



Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship

2016 BONNER CENTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

CENTERVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Sanger Unified School District
48 Smith Ave. Sanger, CA 93657
Cristina Hernandez, Principal**

Centerville Elementary has been a Community of Caring school since 2003. Community of Caring promotes the five core values of Caring, Family, Respect, Responsibility, and Trust. We created our goal by reflecting on our Community of Caring core values and blending them with our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Centerville Elementary is committed to working with our community to reach out to those in need. One example is the collaboration between our school and our Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Our PTA believes that all students should have access to our school events and therefore all events at Centerville are free. This is important because we set the stage for all of our families to participate and in return have a supportive and family-like community.

As part of their core instruction, students learn about relevant concepts such as diversity, citizenship and popular topics in the news. Teachers have developed units, which include reading, writing, and speaking about these topics. We also have a designated program (Second Step) and time that focus on students' social emotional awareness. Teachers bring up character traits during a read aloud or character analysis in class, but also discuss real life character based on student decisions. Students are encouraged to be honest and given opportunities to practice honesty without consequences when discussing behavior.

Centerville Elementary and its staff promote and model fairness, equity, caring and respect for others and infuse character education throughout the school day in various forms. First our teachers have a great working relationship with each other. This is important because our students enjoy when we work together as a staff and do fun extra curricular activities like a flash mob during Lip Sync or dress up for Red Ribbon Week. Secondly, every month we have a Charger of the Month assembly where students are recognized for demonstrating that they are well rounded Chargers. These awards are based on Character alone and not academics. Students are called to the stage and every teacher reads why that student was selected. This

is a big honor and our students work hard to be recognized for their efforts in the classroom. Another way in which we encourage and promote kindness and respect is through our Charger Tickets. Students receive tickets when they model behaviors that we encourage. Finally, Centerville Elementary has several students on campus that require special services in a County Severely Handicapped Classroom. Our students have gained so much awareness and sensitivity towards students with special needs. Last year we had 5 general education students recognized by the Superintendent's Superstars Award during a Fresno County Board of Education meeting for their work with our special needs students.

This year during Thanksgiving break we were able to give 22 boxes of food with a turkey or ham to needy families in our community. While food drives are an established tradition, this year, our leadership class quickly responded to a new community need during the wild fires in the fall. Our leadership class saw the need to support our firefighters fighting the wild fires and started a drive to collect food, water, and hygiene products. This local drive rapidly turned into a district wide drive and many other school sites donated items.

Our students and parents...love that Centerville is a friendly place where students feel safe and thrive.

CENTURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
965 N. Sunnyside Ave. Clovis, California 93611
Gary Comstock, Principal

Century has made progress in character and civic education by using the 6 pillars of CHARACTER COUNTS! (Responsibility, Respect, Caring, Fairness, Citizenship and Trustworthiness) as the foundation to build upon. Additionally we focus on and promote Ethical Decision Making. Each month there is a school wide focus on an articulated character trait. At the end of the month a student from each classroom earns the Tiger of the Month Award. This award is earned by a student who demonstrates this character both inside and outside the classroom.

Other, less formal, measures of how we are progressing in our goal comes from student feedback. For an Open House, Century encouraged our students to complete the sentence, "My favorite thing about Century is..." Some of the responses included, "...everybody accepts who you are." and "... my wonderful teacher and my caring classmates. I like these because they make a great environment for me to learn."

Every Wednesday a link to a character video that highlights our Character Counts pillars is shared with teachers. Teachers then share and guide a class discussion on the video. Infusing the common language of Character Counts! along with real life scenarios, the students and teachers are better able to relate civic duty and good character to other aspects of school.

Our teachers and staff are very approachable and take an interest in the students' lives. Trained staff facilitate groups known as Clovis Intervention, which are run throughout the year and in all grade levels (except Kinder) and are based on need. Some examples of the groups focus are divorce and social skills.

We have a Principal's Advisory Committee comprised of historically underrepresented students, also very much a part of the decision-making process of the school by bringing to light any concerns that may be on campus.

Peer Counselors who are 5th and 6th graders who have been trained to listen and assist their peers in working through issues they may be having in their lives. Peer Counselors also hold a new student reception at the beginning of each year and check in with new students after a settling in period to make sure that our new friends are doing well with the transition. Peer Counselors also run a table at Century's kindergarten registration to color with and "hang out" with our new kindergarten friends to help with the transition to school.

The Century staff and community love our children and strive to fulfill our obligation to the students. It is our duty to not only build a strong academic base for our students, but develop their ability to utilize that base to be a strong, productive member of their school, their family, and society.

COPPER HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
1881 E. Plymouth Way Fresno, CA 93720
Todd Deck, Principal

The character and civic education goals for Copper Hills Elementary are clearly stated daily by every student that attends Copper Hills. These goals and expectations are expressed in our Miner Code, which states, "Together we are better. Take pride in your work. Make a difference. Take care of one another. Character counts...even when no one is looking." When Copper Hills began developing its character and civic education program they used these principles expressed by Doc Buchanan as well as the 6 pillars of the Character Counts program that is a part of all Clovis Unified Schools.

At Copper Hills our Miner Code and Character Counts programs are even incorporated into the general education classroom in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards. With new focus on listening and speaking skills, as well as collaboration with peers, teachers have been able to take classroom lessons on character, civic and behavior expectations and combine them within the classroom setting. Our teachers are making it a priority to teach behavior expectations within the classroom through group roles and responsibilities, as well in explicit instruction on behavior expectations in various areas of the campus.

At Copper Hills we have a school psychologist that meets with students and groups regularly to ensure that students are being success in school academically as well as social-emotionally. The adults and staff members at the site work daily to ensure that all students at Copper Hills feel that it is a site that promotes equality, fairness, caring and respect. In the classrooms teachers practice these elements through strategies such as random, non-volunteers for class questioning and participation, as well as creating classroom cultures that celebrate differences and promote the elements of the Miner Code.

Being a school that has a large population of students that are socio-economically more well off we feel that it is a big focus of our character and civic education program to give back and make a difference in the communities where we live. Throughout the school year Copper Hills partners with various programs to Make a Difference. In the first fall Copper Hills partners with another elementary school in the area and hosts a “Pink Game” in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness. In the winter Copper Hills focusing on Making a Difference through being the only elementary school in the area to join with Clovis Rotary in a canned food drive.

At Copper Hills we believe that the Miner Code should be an essential part of every student, staff member, and family that are a part of our community. The Miner Code is not only a method of teacher civic and character education, but it is a way to grow valuable members of society. The belief that “Together we are better” is shown every day in how our teachers work together in PLC’s, our students create championship willing teams in athletics and co-curriculars, and our strong community connection.

DAWSON & SUNSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Coalinga-Huron Unified School District
1303 & 985 Sunset St. Coalinga, CA 93210
Cari Carlson, Principal

As a school we have established character and civic education goals as indicated through the LCAP, site plan, and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Goals were created in order to build some accountability within our sites. The goals were created by a wide representation of stakeholders including staff, students, and parents.

Through the PBIS process we have also established school wide expectations that we refer to as the “paw pledge.” The paw pledge expectations recite “I am responsible, I am respectful, I am safe, I am a problem solver.” The paw pledge is taught and reinforced as a school wide initiative in grades k-5. Students recite the paw pledge in the classroom, at assemblies, and other school events.

Once a month during student of the month assemblies, the school counselor goes over character traits by defining the trait of the month, teaching a brief lesson, and

showing a video on what the character trait looks like. Teachers reinforce this in their classroom as often as possible by embedding the character lessons in the core units of instruction.

