

ASSESSMENT

Leaders, teachers, and students embrace the power of student-engaged assessment practices to build student ownership of learning, focus students on reading standards-based learning targets, and drive achievement. This approach to assessment is key to ensuring that we achieve educational equity. Students continually assess and improve the quality of their work through the use of models, reflections, critique, rubrics, and work with experts. Staff members engage in ongoing data inquiry and analysis, examining everything from patterns in student work to results from formal assessments, disaggregating data by groups of students to recognize and address gaps in achievement (See Overall Achievement Report and Curriculum sections of Expeditionary Learning and Math)

CULTURE AND CHARACTER

Expeditionary learning schools build cultures of respect, responsibility, courage, and kindness, where students and adults are committed to quality work and citizenship. School structures and traditions such as crew, community meetings, exhibitions of student work, and service learning ensure that every student is known and cared for, that student leadership is nurtured, and that contributions to the school and world are celebrated. Students and staff are supported to do better work and be better people than they through possible.

One example of a student's character is when we ask students to have an outside community member write a letter for them giving evidence of the character they exhibit outside of school. These letters are placed in the student's portfolio. The students then have a letter from various people each year they attend the school. On the next page is a letter to a seventh grade student written by her adult sister.

April 30, 2012

Anser Charter School
202 E. 42nd Street
Garden City, ID 83714

To Whom It May Concern:

Respectful. Compassionate. Brave. Disciplined. Honorable. Responsible. Each of these words could be used to describe Addie Higgins. As her eldest sister, I have known Addie her entire life, and I have had the opportunity to witness her growth and maturation into the person she is today. I have seen her take on community-minded work from a young age, accompanying my mother and grandmother on their monthly Meals-on-Wheels deliveries for several years. Her ongoing commitment to the program, her friendly and helpful demeanor, and the genuine relationships she developed with the folks she would deliver to speak not only to her responsible and consistent nature, but also to her respect and compassion for the elderly members of her community.

Although her time with the Meals-on-Wheels program has ended, Addie continues to show her commitment to the Boise community in a number of different ways. Her work in the Boise Urban Garden School (BUGS) and its Spread Your Roots program has shown her dedication to learning about and practicing sustainable gardening techniques. Her time at BUGS has also helped her to develop an understanding of and appreciation for the food we eat. Through this work, she has clearly demonstrated a strong respect for the earth and a sense of responsibility regarding its care. In addition, her experience of tending and planning the communal gardens of the program speaks to the discipline she has shown in taking on these tasks and following through in order to yield a successful crop for the school and its many patrons.

In addition, I wish to mention a more personal anecdote that underscores the extent to which Addie embodies the Anser values. During this past fall, she was preparing to join an extracurricular basketball team – the first official sport team she had participated with since joining Anser. Before practices began, Addie voiced her nervousness concerning the prospect of taking part in the activity. Would she be any good? Would she even enjoy the experience? How would she handle the pressure of being part of a team? However, rather than allowing her worries to get the better of her, she persevered in joining (and sticking with) the team through the season. It is in such feats as this where Addie's courage can often be found – her ability to follow through on tasks that can often seem daunting and scary when they are first faced.

These are just a few examples of the ways in which Addie Higgins embodies the core values of Anser Charter School. Her commitment to her community and to pushing herself beyond her comfort zone speaks to the remarkable individual she has become far better than any letter ever could.

Sincerely,

Kate Higgins-White
Sister of Student
Kate Higgins-White