

Civility: Respect, Responsibility, Kindness

Education occurs not only in the classroom but also through growing up with a sense that you are a valued member of a community—or of several. In this sense each of us, whether we know it or not, is an educator. Whether as parents, teachers, administrators, community or board members, how we interact with other creates a climate of opinion consequential for our kids. Students learn not only in the classroom, but through observing adults and interacting with their peers. Civility, how we conduct ourselves as individuals and as community members, is not a separate subject matter but a cluster of attitudes and practices and norms surrounding every subject and situation. Whether civility is part of a student's conduct and experience has profound implications for a student's sense of self-worth, belonging and motivation to learn.

Recently our leadership team canvassed our community through conversations with various representative stakeholders. Through listening and discussion our team has found three practices with broad community support which capture the meaning of civility as idea and practice. These principles are: 1) **Be Respectful**, 2) **Be Responsible**, 3) **Be kind**. If these sound like common sense it is well to remember that each of us has known occasions in which common sense and civility were not as common as we had assumed.

As a community, North Mason School District has adopted an expectation of civility from all stakeholders, in all spaces and at all events. When next you enter a North Mason school be mindful that you are entering a **Civil Zone**. If you have ever wondered “what can I do to help prepare the minds of our students for success in school and beyond” take with you some **R, R, and K** for yourself, your kids, family, associates and friends—it is the common text from which all of us should teach.

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