The counseling department also provides social skills groups for at risk students using the “Steps to Success” curriculum. We also offer a mentoring program where High School students are trained on character development and mentor elementary school students on our campus. Finally we also have a peer mediation system called Helping Everyone Learn Problem-solving (HELP) where “paw leaders” help their peers with conflict resolution using respect agreements and strategies similar to those used in restorative justice practices.

As a school we have adopted a behavior management system entitled “time to teach.” Time to teach is the philosophy that behavior needs to be taught repeatedly and progressively as we would teach any academic subject. It’s the idea that we can’t just expect students to know how to behave properly without setting clear expectations, modeling behavior, providing explicit instruction, and offering opportunities to learn the expected behavior. The curriculum includes “teach to’s.” These are lessons that a teacher offers the class on a specific behavior expectation using best practice teaching strategies. Teach to’s can be school wide or it can be specific to the class. Rules are posted in the restrooms as reminders to support staff enforcement of rules. By having clear expectations and consistency, we are ensuring a clean and secure learning environment that is safe for all students. Students also know that we care because they understand that the expectations apply to everyone even the adults.

Our students are involved in service learning activities particularly for the veterans and elderly of our town. Being part of such a small, tight knit, community serves as the perfect platform for strong partnerships with agencies, businesses and organizations in Coalinga. We are able to contribute to food drives, write letters to soldiers, visit senior living centers and send thank you letters to law enforcement agencies. Students are given the opportunities to raise money for “Pennies for Patients” and other organizations. Our student leadership members, “paw leaders” are also very involved in volunteer activities at recess and after school. As a team they are given the opportunity to decide how they would like to contribute to the school, others, or the community.

Shifting the culture to a positive one is not the easiest task, but it is with great confidence, we can say we have done so successfully

DEL REY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Sanger Unified School District
10620 Morro Ave. Del Rey, CA 93616
Pete Munoz, Principal

At Del Rey Elementary, we pride ourselves in educating the whole child by providing instruction for each student in academic, social, and emotional development. We accomplish this through a continuous expectation for good behavior while at school and at home. We utilize the Second Step Character Education Program and our Positive Behavior Intervention Support system. These programs support the Community of Caring Program that has been established since 1996 at Del Rey Elementary School.

In addition, we have developed a “Knights in Training” academy to support students who show a trend in negative behavior and our Peer Mediation group was trained in November and is busy helping to resolve any problems on the playground through discussion and effective questioning procedures.

Every Monday is devoted to explicit character education teaching using the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and the Second Step Character Education Program.

Weekly classroom meetings bring students and teachers together to create a community where each student’s opinion, feelings, and thoughts are honored and real life situations are discussed, modeled, and practiced. The teacher guides the meetings and continuously aligns any discussion to the Community of Caring traits.

Another goal is for students to take pride in their community. Last June, we teamed up with POM Wonderful to plan and carry out a Community Clean- Up Day. Students and employees of POM Wonderful took part in a cleanup of the school, park, neighborhood, and the local Boys and Girls Club. Our school benefited by having all of their desks and chairs washed, windows cleaned, cobwebs cleared, lines repainted, basketball courts painted, and a new flowerbed. At the park, students assisted in placing new bark in the play structures, painting, and cleaning up the baseball field. They did such a great job that Del Rey was able to start their first baseball league in years last summer.

Our Glee Club sang the National Anthem at a Fresno Grizzlies game in May of last year and sang Christmas songs for a convalescent hospital in December. The smiles that they brought to the faces of the patients continue to resonate with the students today.

Del Rey Elementary has challenges with high levels of English learners and high poverty in the community, yet our students continue to strive each year. Our students are succeeding because they believe in themselves and know what is expected of them. We believe students will be successful based on the actions of adults and it is our responsibility to teach the behaviors we expect from our students. We continue to teach the whole student here at Del Rey because WE can and WE will. Go Knights Go!

DRY CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District

1273 N. Armstrong Ave. Clovis, CA 93619
Aaron Cook, Principal

Dry Creek Elementary students, staff, and community believe that character education must be interwoven with academic education to develop a strong generation of adults. Every Dry Creek student is encouraged to develop quality leadership skills and to live and work well together as productive citizens. Dry Creek's character education is not a program, but a lifestyle.

Recognition occurs in class meetings, verbal commendations on the playground and halls, character counts slips, classroom incentives, morning announcements, weekly character drawings, monthly character awards, quarterly personal responsibility events, and sports competition character awards. It is our belief that the development of character education remains an ongoing process; the outcome of promoting an ethical moral code is the foundation for success in life.

Dry Creek's character education curriculum includes:

- *"Bully Proofing Your School "* - taught the first six weeks of school
- *Character Counts program* - trait displayed in every classroom, MPR, and library
- *Red Ribbon Week* - community involvement on Agency Day
- *Transition Team program* - supporting identified at-risk students
- *Monthly Multi-Cultural focus* - promote understanding of cultural traditions

Biographies of people who have positively impacted society as well as themed lessons emphasizing morals are the basis of classroom literature. History lessons stress reflection on historical motives, exploration of cultural significance, and focus on application to encourage personal growth. First and sixth grade students write to pen pals to expand their understanding of others. All grade levels attend assemblies such as *Mr. Eco*, *Bike Safety*, and *Best of Me*, which support core values.

Our school psychologist facilitates the Clovis Support Intervention (CSI) groups which model team building, personal sharing, and endorse acceptance for students that need gentle guidance. Dry Creek's parents partner with class activities such as field trips, art, and cooking. The administrative staff visits classrooms every day, validating good behavior and hard work. Panther morning announcements include "kudos" for student accomplishments, reminders of how Dry Creek Panthers show good character throughout the day, and encourage us to take care of each other.

Classrooms rely on student help to run smoothly by leading the flag salute, serving in the school cafeteria at lunch, greeting visitors, answering phones, and helping peers with a project. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students are selected to be members of the Principal Advisory Committee (PAC). This group meets with the

principal and teacher advisor to share ideas on campus culture, problem solve student concerns, and collectively engage to make positive changes on campus. New this year is the “Champion of Character Award,” which commends opposing team players for showing overall good character and behavior at the athletic competition.

Dry Creek students are connected with peer role models from their feeder high school. Buchanan High School students volunteer as PE tutors in the Dry Creek primary grades; vocal and instrumental groups perform at assemblies, and leadership students assist at rallies, movie nights, and game days. On Agency Day, fire, police, ambulance, National Park Rangers, DEA, and sheriff departments highlight ways to assist others and discuss reasons to stay away from poor choices. Student involvement at every level, small or large, short or long term, is meaningful to the development of the child’s mind, body, and spirit.

FUGMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
10825 N. Cedar Ave. Fresno, CA 93730
Tami Graham, Principal

Our vision to impart students with the character and knowledge necessary to excel in life has not changed since our school’s opening in 2004. Since our opening we have experienced annual continued growth in enrollment numbers and demographic changes, but our focus to help our students build good character has remained the same.

Character Counts Post Cards: These Post Cards are awarded to students by staff members when they observe a student demonstrating any of the six pillars of character.

Block F: Fugman’s highest award is the Block F Award. It is awarded to students in fourth through sixth grades who display well-rounded achievement and participation in academic, co-curricular, and community service activities. This requires long-term planning in order to capture the Block F award each semester. Every year the number of Block F recipients has increased.

Character Counts Events: Students earn the Character Counts Event by modeling the Six Pillars each quarter. Students track their own Character Counts points in their classroom planner which allows them to manage their own behavior and take responsibility for their actions.

