

USA VALUES - CDP
Character Development Program
102 Walnut Street
Winona, Minnesota 55987
(A 501 (c) (3) company)

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Letter and comments in support of the
program and the innovative opportunity
to assist elementary schools
2003-2004



Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association

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Teresa "Teri" L. Edwards, *President*

P. Fred Storti, *Executive Director*

April 4, 2003

Nina Rees
Deputy Undersecretary for Innovation and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Deputy Commissioner Rees,

An engaged community is critical to student success, closing the achievement gap and enhancing student achievement to develop productive citizens! The purpose of this letter is to support USA Values-Character Development Program (CDP) which is a well designed process that connects the key players in the community that affect student learning.

Elementary school principals are the school-community leader at the site that have the potential to engage the community to better ready preschool children to learn before they come to kindergarten. Children coming to school ready to learn is the proactive ingredient that is foundational to literacy acquisition.

USA Value-CDP is an innovative, proactive, tactical program that will lead to system change, enhance student achievement, develop civility through literacy acquisition and help develop effective citizens.

Principals are under increasing demands to enhance and customize services for children and families. USA Values-CDP could be an invaluable resource for principals to build capacity of families, community agencies, churches and school staff to enhance student learning.

As Executive Director of the Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association (MESPA), I support the premise of USA Values-CDP and would collaborate and provide leadership so that Minnesota Principals could use this program to "add value" to our ultimate collective goal of developing world class citizens. We truly want No Child Left Behind!

I hope you will strongly consider USA Values-CDP as a worthy recipient of the Innovative School Grant. If I can be of further assistance please contact me.

Yours for a better education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fred Storti', is written over a circular stamp or seal.

P. Fred Storti

Executive Director
Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association



Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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Charles E. Kyte, Ph.D.,

Executive Director

April 3, 2003

Nina Rees
Deputy Undersecretary for Innovation and Improvement
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D. C. 20202

Dear Ms. Rees,

I am writing in regard to the USA VALUES - Character Development Program which is designed to provide an innovative approach to helping children to succeed in public schools here in Minnesota. The program would be targeted toward children in our urban school districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

We have a significant need in our state to help families to prepare their students to be ready for school so that the students can be successful and the schools can meet the requirements for adequate yearly progress (AYP).

We believe that Mr. Tom Wolfgram, of the USA VALUES - Character Development Program, has an innovative approach to involving elementary school principals as active players in helping with early intervention within their school communities. By working with families and students early, we can create the needed school readiness and character development so by the time children reach kindergarten they will have a fighting chance of being successful.

We believe that this program will work very nicely with the "Leave No Child Behind" federal legislation and is focused on involving the correct community leaders and the population of children and parents. If ideas like this can be actualized, we will have a good chance of having students be successful as they work their way throughout the school experience.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles (Charlie) Kyte
Executive Director, MASA



FAIR OAKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
5600 65th Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota 55429-2096

Dr. Dean L. Reiners, Principal

Telephone: (763) 533-2246

"Fair Oaks Elementary—a community of families, students, and staff dedicated to social and academic excellence."

April 21, 2003

To Whom It May Concern,

This is a letter of support for the USA Values program. As principal of a USA Values elementary school, I can testify to its impact.

The program is effective. We have implemented the USA Values program in grades K-3. The stories captivate the students' attention and the follow-up activities foster ethical behaviors.

The program is time efficient. Our teachers report they find the program very compatible with our school wide "Literacy for Life" program. As part of our school's efforts to develop literacy, teachers oral read in front of their students and follow up these readings with classroom discussions. The USA Values materials provide well chosen books and guided discussion questions that they use to simultaneously promote literacy and ethical behaviors. Teachers appreciate this time efficiency. As principal, I feel this is an attribute of the USA Values Program that will promote its continued use.

The home component is also highly engaging. Its simplicity encourages family support.

In summary, the USA Values Program has been well received and successfully implemented by our school's teachers and our students' families. I highly recommend it.

Sincerely,

Dean L. Reiners, Ed.D.

JIM RAMSTAD
THIRD DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

WAYS AND MEANS
COMMITTEE

TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE

HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE



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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2303

February 6, 2003

Nina Rees
Deputy Undersecretary for Innovation and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Nina:

I am writing to request a meeting with your office for Tom Wolfgram, Executive Director of the USA Values Character Development Program (CDP).

CDP is a non-profit organization in Minnesota that has been formed to facilitate corporate contributions to restart school-wide character education in elementary schools.

Tom would like to discuss with your office an innovative program designed by CDP that would help ensure that all children are ready to learn when they enter Kindergarten.

I have enclosed additional information about CDP. Tom can be contacted at 763-504-5481.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this important request, and please contact me or my legislative assistant, Dave Strandness, at 202-225-2871 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

JIM RAMSTAD
Member of Congress

JR:ds

NORM COLEMAN
MINNESOTAPHONE: (202) 224-5611
FAX: (202) 224-1152

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 9, 2003

Nina Rees
Deputy Undersecretary for Innovation and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Nina:

I would appreciate your office taking the time to meet with Tom Wolfgram, Executive Director of the USA Values Character Development Program (CDP).

CDP is an emerging Minnesota non-profit organization focused on procuring corporate contributions for character education in elementary schools.

Tom would specifically like to discuss a groundbreaking program that CDP has developed to ensure children are prepared and able to learn when they enter kindergarten. The CDP is prepared to meet President Bush's goal of ensuring that "no child is left behind" from the very start.

Hearing what Tom has to say on behalf of the CDP and the 'ready to learn' program is a great opportunity for you and your department to get involved with an exciting program.

Thank you for consideration of this valuable opportunity, and I wish your department success in its exploration of an enduring relationship with the CDP.

Sincerely,



Norm Coleman
United States Senator

USA VALUES - CDP
Character Development Program
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Winona, Minnesota 55987
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August 18, 2004

Teacher Comments in Support

The books and stickers are very good

Students respond to the stories and the discussions

Students could relate to the messages from the stories

Materials are very helpful, well laid out, and easy to tie to the vision and mission of the school

Students like the program and anticipate the sticker activities

Good literature

Materials are useful to start meaningful discussions

Flexible and drives discussions

The books are good and children like the sticker sheets

I like the flexibility – freedom to use the materials my way

The books are easy to use in the morning meetings

Stories are great, the values are good to talk about

Messages allow for many books to be used

I liked the folders, books with matching stories

Many choices were provided to me within the materials

Uses quality literature

Nice messages for the children

Abundant number of stories supporting the messages are selected, no search effort is required

Helps make time to discuss values

Materials are flexible in various applications