



## Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship

### **2003 BONNER CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

**Clark Intermediate School (1262 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Clovis, CA 93612**  
**Tel: 559-327-1500**  
**Principal: Mr. Carl Tomlinson**

Each month a character trait is highlighted providing a focus for classroom instruction through which student achievement is recognized. Peer counseling, the establishment of student body officers, the multicultural committee, leadership classes and various school clubs have been designed for students to implement character values throughout the campus and community. The Character Counts! Traits continue to be emphasized in our co-curricular programs.

An important school goal is to develop individuals, who, through their actions and conduct, exhibit certain qualities perceived by the school and community to be positive traits of character. At Clark, students are taught principles of honesty, responsibility and perseverance, while encouraged to be self-respecting, considerate and courteous to others. These character traits, while not overtly listed, are embedded in the “six pillars of character” that Clark upholds. These principles are reviewed and supported on an everyday basis by academic block class activities and other classes such as health science, leadership, and peer counseling, as well as the multicultural committee.

A special seminar schedule has been developed and is utilized once a month to give teachers the opportunity to focus on the monthly character traits. This added time in the schedule allows for more in-depth discussion and teaching concerning character and what it means to be a “person of good character”. Teachers explain that good character is really doing something good when you don’t necessarily get accolades but doing it when no one is looking. During seminar time, interactive lessons are discussed and a homework lesson or activity is assigned to stimulate and promote discussions with family members. This assists in bringing together ties between the school and families. These assignments are then returned to their classroom teachers to review and can be used for further discussion. Clark Intermediate promotes student improvement through strong curricular and co-curricular areas.

Clark Intermediate has a school goal of 97% student co-curricular participation. The goal was reached this past year with 100% of the students participating in co-curricular activities. This participation may include school clubs, athletic teams, performing arts programs, cheerleading, or academic competitions. It is the district and school philosophy that involvement and

interaction will foster interpersonal relationships and skills resulting in positive personal development.

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**Divisadero Middle School (925 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Visalia, CA 93277**  
**Tel: 559-730-7661**  
**Principal: Ms. Cindy Costa**

At Divisadero Middle School we have communicated to students, parents, and the community the behaviors that are expected of our students. One method of expressing these expectations that is addressed in the handbook has been in the formation of our grade level student teams, or academies, and each academy (teachers and students) has adopted a set of values unique to their mission. The Athenian academy has adopted the values of working for the common good and cherishing philosophy, persuasion and logic. The Nikean academy promotes success, sureness of purpose, and protection of right actions. The Spartan academy focuses on self-discipline of the body and mind and promoting good of the majority. The final academy, the Titans, strives to develop wisdom and the ability to exert great power to achieve one's goals.

We have also implemented character traits for each month. Each month we ask students to work on developing a particular trait by discussing it in Advocacy class, by working on a project to demonstrate that trait, and by participating in at least one activity that illustrates the trait. For example, in December we focused on Caring. Our teachers and students discussed what that meant, how they could become caring people, and what they could do to begin to develop the trait within themselves. Each Advocacy class was then asked to participate in a canned food drive.

It is not unusual on our campus for students to ask other students to modify their behavior, for students to seek out the assistance of adults in intervening in certain situations, or for students to mediate problems with one another in a "win-win" manner. In addition, our students developed, because of these policies, a sense of safety and the perception that Divisadero is more than a school, that it is a repository of willing mentors and a safe haven.

We have modified after-school activities in such a manner as to make them accessible to all students. Students are eligible to go based on grades, behavior, attendance, citizenship, etc. Some activity eligibility is based solely on one or two criteria while others encompass the entire range of expectations. We have also provided free transportation and the opportunity for no-cost admission to activities for all of our students.

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**Kastner Intermediate School (1480 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Clovis, CA 93720**  
**Tel: 559-327-2610**  
**Principal: Mr. Rick Gold**

The expectation of Kastner Intermediate School is that all members of our community (parents, students, and staff) reflect the six pillars of character in their everyday lives. The Kastner staff has developed definitions of each of the pillars of character and has created two sets of banners that...remind all members of the community of the observable behaviors related to each of the pillars.

Each year Kastner conducts many parent orientation evenings... One of the primary messages that is delivered is that the CHARACTER COUNTS! Program is an essential part of their students' experience at Kastner.

This year the physical education and athletic departments have incorporated new lessons specific to the terms sportsmanship and gamesmanship. Students learn that sportsmanship is the playing of the game to develop teamwork, respect for an opponent, and an appreciation for personal integrity. On the other hand, they learn that gamesmanship is an overwhelming drive to win at all costs. By incorporating sportsmanship into our character traits, we have seen fewer incidents of inappropriate behavior on the fields, courts, and pools where our teams compete.