Participation In Sports: To encourage sportsman like conduct, at the end of each sporting activity our coaches select a member of the opposing team who they felt showed strong character and good sportsmanship and give that athlete an “Athlete of Character” certificate and thank them for exceptional sportsmanship. This is done in front of both teams. During our end of season athletic awards

each team gets to award one of their players the Magnificent Marlin award, which is given to the athlete who has exhibited behavior reflected from all six pillars during the entire season. This is a cherished award by both the athlete and parents, because he/she is being awarded on their good character and not on their athletic ability.

Multicultural Emphasis: Throughout the school year teachers design lessons where focus is placed on learning about all different cultures. In our weekly schoolwide newsletter we have a section called The Cultural Corner where different cultures are highlighted and interesting facts are given. To further highlight cultural awareness each grade level is assigned a month during the school year and they must submit a multicultural art project which is hung up in the front office.

Fugman Student Council: The Student Council serves as a vehicle for students to understand parliamentary procedures of government and judicial meetings as well as to understand student governance, differences of opinion, and how to value the democratic process. Student Council promotes good character behavior on a daily basis by participating in morning announcements where students report accomplishments, advertise events, share information, read multicultural quotes, encourage school spirit and remind them of our Marlin Code. Some other meaningful opportunities students get to participate in are Peer Mediation, GATE, Safety Marlin, social skills group, and Multicultural activities to name a few.

We believe we are doing our part to help our Fugman Marlins become contributing, kind humanitarians who will be a benefit to our future.

GARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
1315 N. Peach Ave. Clovis, CA 93611
Jennifer Bump, Principal

At Garfield Elementary, it is our goal to provide students with a variety of opportunities to serve the community through public service. Our goals were established by first examining the types of challenges that our students are faced within the school community. The Character Counts! Our Garfield teachers and support staff are enthusiastic about public service on a personal level and bring their passion for contributing to the community to the classroom.

The success of our character and civic education goals is measured by the number of character related referrals to the office, the number of students participating in our community based service activities, the number of students volunteering in onsite service opportunities, and feedback from parents on our annual School Assessment Review Team (SART) survey. Garfield parents have rated us "Superior" every year for the past 12 years on SART survey question #11 which assesses the "extent to which Character Counts! is an important part of the educational program at your

child's school".

The principal, vice principal, school psychologist, and staff recognize that building open, positive relationships with students and parents is critical to ensuring that our students feel safe coming forward with concerns and interpersonal challenges. At Garfield, students are welcomed to approach any adult on campus and the adults will either help the student resolve minor issues or refer the student to the vice principal, principal, or school psychologist. The administration utilizes conflict resolution strategies when appropriate, revisits character education lessons, provides empowerment strategies, and may refer students to CSI (Clovis Support and Intervention) groups for further support if needed.

A school wide "Character Cubs" program on campus is employed. Any staff member can recognize students who are exemplifying a positive character quality by rewarding the student with a Character Cub card. Some examples of activities students have been recognized for are turning in lost jewelry to the office, staying behind in the cafeteria to help clean up, and befriending a new student and helping them feel comfortable and welcome on campus. In order to model the desired character qualities we seek to instill in our students, it is important that the staff model these behaviors and provide students with ample opportunities to practice acting out appropriate responses to real life scenarios with support.

Block G students can serve as COPS (Cubs on Patrol) to help the Campus Monitors and administration ensure a safe and clean campus. The Garfield campus is shared with a special education center for medically fragile students. Garfield general education students volunteer at the Garfield Center during their recesses throughout the school year helping the students and forging friendships. Students may earn points for volunteering at the Center for community service. Many students reverse mainstream because they feel the need to help those students who are disabled.

HARVEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Central Unified School District
6514 W. Gettysburg Ave. Fresno, CA 93723
Julie Shafer, Principal

The old African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child," is more than a saying. We are a community and all the students that come to us are our responsibility.

Our school utilizes Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) to teach our school wide expectations. Safety involves keeping our hands and feet to ourselves at all times, helping others remain safe from bullying, and notifying adults of unsafe situations. Being Respectful entails using kind words and actions, being accepting of others' differences, and taking pride in our school. Being Responsible includes making good choices for yourself, treating others with respect, and standing up for what's right. All of our actions are tied back to these three expectations. They were

chosen because they encompass many aspects of behavior and are applicable in different situations and locations.

Working on achieving our school expectations is a daily effort. Progress towards every student being Safe, Respectful and Responsible is determined each month based on our student discipline data in School Wide Information System (SWIS) for our Tier 1 students, our Check In Check Out data for our Tier 2 students who are working on specific behavior goals and based on the PBIS team monthly meeting and individualized schedules and counseling for Tier 3 students who have intensive needs.

Each month a new character virtue, Trustworthy, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship is introduced to the school via the school newsletter as well as in each classroom. All teachers review the character virtue with the class and discuss what it means and how they demonstrate that trait at school every day. By the end of the month, each student is asked to respond to what they have learned and write about what that trait means to them, how they exemplify the character trait and or why it's important to develop that character virtue. Every classroom supports a Character Education wall that displays the students' writing.

At the beginning of the year, all of our staff members created a Respect Agreement which is followed from teacher to students, teacher to teacher, teacher to administration and staff to the community. It is posted in our staff meeting room and referred to at the beginning of every meeting. Teachers and support staff are trained in our PBIS expectations just like our students so expectations are consistent. Everyone also uses the same language when speaking to our students and ties any behavior to our Hawk's Honor for redirection.

Service learning is an important part of the educational experience for our students. They need to feel empowered to be change agents and understand that their actions can have positive results that ripple throughout the community. At Harvest, we encourage our students to give back based on their talents and offer the Block H Award to recognize students for excelling in academics, community service, arts or athletics. Our sixth grade students also have the opportunity to receive the Rotary Junior Service Award for volunteering forty hours by contributing their time in their community, using their skills, cultural awareness and athletics. Our goal is to recognize our students for their efforts to make our school, community and world a better place and develop their self-esteem.

JOHN FREMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Fowler Unified School District
3320 Las Palmas Ave. Glendale, CA 91208
Christin Molano, Principal

Fremont Elementary supports the District's Big Ten and has implemented the Big Ten as part of our classroom expectations. The Big Ten is also the foundation of

SOAR, our PBIS acronym which stands for: *Show respect, Observe safety guidelines, Act with integrity, and Remain responsible*. Students who show SOARin' behavior are celebrated with an Eagle Recognition, Student of the Month, or Character of the Month.

Character and civic education is infused in our Units of Study and as a part of our history curriculum, which lends itself to citizenship as we learn about our nation, our communities, and our state. In our literature circles and guided reading groups, teachers foster discussions with students about relationships and character. Students are encouraged to reflect on their readings and learnings and apply to their own life and extend those learnings into future actions and daily living.

We build good citizens by being good citizens. At Fremont, teachers and staff model the Eagle Way by being respectful to our students, by showing kindness and compassion, and by setting an expectation that all students are a valued part of our community.

Currently we have a fifth grade classroom who has begun their "Adopt a Cop" project which promotes citizenship and creating lasting friendships between and officer and child, giving a renewed sense of community. Students practice respect for our earth daily as the fourth grade students in particular, recycle cans and plastic as part of their way to apply conservation. The money they receive from their recycling project is used to purchase plants and flowers to beautify our school. Students learn about the photosynthesis process and learn how to plant flowers and take responsibility for the care and maintenance of the plants. Third grade participates in Pennies for Patients. Students graph the money collected and apply math skills to this service-learning project. In addition, we began our school-wide Beanies, Mittens, & Scarves Drive to build awareness for those in our community who may not have the extra accessories to keep warm this winter and to give students the opportunity to show compassion for those less fortunate.

