideas to expand thinking
- Encourage a growth mindset in others

Demonstrate Respect, Empathy and Kindness involves caring for and showing compassion for oneself and others. Examples include:

- Seek to understand one another's experiences, circumstances, and perspectives
- Embrace diversity and recognize the value of all persons by promoting equity and inclusivity
- Maintain self-respect and advocate for oneself and others
- Be kind and act to enhance the climate of our schools and community

Display Character, Courage, and Integrity involves having confidence in oneself to make sound decisions. Examples include:

- Do the right thing, even when no one is looking
- Take the initiative to provide or seek help for oneself or others
- Stand up for oneself or others when faced with unkind, disrespectful, or discriminatory behavior
- Actively engage in discourse that addresses difficult topics or situations to improve conditions for all

Our *Vision* focuses on developing our learners to be critical thinkers and collaborators, who are caring and compassionate with the skills and mindsets to solve real-world challenges. Students grow and contribute through academic exploration and feedback, perseverance and resilience, and open-mindedness to others' perspectives. Through their experiences in the RSD17 schools, the HK student develops a strong academic foundation supported by our commitment that all students receive what they each need in a system designed for them to achieve academic and social and emotional success regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, language or other characteristics of their identity.

We look forward to using this *Vision* to guide and ground our ongoing efforts to provide the communities of Haddam and Killingworth with an outstanding school system serving current and future HK students.