



**Mission Critical - Creekside High School** differs from the students' traditional high schools in these dimensions: the ratio of students to teachers, the way academic subject matter and content standards are presented, the school setting, the linkage of the school to the community or workplaces, the emphasis on behavior modification, the emphasis on counseling for conflict resolution and anger management, the availability of comprehensive support services, and a sense of family. Creekside's goals are to 1) prepare students to return to their regular schools or 2) to prepare students to graduate from high school and enter the workforce or post-secondary educational institutions directly from Creekside. The "mission critical" effective components of Creekside are:

- Lower student-to-staff ratio
- Strong and stable leadership
- Highly trained and carefully selected staff
- A vision and set of objectives that are shared by all staff and integrated into how staff and administrators interact
- District-wide support
- Innovative presentation of instructional materials with an emphasis on real-life, personalized learning
- Working relations with all parts of the school system and with other collaborating agencies that provide critical services to youth
- Linkages between schools and workplaces
- Intensive student support services and counseling
- Opportunities for more individualized, personalized instruction
- Noncompetitive environment where progress is measured by improvement rather than by comparison with others
- An instructional program that creates a positive, safe learning community
- Student-centered outlook
- Relative freedom to pursue unconventional methods to achieve educational objectives
- Character education emphasis and a culture focused on fostering relationships and inclusion

**Small is good! Why? What do staff and students say . . . . .**

"Students pay better attention & ask more questions."

"There are fewer discipline problems, behavior improves, & there is increased class time for on-task instruction."

"Kids have more space; spend less time in each other's face & get more actively involved in their learning."

"Teachers have more time to involve parents who then feel a part of the process; students behave better & achieve more."

"Thank you for always believing in me and never doubting that I could make it. You all have made a huge impact on my life."

"I know you believed in me and you helped me to believe in myself."

"After I had been at Creekside awhile, I began to accomplish great things, I began to see the light and I began to understand the importance of an education. I was encouraged by all the staff and support teams while I was here."

"One thing I have changed here at Creekside is my negativity towards life itself. There had been many times when I felt like giving up completely. I have to thank the staff for believing in me and teaching me to allow myself to fall because life is about trials, and that high school is not just a chapter in my life."

"Within a month of regularly attending this school, it became much harder for me to not care than it did to recognize that here I had constant support and love from my teachers and the rest of the staff."

"Once I got here things changed, I had teachers and principals that cared and welcomed my opinions. They listened instead of judging and made me feel ok to be myself, flaws and all. They made me want to do my best. Anyone that knew me would agree I am a different person."

"Getting over a painful experience is much like crossing monkey bars. You have to let go at some point in order to move forward. I would like to give a big THANK YOU to Creekside for being there for me!"