Fremont service-learning projects and units of study all integrate citizenship and civic-education; therefore, our students naturally understand the importance of being model citizens. Students know it is not just something we recite but something we do every day.

JOHN WASH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Sanger Unified School District
6350 E. Lane Ave. Fresno, CA 93727
Amy Jones, Principal

John Wash Elementary seeks to imbed the following goals into its character and civic education program: civility, courage, self-discipline, persistence, concern for the common good, and respect for others.

John Wash Elementary started its character education program back in 2003 when

it became a Community of Caring school. It was implemented through a district-wide grant that targeted five core values of Caring, Respect, Responsibility, Trust and Family. For the last twelve years we have infused these values throughout our curriculum, school culture and community through various community service projects, programs and special community events.

Teachers create democratic classroom environments by involving students in decision-making and taking responsibility for making the classroom a pleasant place to learn. John Wash teachers collaborate to build school and community service learning projects that provide students with relevant and motivational opportunities to connect the formal classroom instruction with the principles and processes of democratic life through practical community problem solving. This year, John Wash Elementary will plant a school garden that will incorporate Kindergarten and fifth grade service learning opportunities. The following year, all other grade levels will create inquiry-based service learning projects that address community problems. From topics such as drought, to bird migration, to feeding the hungry, and myriad agricultural topics, the garden project will expand the following year into a community garden, where parents will be recruited as community partners in character education. By letting parents know that the school considers them their child's first and most important moral teacher, the community garden will give parents a specific way they can reinforce the values the school is teaching.

Sixth graders at John Wash Elementary have buddied up with Kindergarteners to mentor and tutor throughout the year. This engagement builds respect, vertical articulation and mutual understanding between students of different age levels. Civic activities are developing at John Wash Elementary such as student government, mock trial, speech and debate, and a special room set up like an authentic courtroom to role play and practice civic learning opportunities. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are more motivated to learn, more confident, and exhibit greater leadership qualities. For these reasons, John Wash continues to offer character education through sports, after school enrichment opportunities in STEM (Science, technology, engineering and math), the arts and performing arts, garden club, cooking, and Robotics, along with intervention classes in both ELA and Mathematics.

To kick off 2016, John Wash Elementary will develop a recycling program that will span both communities of Sunnyside and Sanger. John Wash students will support Operation Gratitude by sending letters to our troops. This will be linked with a unit of study at all grade levels. Later on in the spring, we will revisit our friends at the California Armenian Retirement Home to do fun arts and crafts projects. John Wash students and families will also choose two Saturdays in the spring to pick up trash at our parks to support the Nicodemus Wilderness Project. This will also be linked to STEM activities in core units of study in the classroom across grade levels.

What makes John Wash Elementary a unique and special school is how we celebrate each other's successes. We will continue to strive each day to make our community a better place, and we realize it begins with each one of us.

MALAGA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Fowler Unified School District
3910 S. Ward Ave. Fresno, CA 93725
Luisa Custodio Lopes, Principal

Character Education is a priority for us because we understand that having good character is just as important as having good grades. When students leave us, we expect them to have not only learned academic standards, but moral standards as well. The school goals are derived from and support the district's core character education traits, known as Fowler Unified's "Big Ten." The ten traits strategically chosen were *responsibility, respect, courage, citizenship, caring, fairness, honesty, work ethic, trustworthiness, and duty.*

Fowler Unified's Big Ten Character Traits are embedded in the curriculum and culture of each school. Kindergarten through fifth grade teachers have specifically embarked on designing core curriculum units integrating character and civic education into English Language Arts, History, Social Studies, and Mathematics. By incorporating teaching strategies that encourage cooperation, citing evidence, evaluating sources, interpreting information, and writing and speaking we will develop students who can think for themselves, make informed decisions and state their opinions in a healthy and respectful manner.

Monday Morning Meetings were implemented for the first time at Malaga this year. These ten minute meetings are built around key character education lessons lead by the site administration. The lessons are correlated to the Big Ten character trait for the current month and usually include a short video clip followed up with a discussion lead by the administrator. The lesson for the week is reinforced throughout the week, at lunch time, where a question relating back to the Monday lesson is posed by the administrator. Students are asked to discuss solutions or answers with their peers sitting nearby. This is followed by students being selected to come to the front of the cafeteria to share ideas or solutions with all peers.

Every classroom participates in some type of service learning project during the school year. Service learning projects are based on a community need and connected to the curriculum by linking projects to specific standards. Students are encouraged to take responsibility and ownership for service projects by planning projects, setting project goals and timelines, and connecting with community agencies. The type of skills students learn through service are exactly the ones needed to be successful in the work world, which are difficult to teach through more traditional methods of instruction. During the 2014-2015 school year, Malaga students volunteered over 236 hours. Students are given special recognition at the end-of-the year assembly for their service.

Listed below are just a few of the service learning projects students have participated in at Malaga Elementary in recent years:

- *Adopt an Animal Program at the Fresno Chaffee zoo*
- *Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation*
- *Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Pennies for Patients*
- *Recycled juice pouches and other items*
- *Prepared and delivered sack lunches to the homeless in the Fresno area known as "tent city"*
- *Collected and distributed toiletries to the Poverello House, a center for the homeless*

Clearly, character education and service learning is not intermittently touched upon as individual teachers see fit, but rather a vital part of who we are as a community. *We are Malaga Falcons and we will F.L.Y!*

MARSHALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Fowler Unified School District
142 N. Armstrong Ave. Fowler, CA 93625
Kathleen Denton, Principal

One of the first things all children must learn, and one of the hardest things to teach at a deep level, is to consider and understand the needs of others. Included in civic learning is character education- the awareness and demonstration of positive character traits (and the need to recognize and reward those characteristics when students demonstrate them.

Marshall Elementary has expectations for all students that are clearly articulated within the Fowler *Big 10* (Honesty, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Trustworthiness, Respect, Work Ethic, Courage, Duty, and Citizenship), which are also incorporated within English Language Arts Units of Study and lesson delivery. By implementing the *Big 10*, students have an understanding on what their daily expectation is as a student and as a citizen. This also allows for the development of positive social and leadership skills. Overall, this supports the ability for students to develop 21st Century skills that will lead them towards the path of college or career readiness.

Marshall Elementary School staff infuses the Fowler Unified *Big 10* Character Education program into their daily lessons and assignments, rather than utilize a specific curriculum at each grade level. Students naturally find themselves in "teachable moments" and teachers look within the regular materials for examples of character traits- Duty, Courage, Fairness, and Respect, for example – and have activities/lessons that tap into these traits while still focusing on academic areas like reading comprehension.

Ultimately, Marshall elementary implements units of study to infuse core curriculum while simultaneously teaching valuable character education lessons in addition to lessons in civic education through common core state standards.

Educators and other site level staff at Marshall Elementary are able to model the *Big 10* core character traits for the students by integrating the traits through core instruction. As an example, Kindergarten staff has developed one of their English Language Arts Units of Study, which is created solely to implement common core state standards, to teach students about citizenship. During this unit, students are taught common core standards that correlate with the different aspects of being a good citizen. In Fowler Unified, citizenship is the Character Trait of the Month for November.

Ultimately, integrating character education and Fowler's *Big 10* in classrooms will have positive outcome student performance and will lead them on their way to a path of career or college readiness.