Recently Kastner enacted a "No Put Down Zone" on the campus. This program recognizes the harmful effects that words can have on individuals. Students are encouraged to praise each other for the things they are doing right instead of criticizing each other.

This year the eighth grade students had the opportunity to participate in a field trip to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Here they learned the harsh realities of the holocaust and what can happen when individuals and nations forget to embrace the basic principles of good character.

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**La Joya Middle School (990 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Visalia, CA 93277**  
**Tel: 559-730-7921**  
**Principal: Ms. Mary Whitfield**

La Joya Middle School has a clear school mission: La Joya Middle School will provide students with a caring transition as they move from elementary school to high school. They will be "connected" to the goals and purposes of the school in a positive way and have numerous opportunities for personal growth. All students will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to become successful life-long learners, workers, and citizens through a wide variety of instructional options that meet their needs. Within a nurturing educational environment,

individual development will be maximized, which will allow students to reach their fullest potential.

Citizenship grades are part of the progress report and report card system of feedback to the parents. Students who have more than one unsatisfactory citizenship grade are not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities. Classroom rules model the Character Counts! traits. The administration uses detention, campus beautification, suspension and expulsions as methods of tracking the effectiveness of the program. The principal and Asst. Principals monitor these figures for feedback.

The government of La Joya is vested in the Executive and Student Councils. The Executive Council consists of ten elected officers: President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Activities Commissioner, Athletic Commissioner, and Team Senators (two eighth graders and two seventh graders). The term of office is one semester. Elections take place in the fall and late January. Candidates are expected to adhere to La Joya Code of Ethics/participation.

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### **Liberty Middle School (735 Students 7th-8th Grades)**

**Lemoore, CA 93245**

**Tel: 559-924-6860**

**Principal: Mr. David Andreasen**

Liberty Middle School has formed a partnership with the entire Lemoore community in establishing its character education program. The four elementary feeder schools have all made the same commitment to character education and use the common language of character established in the Character Counts! program. Likewise, Lemoore High School teachers and staff continue emphasizing character education and development with their Character Counts! program. The business community of Lemoore has supported the school's efforts of character education through its Business Education Together committee (BET). The BET committee, made up of Lemoore area business partners and school personnel, has recognized the importance of character development in the schools and the overall effect it can have in the work place and in the community at large. As a testament to this recognition, a banner has been purchased that can be hung over Main Street in Lemoore that states, "Lemoore...a community where Character Counts!" Business Partners are also able to share their careers with Liberty students at the Career Café. Speakers are encouraged to tie into their presentation which character traits are essential in their particular fields.

Each year Liberty holds a Character conference. Here eighth grade students from Liberty and neighboring schools, Island and Mary Immaculate Queen, will spend a morning exploring the meanings of character, ethics and values. They will evaluate their own values and participate in exercises that help them to understand the process of ethical decision-making. Juniors and seniors from Lemoore high School that have participated in their own Ethics Day will serve as table leaders to help facilitate these discussions. Business Partners from FAST Federal Credit

Union and the California highway patrol generously donate their time to host this event as they sincerely value its importance.

In an effort to create a school culture that is safe, caring and respectful, Liberty staff has established a motto, "If you permit it, you promote it". Therefore, proactive and reactive measures are taken to enforce the values and rules that Liberty has established. Conflict resolution...is available and often utilized. Gang Contracts, Harassment Contracts and Behavior Contracts are issued when necessary in an effort to hold students responsible to the high standards necessary to create a school culture conducive to learning. The Harassment Contracts have been especially helpful in dealing with the less overt types of harassments like teasing, name calling, and the spreading of rumors that have the potential to overtake a middle school campus.

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**Live Oak Middle School (681 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Tulare, CA 93274**  
**Tel: 559-685-7310**  
**Principal: Mr. Brian Hollingshead**

Live Oak staff has strived to instill good "character" in the students of Live Oak since the school's doors opened in 1989 with the motto, "The Right Place at the Right Time". We want to influence ourselves and our students to be people of sound character. We want to guide our students to develop to their greatest academic potential. Our role then, is to model the core values of Respect, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Caring, Fairness, and Citizenship from Michael Josephson's Character Counts! Using these common terms we can be consistent in our communications with students, their families and each other, while making it possible to acknowledge and respect the diversity of our population and cultures. "We believe that as we impart these core values we are making a difference. Our mission statement conveys our commitment: Live oak middle School is a safe, caring place where staff challenges students to reach their fullest potential in academics and personal character. Live Oak is the right place at the right time!"

Influencing core values is not a program. It is modeling a way to live. We all use the same language when talking about character and ethical behavior. Everyday school day ends with a message from our principal and a reminder that character does count.

