



## Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship

### **2000 BONNER CENTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

#### **Ann Leavenworth School (994 students) Fresno, CA**

Mrs. Quiring, 5th/6th Grade Teacher at Ann Leavenworth School, wrote about her program:

“Many of our older children have Reading Buddies in the primary grades. This is an excellent opportunity for our students to become role models for our younger students. We discuss before visiting another classroom why it is important to use our best behavior around little children and what it means to be a good role model. This opportunity gives them a taste of what a Cross-Age Tutor does and it encourages them to continue using that good behavior so they can be recommended for that job when they go off track.

“In fifth grade, the social studies and language arts curriculum lends itself very well to character education. For example, during our study about the colonial era, there are many lessons in our textbook that involve children helping their parents. This initiates a discussion about ways students can help their parents at home or ways they can help each other in the classroom.

“There are also opportunities to study character qualities such as justice and civic virtue when we study the slavery issue, the Statue of Liberty or the Declaration of Independence. My students recently read the book, Blue Willow, a story about a young girl who was a migrant worker. This story provided an opportunity to explore peer acceptance. Students discussed the character's feelings and why she felt out of place. We talked about how they would feel if they were in her shoes. Students were then able to write a paragraph describing different ways they could help a new student feel accepted and part of our school family.”

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#### **Burroughs Elementary School (1400 students) Fresno, CA**

The school and teacher expectations of student behavior and character development are regularly integrated into the school day. Students participate in the Second Step program, Here's Looking at You drug prevention program, Talking About Touching, the DARE program, and various teacher-led activities including recognition of the contributions and characteristics of great

leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington, Lincoln, Cesar Chavez, and various other leaders included in the social studies curriculum. The qualities of good character demonstrated by a variety of leaders in our country's history are the subject of essays, readings, and other various studies. Burroughs does an excellent job of recognizing historical figures and connecting their contributions to the students' lives.

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### **Burton Elementary School (600 students) Porterville, CA**

Burton Elementary School is fortunate to have a Special Friends Program. The program is directed by a full-time staff person. The Special Friends Director has completed, along with two classroom teachers, the Tulare County Office of Education's three-day Character Counts! Development Seminar.

The Special Friends Director has been extremely dedicated and creative in providing opportunities for students to develop and nurture the qualities and behaviors that define a person of good character. The following are outstanding examples of these opportunities:

1. The entire student body (600 students) participated in "The Pennies For Patients" fundraiser. This school-wide project generated over \$1500 dollars for leukemia victims and involved 30 teachers as well as over 1000 parents. The project was done in conjunction with the Pillar of the month program. Quite appropriately the Pillar for the month was 'Caring'.
2. The "Cool Caps for Kids" is another project for leukemia victims. This program provides Cool Caps for young leukemia patients who have undergone chemotherapy and lost their hair.

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### **Jefferson Elementary School (715 students) Dinuba, CA**

Students in grades 5 and 6 are eligible to participate in student council. Qualified students are nominated from each of the seven classrooms as representatives. Then, a schoolwide election is held to choose officers. Students make posters and prepare a campaign speech, delivered to eligible grade levels during lunch. Once this process is completed, student council meets to consider issues important to the student body. For the school year 1999-2000, the student council decided to approach Mrs. Haston, the principal, with a request to have ice cream sandwiches added to the ice cream choices available Friday afternoon. Mrs. Haston required the students to research the cost of the sandwiches compared to astropops and crunch bars. Since the sandwiches were slightly more expensive, the student council made several suggestions as to how this could be handled.

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**Mountain View Elementary School (659 students)**  
**Clovis, CA**

Mountain View provides many opportunities, within a student-centered program, that convey to children the commitment to character and values education. Mountain View's highest award is the Block MV. It is given to students who display well-rounded achievement and participation in the MV academic, co-curricular, and community service activities. Students must earn points in the various areas to demonstrate their ability, dedication, and responsibility in earning this award. The Exemplary Bear Award has been designed so all upper-grade students have an opportunity to earn the award. This requires a yearlong focus to plan and excel each semester. A special evening celebration is held in honor of the recipients.

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**Nelson Elementary School (643 students)**  
**Clovis, CA**

Nelson School recognizes that character education must be a joint effort between parents, staff, community and students themselves. It is believed that the problems in society today are systemic. Therefore, to help shape the attitudes of students and instill character values, all those involved in the lives of students need to take part. The Clovis Unified School District, as a whole, has adopted the Michael Josephson's Character Counts! School and workplace program promoting character education. On a bimonthly basis, articles on character are published and sent to every student, parent and staff member in the CUSD Today newspaper. Nelson distributes a school newsletter weekly that highlights student activities and accomplishments and reminds students and parents about the "character pillar" of the month. At a recent School Assessment Review Team (SART) meeting parents were presented with the Nelson Character Counts! program. Parents were given the opportunity to comment and make suggestions to help improve the character education program. When Nelson implemented the program, teachers were formally trained in Character Counts! And given lesson plans that are used as part of regular classroom instruction.

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**Pixley Elementary School (enrollment 850)**  
**Pixley, CA**

In a marvelous display of student support, a Character Counts! Mural (which can be seen on the Tulare County Office of Education web site: [www.tcoe.org](http://www.tcoe.org), was painted by members of the student body. The mural faces the playground so that all students, teachers and visitors to Pixley may observe this statement of school and community values.

The Positive Futures program addresses the needs of students displaying aggressive behaviors in grades 1 through 3. The program serves 20 students in group sessions for 14 weeks. The sessions target decision-making strategies that are used in the Character Counts! Program while also emphasizing the Six Pillars of Character as the framework for improving behavior. This program

is facilitated by a Character Counts! trained prevention specialist. The prevention specialist continues to track the students through the peer mediation program which she also facilitates.

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**Sun Empire Elementary School (850 students)  
Kerman, CA**

Our Peer Mediation program teaches students communication and mediation techniques, skills that improve ability to work effectively and cooperatively with others. Each year approximately 35 fifth and sixth grade students are selected by their peers for potential success as mediators. They attend two days of training planned and provided by advisor/teachers who attended the training through Fresno Pacific University. Upon completion, students wear bright yellow T-shirts on campus during recess so that other students can recognize them. They are available to help resolve disputes before they need the attention of adults. As Peer Mediators apply their skills, they teach other students. Peer mediators also assist with the Student of the Month ceremonies by setting up and serving snacks. The peer mediator advisors, along with the students in that program, plan all their activities, goals and training.