MARTIN LUTHER KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Hanford Unified School District
820 Hume Ave. Hanford, CA 93230
Debra Colvard, Principal

As we compare our data across the years, the growth in academic achievement and character development is evident. Students at MLK have worked hard in and out of the classroom to increase their skills in reading, writing, and math. Our school has recently been recognized by Dr. Anthony Muhammad in his new book, "*Overcoming the Achieving Gap Trap*" for the academic and cultural changes demonstrated by the campus throughout the years in spite of a high minority, high-poverty, and large English learner population.

Character Counts is an active program at our campus. Students are educated on the six pillars of good character and it is a common occurrence to walk into a reading lesson where teachers are emphasizing book characters demonstrating these traits or lack thereof. Each month is assigned a particular character pillar, and a school wide effort is made to assist students in demonstrating this trait.

MLK has also adopted Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) to enhance the character education on campus. PBIS, through the use of trainings each trimester, establishes behavior expectations for all areas on campus, and provides supports to students in order to achieve social, emotional and academic success. These supports include a psychologist and counselor on campus, a student specialist, and an interventionist.

In order to support the safety of students on the playground and their ability to learn proper communication skills amongst their peers, MLK has launched a program called Peer Mediators. A group of 28 students trained by support staff, pair

together and offer support with conflict resolution while out on the playground. A similar model is also used with the pairing of older students with younger students. MLK students work to ensure that their campus not only remains safe, but also clean. Students clean their rooms each day, and volunteers work hard during their recess picking up trash and helping custodial staff with basic upkeep.

Similar to the peer mediation, we also participate in a mentorship between students and staff. As students are identified requiring extra support rather academically or behaviorally, staff are notified and mentors are chosen to help support the students. Mentoring involves staff members befriending the student by making special attempts to talk with the students, discussing special events in their lives, and bonding with them during different components of their days. Students are not aware that they are a part of this mentorship program, but classroom teachers of the selected students recognize a positive change in their behaviors or skills.

Organizations such as Pennies for Patients, UNICEF, and Camp Taylor have been recent recipients of our students' generosity. Each giving project is launched with an assembly in which students learn about the organization and people in which they serve. They are then encouraged to collect and gather small donations. Because a high percentage of our students are from a high poverty household, every donation serves as a big gift from their heart.

For the past two years, our school has also paired up with a local convalescent hospital in which our students have adopted the patients as their surrogate grandparents. Each month, a grade level walks to the hospital to visit with them, bring special hand-made presents, participate in activities, and perform special dances or songs for them. This opportunity provides many with interactions from elderly that they might not otherwise have. It also instills a sense of respect for their elders and demonstrates compassion for others.

We believe in building the character of our youth and our culture. Through effective collaborative teamwork, we know the importance of providing strong role models for our students. MLK has become a place where everyone grows, students, staff, and parents.

NELSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
1336 W. Spruce Ave. Pinedale, CA 93650
Kendra Matson, Principal

Our goals for character and civic education have been collaboratively determined by our stakeholders in an effort to create a culture at our school of commonality of behavior and democratic mindedness that allows everyone to prosper and grow.

Keeping our school safe for all students starts with the positive behavior intervention systems in place. Expectations for behavior are specifically taught and

practiced by all students. Nelson offers students support groups to students who need additional emotional support. Students dealing with divorce, death, bullying and/or making friends are given the opportunity to meet with other peers encountering the same type of need and with the guidance of a trained facilitator, share their feelings and learn how to empathize with others.

All of the adults at Nelson Elementary believe in treating each other and all students with unconditional positive regard. This belief is the foundation for all interactions between individuals, resulting in fairness, equity, caring and respect as the norm for social and professional behavior.

At Nelson Elementary we believe in educating a child in mind, body and spirit. We strive to create individuals who will be productive and will be positive additions to our society. We also strive to create a nurturing and empathetic culture and an environment which accepts and includes all individuals no matter what their socioeconomic background, race or religion. We do this purposefully each and every day due to the diverse population and transiency of students who attend our school. We want our students to develop habits of character which can be implemented and integrated into their lives, not only during their regular school day, but outside of school as well.

PIONEER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Pioneer Union Elementary (Hanford) School District

8810 14th Ave. Hanford, CA 93230

Sharon Cronk, Principal

At PES, the goal for students is to be active in their school and community as well as being proud, aware, wise, and safe (PAWS). PAWS is a school-wide acronym that was put into place with the implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) two years ago.

At last measurement, PES had a 97.1% daily attendance rate, well above the state target. Pioneer has an active student council comprised of 26 students. There are another 28 students involved in a quasi-peer mediation program called Panther Pals that are not also involved in student council. Pioneer also offers intramural sports, wherein over 50% of eligible students participate. Intramural sports are managed by a staff member, but are mostly student led and student run. Pioneer has 27 students in a recycling club who go to every room on campus each week to collect recyclable materials. Outside of the school day, nearly 25% of Pioneer families attended the Winter Family Fun night hosted by PES.

In August, January, and again in April, students are explicitly taught behavior expectations in all areas of the school in an event called "Passport Day" in conjunction with the implementation of PBIS. Passport day involves each teacher taking his or her class to various non-classroom settings (i.e. the cafeteria, library, hallways, playground, etc.) and a select staff member is there waiting for the class in

order to teach them the expected behaviors and citizenship requirements in each area of the school using the common language of “PAWS” (Be Proud, Aware, Wise, and Safe).

Panther Pals can be seen with their bright orange vests on every playground. Student Council can often be found planning the next school event. And of course, you can always find an intramural game going on during lunch. With so many students involved during the school day, naturally it carries over to outside the school day.

At Pioneer, civic service opportunities are a priority as a means to build student leadership and awareness of the importance of stewardship. Students have the opportunity to participate in Student Council, Panther Pals, and the Recycling Club.

Participation in Student Council requires students to serve their fellow classmates by organizing school wide events, attendance at weekly meetings during their lunch recess, and attending school events in order to assist in their implementation. Student Council Members must not only apply, campaign, and run for an office by getting signed off by peers, a teacher and administration approval, but they also have to follow a rigorous criteria to maintain eligibility for participation.

The Student Council organizes an annual school wide Canned Food Drive that raises nonperishable items for the less fortunate. All items collected are donated to the local Salvation Army. This year alone, students at PES donated over 2,000 food items to help those in need. Student Council also organizes Write a Veteran Campaign prior to Veterans Day. This is a school wide effort where students Kindergarten through fifth grade write letters or draw pictures for service men and women. This creates a dialogue in classes with students and teachers that tells of the importance of serving your country to ensure freedom for all and preserving everyone’s rights.

The Panther Pals program has a focus on older students mentoring and assisting younger students with peer mediation and overall playground support. Thus creating a safe and nurturing playground environment for Kindergarten through third grade students. Panther Pals have to apply for a position, go through training, and adhere to their weekly schedules.

The value of character education and civic learning are not lost upon the Pioneer family, but are embraced. PES prides itself on teaching the whole student and not just a small piece.

REAGAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
3701 Ashlan Ave. Clovis, CA 93619
Janet Samuelian, Principal

As a result of our implementation of PACK Pride and Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS), referral incidents are down by 20% and suspensions are down by 70% since implementation.

The PBIS committee meets monthly to review data from the previous month concerning suspensions, referrals, and other issues affecting students. Discussions are held through the prism of P.A.C.K. Teachers are brought into the conversation, and discussions are held about which character traits need to be emphasized to solve the most recent data trends. Interventions are then held with those students who need additional support through our Transition Team, CSI (Clovis Support and Intervention) groups and from additional staff. Students are recognized every Monday in front of the school student body for modeling character traits. A bulletin board in the cafeteria lists the names of every “Leader of the Pack” who has been recognized during the weekly announcements. Our student council members are a part of this process every Monday. Students and staff conduct a weekly inspection of the campus to note who is keeping their area clean. Feedback and rewards are given each week.