This year the counselor trained the leadership team to be peer mediators. A peer-helping group is a powerful way to build strong character in both the mediators and those they help. Peer mediators make students aware of positive ways to resolve conflict.

Any student at Live oak that is willing to share their free time can be a member of the Live Oak Volunteer bureau. This group puts in hundreds of hours each year working at parent conferences, collecting canned food for the Tulare Emergency Aide, selling hot cocoa during December to

raise money for two our own families, participating in the Fresno Bee Kids' Day, sponsoring a school dance, working at the Student of the Month Luncheons, and anything else that needs to be done. The only requirement to belong to this group is a willingness to serve others. Therefore, often students show up to work who are not usually involved in school activities because they do not need a certain GPA or any special talent.

Live Oak has the unique opportunity to have a class of developmentally delayed and severely disabled students on our campus. We integrate these students into regular classes as much as possible, giving all of us a rich character building experience. Regular education students can apply to be classroom aides in this class. (S)ome of our students who have difficulty affiliating with school become some of the best aides for these special students.

Students that struggle academically and with their behavior participate in a biweekly progress report system. The administrators and teachers manage this system with special regard given to character and values, like Character Counts!. This support system is time consuming but a worthwhile and effective way to encourage and help our students help themselves.

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### **Mulcahy Middle School (881 Students 6th-8th Grades)**

**Tulare, CA 93274**

**Tel: 559-685-7250**

**Principal: Mr. John Pendleton**

Mulcahy Middle School was named after long-time educator Mrs. Alice G. Mulcahy. Since its opening in 1958, the school has been dedicated tot he principles of hard work, honesty, pride and determination, all hallmarks of Mrs. Mulcahy and her family.

Student and parent support is a key factor in the success of our program. Prior to the first day of school, members of the school community and the staff participate in an orientation assembly. School policies, student behaviors and responsibilities are discussed. The core ethical values are used as a model for expected student behavior. Academic school planners are given to every student. The planners contain several items supporting our character development program and are used as a tool to promote responsibility through daily use, recording class assignments, homework to be completed and on-going communication with parents.

Alice G. Mulcahy Middle School is proactive in our approach to cultivating the continued development of ethical decision-making. Teachers are encouraged to construct or integrate the Character Counts! philosophy into their lessons to further encourage and promote the progression of ethical decision-making. In addition to classroom instruction, we take advantage of every opportunity to recognize students exhibiting behaviors consistent with the pillars of character.

Community service is a priority for Mulcahy Middle School. Students actively participate in a number of valuable community service projects. Community service projects are designed to promote social development, provide students with an opportunity to model the pillars of character, and foster community partnerships. Members of the California Junior Scholarship Federation (CJSF) have taken a leadership role on campus organizing coat and toy drives for neighborhood children. CJSF members also participate in “bell ringing” for the Salvation Army during the Christmas season.

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**Reyburn Intermediate School (1390 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Clovis, CA 93611**  
**Tel: 559-327-4500**  
**Principal: Ms. Stacy Dunicliff**

Students demonstrating outstanding character are recognized during monthly CHARACTER COUNTS! dinners as well as Teachers’ Choice Pizza luncheons. In order to earn the prestigious Timberwolf Way award, students must earn points for each of the six Pillars of character. The top athletic award is the CHARACTER COJNTS! Award. Banners in the gymnasium proudly display the names of students who have earned the top academic and character awards.

Each year the Administrative Leadership Team (ALT) revisits and refines Reyburn’s Vision, Mission, Beliefs and Desired Student Exit Behaviors based on input from students, parents, staff, and the community. During weekly department and team meetings, teachers assess the school’s progress towards goal attainment. The classified staff meets with the principal on a monthly basis to discuss ways to improve system-wide processes. Reyburn’s Vision Statement reflects the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders: “Reyburn Intermediate School is dedicated to creating an exemplary learning community in which every member is valued, students reach their fullest potential, and ongoing improvement is evident.”

Programs that address the academic, physical and emotional needs of adolescents, as well as assertive, consistent discipline, are used to successfully integrate character education and values into classroom instruction. A school-wide code of behavior is clearly spelled out to staff and students and is consistent from classroom to classroom. Since students do not necessarily transfer character concepts to their own life experiences, Reyburn’s staff is dedicated to defining character and modeling its application.

In an attempt to make sure all students feel connected to school, a concerted effort has been made to hire adult role models representative of the diverse student population at Reyburn. In addition, several members of the Reyburn staff have received Student Assistance training and are available to assist students with special problems. This helps teachers identify and channel potential situations involving drug abuse, depression, gang involvement, and child abuse/neglect to the correct agencies for additional assistance. Leadership classes, clubs, and Reyburn’s Peer counselors act as liaisons between community services and the Reyburn student body.

