

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Waseca Junior & Senior High Named 2020 Minnesota School of Character**

Waseca Junior & Senior High is one of two schools in the state named as a 2020 Minnesota School of Character by Character.org and its state sponsor, Synergy & Leadership Exchange. Nationally, 81 schools and 7 districts received this designation for 2020. Since its inception, the Schools of Character program has positively affected nearly 3 million students, staff, parents and other community members.

Each year, Character.org works in partnership with state sponsors to certify schools and districts that demonstrate a dedicated focus on character development which has a positive effect on academic achievement, student behavior and school climate. The Schools of Character application process is an opportunity for schools and districts to receive professional feedback for continuous improvement.

Waseca Junior & Senior High serves nearly 1,000 students in grades 7-12. The school has used character development to drive positive results in academics, student behavior and school climate. *We R4 the Bluejay Way* is the school motto, encouraging all to "Respect yourself, others, property and learning."

"Character education has always been a part of our school. I have seen positive benefits for students and staff members," said Karen Pfarr Anderson, Junior High Language Arts Teacher. "By learning about character education through staff development and independent research I feel that our school community has developed excellent methods of ensuring our students feel safe and they are held to the expectations of what it means to be a Bluejay."

"Waseca Jr. & Sr High has a positive and welcoming atmosphere," said a student when asked what he liked best about the school. "The atmosphere has been built on a strong foundation by all of our staff. This boosts the student's attitudes and positively impacts the learning environment."

Synergy & Leadership Exchange will celebrate Waseca Jr. & Sr. High at the Character Recognition Awards luncheon on May 20.

### **About Synergy & Leadership Exchange and Character.org:**

Synergy & Leadership Exchange is a non-profit organization fostering collaboration to advance the development of ethical citizens, providing educational resources, and celebrating achievement and best practices in Minnesota schools, businesses and communities. Visit [www.synergyexchange.org](http://www.synergyexchange.org) to learn more.

Character.org is a national advocate and leader for the character education movement. Based in Washington, D.C., it works with schools and districts to inspire, educate and empower young people to be ethical and engaged citizens. Visit [www.character.org](http://www.character.org) to learn more about the Schools of Character program.

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