Each month during our school year we focus on one pillar of character, such as Respect and Trustworthiness. Writing activities and role playing are just a couple of the ways these pillars are infused into our curriculum. On Fridays the school holds a “Five Minute Friday” lesson which focuses on the weekly character trait. Teachers lead character and empathy lessons to promote a psychologically safe and caring environment.

Our focus on character development means that our students must be active participants in co-curricular programs. During athletic competitions, we emphasize character development over winning the game or competition. We have implemented the Wolfpack Award to provide evidence for this value. At the end of the each game our teams (coaches and students) vote on and choose a visiting athlete who stood out showing positive character traits. That visiting athlete is awarded with a certificate for outstanding sportsmanship. Our teams and players “howl” in their honor.

The students at Reagan also are involved in PAWS PALS. This program pairs regular education students up with students from our Autism Class. Both sets of students benefit tremendously from this pairing. Functional Life Skills students are paired with Reading Buddies from regular ed who provide ongoing support and service to their peer buddies.

One of the key ways that we support our kids is by getting involved with the community through our Block R program. Mentors from our staff listen to the students’ interests, and help them craft projects that will help the community at large. Block R students have been involved in service projects throughout the community. They have done clean-up projects, adopted animals, participated in fundraising walks and other forms of service.

Reagan strives to create students who will be positive contributors to their communities and to the world. "Intelligence plus character is the true goal of education." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Reagan Elementary staff and students embody that goal and strive to contribute positively to their school and community.

REAGAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Sanger Unified School District
1586 S. Indianola Ave. Sanger, CA 93657
John Hannigan, Principal

As a "Community of Caring" school, we strive to integrate the five core values - Caring, Family, Respect, Trust and Responsibility - throughout our curriculum, programs, and school environment.

Reagan staff members integrate character education throughout the school year by teaching character lessons weekly (Second Step and L.E.A.P.S.) and planning activities that create a strong foundation in behavior. Students are given countless opportunities to learn and practice using our values and positive behavior expectations. Our Leadership and Behavior teams introduced these positive behavior expectations to supplement and enhance our Community of Caring efforts.

Adults at Reagan promote fairness, equity, caring, and respect by explicitly teaching these character traits and by being role models to the students. This is evident in teaching character lessons in the classroom, participating in community events, providing students with a safe, nurturing environment through active supervision, celebrating S.O.A.R.ing with Character, and being someone that students can turn to. We believe that adult visibility and connections with students are the driving force in building good character traits in students. We also believe in recognizing and rewarding our student role models at this school. Every student has a chance to earn a Community of Caring gold medallion by the end of the year. Teachers keep track of students who are meeting their grade level S.O.A.R. with Character expectations with classroom charts and trimester tracking sheets. Progress is communicated to students and families throughout the year and documented on "positive parent contact logs" by each teacher. The principal requires that each teacher make at least one positive phone call home each week - Mr. Hannigan makes five positive phone calls or contacts weekly - to help build better connections with our families..

The Olweus Anti-Bullying and Second Step programs are also taught in every classroom. Anti-bullying rules and "S.O.A.R." expectations have been clearly articulated and posted in all locations on campus. We also implement "Stop, Walk, and Talk" bully prevention, which is taught school-wide to students and staff. Staff members are taught how to address bullying and students are taught skills on how to respond peacefully. We follow this up with a schoolwide kick-off rally where peer mediators role-play scenarios to teach students how to include others and prevent

bullying. We also added a “Red Hawk Talk Box” in the front office for students and staff to anonymously report problems or suggest ways to improve the culture of our school. Our peer mediation program is a trained team of fourth and fifth grade students, who work with their peers to solve problems peacefully with fairness and respect.

Reagan focuses on each Community of Caring value for two months at a time, which enables us to cover the five values over the duration of the entire school year. For example, one popular selection is The Empty Pot by Demi. After reading this book, each teacher discusses its meaning and the importance of how the character trait of honesty exhibited in the book relates to our Community of Caring values. Other popular titles include How to Fill a Bucket, Grouchy Ladybug, Chrysanthemum, Frog and Toad, Elmer, and Elf on the Shelf for primary teachers. Upper grade students also read chapter books, selections from their Houghton Mifflin Reading Anthologies, folktales and fables, and complete studies on authors, such as Louis Sachar and Robert Munsch.

Each year, our second grade classrooms forgo their Christmas parties to bring supplies to make bag lunches for the homeless. Rather than enjoying the treats themselves, they gather in the cafeteria and work in assembly lines preparing meals in personally decorated bags. Our third grade classes work in conjunction to make scarves to be delivered with the meals. This year, the third grade team also used left over money that they raised to buy Christmas gifts for another family who was struggling this season.

Behavior is taught and modeled as intentionally and important as any subject on our campus. After all, character is who we are expressed in action, in how we live and what we do and the children around us know and take notice of what they observe.

RIVERVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
2491 E. Behymer Ave. Fresno, CA 93730
Sonia Torossian, Principal

Parents and staff insist that there is ongoing instruction in leadership, diversity, sportsmanship, and sensitivity. To that end, we have embraced the Josephson Institute of Ethics CHARACTER COUNTS! program which helps teachers and students focus on those traits that make us well-balanced, positive members of society.

Children in all grades explore character education principles through writing, but many other opportunities are created and valued across and beyond the curriculum. Our students demonstrate their growth in these areas by taking part in activities such as Peer Tutoring, Student Government, Human Relations Council (HRC), Peer Counseling (Ram Team), and Red Ribbon and Character Counts Weeks. Further, our

students develop an appreciation for their community by supporting causes such as Toys for Tots, Pennies for Patients, Jump Rope for Heart, and Coats for Kids.

The entire community of staff and parents work together to ensure that we are constantly promoting and modeling fairness, equity, caring, and respect. Administration, teachers, and the parent population treat one another with professionalism and provide guidance to students through many activities, such as: coaching sports and cheerleading, leading GATE, Drama Club, Destination Imagination and Robotics teams, mentoring the Human Relations Council and Student Body Officers, organizing and supervising students taking part in school and community service activities like Toys for Tots, Jump Rope for Heart and Pennies for Patients, and participating in the Ram Dad program in which fathers of our students assist on campus, supporting teachers in the classrooms and on the playground as positive role models for our students.

All are dedicated to Riverview's mission and devoted to helping students achieve academically, to value the rights of others, and to make positive contributions to the community and society.

SEQUOIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Sanger Unified School District
1820 S. Armstrong Ave. Fresno, CA 93727
Nichole Rosales, Principal

Our participation in the Community of Caring program centers around five core values consisting of: Caring, Family, Respect, Responsibility and Trust. These values form the basis of our Sequoia community and are modeled by both students and staff every day. Each of the five traits is displayed in all settings, school-wide.

The sense of family felt at Sequoia mirrors the belief that it is the collaboration between staff, parents, and administration that will ensure each child reaches their full potential. With many of our students coming from broken homes, we want students to feel cared for at school and to teach them how to reciprocate caring to others.

In order to monitor our goal of teaching students to embody the values of family we are tracking attendance, the number of office referrals, and student academic progress. We believe that students who embrace the value of family and feel emotionally safe will be more motivated to be in school, have improved behavior, and perform at higher academic levels. Evidence of progress towards our increased focus on character education is evidenced through a decrease in the number of office referrals.