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**Sutter Middle School (530 Students 6th-8th Grades)**

**Fowler, CA 93625**

**Tel: 559-834-6300**

**Principal: Mr. Mark Archon**

In 1997, as part of a strategic plan developed the prior year, a district Character Education Committee was formed. This committee was comprised of teachers, classified employees, parents, and students and district administration. One of the first tasks this committee completed was to identify a list of core values for the district. Surveys were sent to all stakeholders in the district to rank the importance of these core values. Data from this survey resulted in the creation of the ten pillars of Character for the district.

Teachers consistently use these fundamental values in class discussions and they are woven throughout instructional lessons wherever appropriate. The committee continues to keep character education a high priority at each school in the district by continuing to develop resources, plan activities, and provide support for each school site to support an annual character education theme. This year the theme is Students in Service to America.

We believe that student needs must be met in order for the child to be able to achieve maximum potential. Maslow's Hierarchy of needs supports a strong character education program that provides students with a great deal of support in the areas of safety, love and esteem. We strongly believe that the positive school climate, low number of discipline accounts and the tremendous school spirit can be attributed to a strong character education program that begins in the classrooms and is supported and emphasized at the site administrative level.

Last year, Sutter middle School evaluated the effectiveness of its program using the Character Education Quality Standards instrument. One of the key findings support the need for support staff to become more involved in the school's Character Education efforts. The Classified Employees Encouraging Character (CEEC) program was developed at the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year in response to this need . its purpose is to foster mentoring relationships between at risk students and classified employees. The main thrust of these interactions between staff members and students is to model and reinforce positive character education behaviors for the students and to encourage these types of behaviors in students. Classified employees now have the opportunity to recognize students during Student of the Month selections and, more importantly, at any other time during the school year. Employees are given free snack coupons that they are able to give to students exhibiting model behavior.

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**Valley Oak Middle School (1140 Students 7th-8th Grades)**  
**Visalia, CA 93292**  
**Tel: 559-730-7681**  
**Principal: Mr. Andrew Vasquez**

Valley Oak staff and administrators recognize that students at this grade level are unique. No other grade span encompasses such a wide range of intellectual, physical, psychological and social development. As more kids and staff catch on, the message becomes more pervasive, visible and consistently reinforced. In the book, *Good Ideas: Ways to Teach the Six Pillars of Character*, there is a section entitled, "Good Ideas for School-Wide Activities". At Valley Oak, we have already incorporated 22 of the 26 ideas/activities. We also ensure that our recognition systems recognize excelling groups as well as individual pupils.

Students begin each day with a quote exemplifying that month's focus pillar which is read from the daily bulleting. Every classroom, office and staff room prominently displays the posters representing character Counts. Large pillars were made by our Graphic Art class that hang in the multi-purpose room that students frequent daily. Valley Oak strives to provide a safe, well-maintained and visually pleasing campus. We have an ongoing student mural program that integrates various school wide themes such as the Character Counts! traits which promote good Citizenship. Our program has also been discussed and promoted by our parent Booster Club and leadership classes.

At Valley Oak we have a large population of special needs students. We are proud to mainstream these special students into many regular classes. There are also many students who serve as teacher assistants in the severely handicapped classes as well as our special day classes. Caring for the less fortunate promotes Caring, Respect, and good Citizenship. We also honor different cultures to exemplify these pillars. With our All American Day we recognize Asian and Hispanic cultures through various activities and demonstrations performed by the students. This promotes sensitivity and awareness among the students.

Administrators and teachers are highly visible at all times, and Valley Oak maintains a closed-campus policy. Students are not allowed to leave campus during the school day without parental and administrative permission. Partnerships which support a safe school have been formed between Valley Oak and the following: Visalia Police Department, the Tulare County Probation Department, VUSD Safe Schools Coordinator, and the Youth Development Officer who is on campus daily. Most teachers have been trained to help identify and channel potential situations involving drug abuse, depression, gang involvement and child abuse/neglect.

Our instructional practices emphasize active learning strategies which are consistent with the developmental characteristics of young adolescents in middle school. To help all students achieve the learner outcomes desired, our teachers teach to each student's strengths. According to Howard Gardner, there are seven different intelligences, seven ways that teachers can use to reach students. Every one of our teachers has been trained in the Multiple Intelligences approach to learning. Special education students are mainstreamed in all electives, physical education, and many academic classes.

As a school, we are involved in many service projects that bring our school, students, and community together. It has been a wonderful opportunity to teach and demonstrate citizenship that reflects a personal, civic and global responsibility.