This We Believe
Keys to Educating Young Adolescents

16 Characteristics

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Educators value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them. [Value Young Adolescents]
- Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning. [Active Learning]
- Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and relevant. [Challenging Curriculum]
- Educators use multiple learning and teaching approaches. [Multiple Learning Approaches]
- Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it. [Varied Assessments]

Leadership and Organization
- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision. [Shared Vision]
- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices. [Committed Leaders]
- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration. [Courageous & Collaborative Leaders]
- Ongoing professional development reflects best educational practices. [Professional Development]
- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships. [Organizational Structures]

Culture and Community
- The school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all. [School Environment]
- Every student’s academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate. [Adult Advocate]
- Comprehensive guidance and support services meet the needs of young adolescents. [Guidance Services]
- Health and wellness are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies. [Health & Wellness]
- The school actively involves families in the education of their children. [Family Involvement]
- The school includes community and business partners. [Community & Business]

Essential Attributes
An education for young adolescents must be

Developmentally Responsive
- using the nature of young adolescents as the foundation on which all decisions are made.

Challenging
- recognizing that every student can learn and everyone is held to high expectations.

Empowering
- providing all students with the knowledge and skills they need to take control of their lives.

Equitable
- advocating for every student’s right to learn and providing challenging and relevant learning opportunities.

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This chart is based on This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents (AMLE/NMSA, 2010). For more information visit us at, www.amle.org/twb