Each month, students respond in writing to the character trait being studied. One student is chosen per classroom that has captured the essence of the character trait for the month and their writing is displayed in the front office. Instruction using

Second Step is provided on a weekly basis within each classroom. The program focuses on providing learning experiences in the classrooms where students discuss appropriate behavior, learn to have empathy for their peers, and role-play to develop skills to effectively deal with challenging situations. Students work together as active participants in the learning process. Encouragement is given from the teacher as well as students for academic progress.

There are several programs on our campus designed to reinforce the core values of caring and respect for all students including Special Friends and The Friendship Club. Both programs are designed to support social development and positive social interaction for those students identified as “at risk.” Regular communication between the support staff and the classroom teacher remains a top priority to ensure that well-informed decisions can be made for all participating students.

Because character development of students is equally important to their academic progress, Sequoia integrates the values of caring, trust, respect, responsibility, and family through cross-curricular connections and meaningful Service Learning Projects. Each grade level chooses a socially conscious cause to support so that students learn the importance of giving back to their community. Projects include: kindergarten – “Coats for Kids”, 1st grade – “Happy Feet” shoe donations, 2nd grade – “Hats Off to Cancer” (donation to Children’s Hospital), 3rd grade – Partnership with Sanger Golden Living Center Home, 4th grade – Rotary wheel chair foundation, 5th grade – “Rescue the Children,” which is a branch of the Fresno Rescue Mission, 6th grade – Sequoia mentoring program.

Our Student Council provides opportunities for leadership as each officer plays a role in positively impacting campus activities. The Council also works together to develop theme days to create a sense of community on campus for students and staff to participate in.

Our goal is to develop young people that leave Sequoia with the academic tools to be successful and a strong moral character that will enable them to make good choices for themselves and those around them.

SIERRA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
510 Barstow Ave. Clovis, CA 93612
Cathy Dodd, Principal

The staff at Sierra Vista Elementary School are integral members of the team who work together to provide for the character and civic development of students. Opportunities for school service and leadership include participation in Student Council, either as an elected officer or as a class representative; other school service; or community involvement. The Multicultural Club promotes acceptance of all diverse groups, school and community service. They sponsor a school-wide food

drive each year to provide food to the Salvation Army. Classes partner with students in lower grades to develop “reading buddies” to encourage a love of reading. Sierra Vista choirs present concerts at L.C. Hotchkiss and Rose View Terrace Retirement Homes. At the end of weekly sports activities, Sierra Vista athletes identify athletes from the opposing team to recognize those athletes with certificates of outstanding character and good sportsmanship.

Teachers display Character Counts posters in their classrooms and instruct students about the pillar of the month. The traits of Character Counts have expanded to include critical thinking skills and good decision making. Teachers infuse these traits within their cooperative learning groups and enable students to be productive team members. They utilize their curriculum to promote citizenship and understanding of perspectives and diverse cultures.

Students are recognized through positive reinforcement with Character Counts tickets when they are “caught” committing good deeds, random acts of kindness, or for class or school service. Students are recognized during awards assemblies with Character Count Certificates for the pillars recognized during the quarter. Staff is eager and always on the look out to give positive verbal acknowledgement when students are observed displaying good character. Verbal praise and acknowledgement is one of the most powerful acts an adult can offer our students and assists them in becoming good citizens. They learn that the specific acts themselves are rewarding through verbal acknowledgement.

Drama students present Character Counts plays to model good character traits. The Multicultural Club has an annual canned food drive for the Salvation Army in our community. The Student Council and Class Representatives participate in the annual Kids Day newspaper sales to benefit Valley Children’s Hospital. Students in all classrooms participate in the recycling program.

Recently students participated in letter writing to send to troops stationed abroad. Upper grade students participate in Reading Buddies providing them the opportunity to read with younger students. Students learn about holiday and cultural celebrations around the world. They also discuss character traits of characters in stories read and how those traits are represented in themselves and other students. Students participate in Veteran’s Day essay contests with topics about freedom and national appreciation for Veterans. Students earn points to earn the Block SV Award through academic; class, school, and community service; and through co-curricular participation. In addition to the elected Student Council, students can participate through the student Principal’s Advisory Council (PAC). Administration specifically selects students for PAC who may feel disenfranchised or aren’t involved in co-curricular activities to encourage involvement.

At Sierra Vista, education is always with the future in mind. Students are the future of our community and the primary goal is for them to develop the skills they need to be the leaders of tomorrow.

TARPEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clovis Unified School District
2700 Minnewawa Ave. Clovis, CA 93612
Darrin Holtermann, Principal

Our character and civic education goals at Tarpey are simple! 1) We want our students to treat each other the way they would like to be treated, and 2) we want them to recognize the importance of giving back to their community! To help instill these values we have adopted the 6 Pillars of Character, and the Character Counts Program.

Each month the entire school focuses on one of the pillars of the Character Counts program. We discuss the pillar in our weekly newsletter, our teachers teach lessons that are specific to that month's character trait, and we reward students who exemplify the character trait of the month at our quarterly awards ceremonies. Over the past 2 years we have also been using a "Caught with Character" program. This program allows every staff member (custodians, instructional aides, crossing guards, etc.) to immediately recognize a student for doing something that exemplifies good character.

At the beginning of each year we have a Character Counts Week, which teaches the students about the 6 pillars of character, along with behavior expectations at Tarpey. We start the week with a Character Counts Assembly that teaches the students about the 6 pillars of character and how they are related to the behavior expectations here at Tarpey. We also spend time talking with the students about Bullying, and how to actively prevent it at their school. 6 pillars lessons, and Anti-Bullying lessons are taught by all of the teachers in every classroom across the school that week.

In addition to our active student government, which consists of nearly 30 students, our students also have a variety of groups they can work with to support our school. We find that students who actively participate in maintenance and activities at their school take more ownership for their school. We have voluntary crews of students that help us set out Blacktop "safety pads" each morning, and bring them in each afternoon. There are students who voluntarily pick up trash each day at lunch. We utilize students in our lunchroom each day to help serve lunches to nearly 600 students. Our student council students and athletes put on 4 different sports rallies each year. Our student council students also help put on 2 Character Counts assemblies and an anti-bullying assembly.

One of the neatest things our student council does each year is put on a "Career Day." Our student council puts on a small conference where they invite 15 to 20 professionals from the local community who present information about their careers to all of our 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. The Tarpey students are divided up into

a bunch of small groups. These groups then travel around the campus from presentation to presentation learning about various careers.

We also employ a school psychologist who works with students when they are in crisis, or simply need someone to talk to. She runs "Encourager Groups" where she does small group meetings with students who are struggling with similar personal issues (i.e. loss of a family member, recent divorce, bullying, self-esteem issues, etc.).

Employees in Clovis Unified often go through four to six interviews before they are hired, and their character and core values are being assessed at each of these interviews. This process, while lengthy, ensures that we are hiring the best of the best in Clovis Unified, and that we have a strong understanding of a person's Core Values and beliefs before we hire them. We want to make sure that we are surrounding our children with the best role models and leaders possible. Throughout the year our teachers teach lessons about fairness, equity, caring, and respect.

At Tarpey elementary we have a very active Student Government system where students get to participate in the democratic process of electing their classmates to student council positions at the school. In addition to the usual positions of president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary, we have nearly 25 additional student council members, all of whom participate in the planning and activities of the school.

