Ankeney Middle School implemented the nationally recognized Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) program to assist its sixth-grade students with the critical transition from elementary to middle school. Members of the eighth-grade class train to be WEB leaders and serve as role models and motivators for the entire school, but especially for sixth-grade students. These WEB leaders also build relationships and foster a caring atmosphere by facilitating character-based activities. They lead activities with sixth graders the day before the first day of school and approximately two times a month in the classroom. Leaders also facilitate social activities for the sixth graders outside of school. Activities focus on the Ankeney’s six pillars of character and on a variety of adolescent issues, including conflict management, bullying, and study skills. Four staff members train as WEB coordinators and seek regular feedback from sixth-grade teachers and WEB leaders about current and future activities. Administrators request WEB leaders to assist new students, and sixth and seventh graders inquire about becoming a WEB leader and aspire to incorporate the six pillars of character education.

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