Our students start off the year by collecting donations and food items for our Patriots Day (September 11th) celebration. They collect baked goods, cash donations, and gift cards and then deliver them to our local fire station and police station. This past year was the 11th year that we have done this, and our kids look forward to it every year. A group of 30-40 students walk the items over to our local fire station. While at the station the students get a tour of the firehouse, talk with firefighters, and get to explore the fire engine. It's always a great experience for everyone involved. Our student council students also develop a video every year that is shown to the entire student body. These videos have covered a variety of topics such as Anti-Bullying, Clean Campus, No Profanity, etc. In October and November each year we have a school-wide food drive where we collect food together to make Thanksgiving meals for needy Tarpey families. This past year we were able to put together Thanksgiving Meal boxes for over 50 needy Tarpey families. These meal boxes included everything the family would need to put together a large traditional Thanksgiving meal, including a frozen turkey. Students helped sort the canned items, put the meals together, and passed them out to needy families who had been called to come and pick them up. The community members who received these meals were very grateful. Students and teachers select families from the Tarpey community that they feel would benefit from a Thanksgiving meal.

We truly believe that the most important thing that we can teach our students is to be active, ethical participants in their communities. At Tarpey Elementary we deeply

believe in these core values and we intentionally infuse character values and civic education throughout our curriculum and school environment.

TEMPERANCE-KUTNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Clovis Unified School District

1448 N. Armstrong Ave. Fresno, CA 93727

Kathy Blackburn, Principal

Our teachers worked to determine what systems were necessary to maintain the character driven culture of our school. However, upon evaluation of our systems, it became evident that the behavior support program at the time was seen as an emphasis on students' deficits rather than a focus on positive character. We made a staff decision this year to completely eliminate this system and instead reinforce positive behaviors with Character Counts tickets. Within the second quarter we saw a much higher number of tickets turned in, and therefore we are looking for more ways to honor and celebrate our students who earn Character Counts tickets.

Each month our school site focuses on a Character Pillar of the Month: Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Citizenship, Trustworthiness, and Fairness. Students are encouraged to wear the color that represents the monthly pillar and definitions of that pillar are shared with students.

Our students learn to respect people from all backgrounds as we celebrate our diverse populations throughout the school year. We believe our diversity is a strength and blessing for our school. We honor all the cultures represented in our community and provide opportunities for our students to learn from one another as they share their traditions and cultural practices. Our Folklorico and Hmong Dance Clubs offer our students the opportunity to learn about the dress, cuisine, and celebrations of our largest student populations. These dance groups are made of students with varied backgrounds because all of our students are invited to participate. Also, each spring, we celebrate our diversity with an International Fair Day where students "travel around the globe" to stations that focus on different countries/areas of our world. While learning about differences in people, students learn to respect, honor, and take pride in those differences.

The T-K staff takes advantage of every opportunity to model caring and respect for others. Everyday we greet our children with a handshake, a smile, and a "Good morning." Students are taught how to address adults and each other and respond respectfully with eye contact and speaking in clear, complete sentences. This is done as students arrive on the bus, at parent drop-off, and at the classroom door. As a staff, we use the book [How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids](#) to introduce how to show kindness towards one another. Also, at the beginning of the school year we enlist the help of our community businesses to make sure backpacks are provided for all of our students. A student entering campus the first day of school without a backpack is certain to leave with one full of school supplies. Our secretarial staff started a project 3 years ago called, "Cathy's Closet" where we have clothes on hand for kids

in need. At any time, students are able to come to the office and “shop” for new clothes to be sure they are clean, warm, and feeling confident. During the holidays teachers submit names of students they believe may be less fortunate than others. Our staff ensures these children are provided with both warm winter clothes and toys before the winter break. In this way we show our kids we see their need and we care.

We offer multiple co-curricular experiences for our students including GATE, drama, music, athletics, and student government. These activities provide great opportunities for kids to display and teach proper behavior and good character and be role models for their peers. We understand that students modeling great character is just as important as the adults.

Every morning our student body president and vice-president lead the flag salute over the intercom. They also lead the flag salute at the beginning of all school assemblies and rallies. It is important for our students to display patriotism for our country. Our student government hosts special events for our families throughout the school year. We open our cafeteria doors early three times a year for Muffins with Mom, Doughnuts with Dad, and Goodies with Grandparents. We do not limit this to just moms, dads, or grandparents though, and often you see teachers and staff members standing in for kids who have no significant adult in their lives during these events. As a service group, our student government conducts fundraisers for outside organizations such as The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and The American Heart Association. Along with the physical activity for health, the student government officers, with guidance from adults, will help to educate kids on healthy food and lifestyle choices.

We have several systems that promote reading and literacy in all forms. One such opportunity allows older students to value reading by reading with a younger student. The younger students look forward to their “Book Buddy” coming to read to them each week, and many of them look up to their older partner as a mentor in literacy. T-K also has a sibling-to-sibling reading program called “Bringing it Home.” In the intervention class, our students learn about the importance of knowing how to read well, gain confidence in their abilities as they get the support they need, and are expected to read at home with their younger siblings to prevent reading challenges for them. Students also support one another through the T-K Mediator Mentor program. The Mediator Mentor program has been implemented to promote peaceful environments among students, especially during morning and lunch recesses. In pairs, the mediators work with their peers to find solutions to their conflicts. This has been greatly embraced by staff and students.

We are confident that this positive, healthy learning environment and climate of civic responsibility and community produces students who go on to be leaders in their junior high and high school settings, as well throughout their lives.

WILSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Tulare Unified School District
955 E. Tulare Ave. Tulare, CA 93274
John Pendleton, Principal

Members of the Wilson staff clearly understand the importance of character education in public school and work diligently to create an environment at school that supports the concept of mutual respect and adherence to the principles found within CHARACTER COUNTS!

In support of our efforts to address positive character development, our core curriculum is supplemented with several programs that help promote and sustain positive character trait [CHARACTER COUNTS!, Second Step, Safe & Civil Schools, and elements found within the Foundation for a Better Life]. From transitional kindergarten to fifth grade, each instructional day begins with a reminder of our Core Values of Courage, Honor, and Respect through the daily bulletin and the reciting of our school creed. This activity is followed by our school-wide involvement in the CHARACTER COUNTS! Program, "Today Counts." Tailored to our yearly school activity calendar and in support of the Six Pillars of Character, each teacher engages their students in a five to ten minute, interactive lesson, designed to strengthen our students' decision-making skills and support positive relationships.

Teachers are given the ability to incorporate character education lessons into their current units of study or as stand-alone activities. In an effort to strengthen our approach to character education and define Wilson as a unified school community, students, staff, and parents adopted the Core Values of Courage, Honor, and Respect. In doing so, members of a very diverse school community who had previously identified themselves with a school mascot, now identified themselves through their adopted Core Values of Courage, Honor, and Respect.

As noted...the 2015-2016 school year represents our commitment to an all school advisory period in the form of "Today Counts." In addition, a variety of activities also help to support our ongoing efforts to promote a safe and caring learning environment. Divided into three multi-grade level "tribes" (the Mohawk, Blackfeet, and Apache) vie on a trimester basis for grade-level Warrior Pride Trophies. Points are assessed for good behavior, attendance, campus cleanliness, and school spirit. Trimester "Pow-Wows" are held to celebrate as a "school family." Monthly pride/award assemblies have been established to honor student achievement and outstanding acts of character. Warriors who have distinguished themselves through outstanding character are honored in front of their peers and members of the community. New for the 2015-2016 school year, all students who participate in the "Pride Pennant" program with individual award pins presented to students for their academic achievement as well as their contributions as outstanding citizens.

Through character education, students and staff have formed a strong, meaningful relationship where compassion, caring, and dignity thrive.