



## Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship

### 2015 BONNER CENTER HIGH SCHOOLS

#### **ACADEMY FOR CIVIC AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP**

**Chartered with FUSD**

**1713 Tulare St. Suite 202**

**Fresno, CA 93721**

**Principal: Mr. Steve Morris**

The development of character is an essential concern of public schools in the context of preparing students to be college and career ready and to become responsible citizens. These are two parts of the mission of the public schools, which have been largely ignored in recent decades. Even with the third and most prominent goal of education, academic achievement, students must have character values of respect, self-discipline, personal responsibility and a strong work ethic, to be successful. The core civic values, which should be learned and practiced by every student, include: Liberty, Equality, Justice (fairness and the rule of law), Constitutional government, Unity (obligation to serve the common good) These civic values, the knowledge of our political ideals and system and the civic participation skills are taught in specific parts of the History/Social Studies curriculum. In high school, it's the semester of civics in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. However, for students to learn these essential values and skills, there must be opportunities for guided practice throughout the K-12 school experience.

The Academy for Civic and Entrepreneurial Leadership (ACEL) is a free public charter high school in downtown Fresno, certified under Fresno Unified School District. Beginning 7 years ago, ACEL now serves 115 students who seek an alternative to traditional education. Teaching and learning at ACEL emphasizes the application of academic knowledge and skills, through service projects, which develop leadership and civic responsibility by serving the community.

#### **ACEL Values:**

1. **Creativity** - innovation, visioning, creative problem solving, opportunity development, pursuit of academic and career potentials
2. **Freedom** - liberty, rights, respect, equity, appropriate self-expression, individual choice
3. **Responsibility** - collaboration, service, trust, safety, obey laws, social justice, civic engagement, sustainability

Teachers have been engaged in more comprehensive training to accomplish 4 goals for students:

1. Academic achievement and lifelong learning
2. Meaningful and respectful relationships
3. Fulfilling career in a sustainable community
4. Becoming ethical leaders and responsible citizens

In 2013, the graduation rate was 94%. In 2014, it was 100%. In the last 2.5 years, there have been no expulsions and a minimum of suspensions. The teachers and administrators initiate communication with students and parents about behavior or academic issues. The school offers a variety of ways to address problems with the goal of promoting student success.

Student voice is expected in the classroom, especially as teachers relate their subject to current events and to projects. Every teacher is expected to implement project-based learning. Students may also choose to take the Student Government class, which currently has 18 students. Students have initiated a problem solving process for dress code issues and for lunch passes. The dress code stated that open toed shoes were not allowed at school. Students asked the principal to change the rule and were told that it was prescribed by our insurance policy. Students were able to persuade the principal to appeal to the insurance company to allow that, which he was able to do. There was no policy to allow students to leave campus for lunch. Student leaders and the principal developed a policy that is now implemented.

The issues of bullying and disrespect have also been addressed by students and staff. Most students report that there is much less of this at ACEL than other high schools. However, with a small school (115 students) and small classes (under 25), students are in close contact and have to learn to practice respect. This problem is discussed in classes, as it becomes an issue there.

For the 2014-15 school year, ACEL students have designed a **Brighter Future Film Festival** project for high school and middle school students in Fresno County. In partnership with the City of Fresno Water Conservation Division, they challenge hundreds of local students to learn about how the water system works, to analyze the causes and impacts of the water crisis, and to discover innovations and potential solutions to the crisis. They invite students to share what they learn through videos.

ACEL encourages multicultural understanding and expression in classroom experience, interactions in the whole school setting and on projects. Teachers are guided to be aware of issues related to race, culture, gender, disability, etc. They are expected to address issues as they emerge in class and through the class content. Especially in the social studies classes, the cultural issues are discussed, in relation to history as well as current events.

Staff and administration are very deliberate in encouraging and guiding students of all cultures to become leaders in class, at school and with project groups. The mission of ACEL is to develop diverse leaders, through opportunities to practice in project-based learning.

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**CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Central Unified School District**  
**3535 N. Cornelia**  
**Fresno, CA 93722**  
**Principal: Mr. Jack Kelejian**

Central High School empowers students and adults in a school community to recognize, respect and diligently practice core ethical values such as respect, fairness, integrity and citizenship, and dependability, while bettering one's self and others. Schools must elucidate that these essential human values surpass our distinct cultures, and articulate our shared humanity.

Central High School's character education goals are embedded in the vision statement of Central Unified School District's Guiding Principles: Every student is prepared for success in college, career, and community. With the help of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, students learn the Grizzly Five or CLAWS: Come Prepared, Live Responsibly, Act Safely, Work Together and Show Respect.

Central High School has made progress and continues to make progress in ensuring that every student is developing excellent character. The PBIS team meets once a month to monitor progress toward achieving character education goals. Last school year, Central High School reached the silver level by attaining at least 80% fidelity on tiers of the School-wide PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory. Central High School is determined to continue its character education program and plans on maintaining the silver status by focusing on a tier two intervention strategies and work toward achieving gold status. Another progress monitoring tool that has been implemented at Central High School this school year is use of the *5 Star Students* program. This program has been instrumental in monitoring character development by keeping track of student involvement in school activities and events, such as demonstrating one of the CLAWS, using barcode scanning technology.

The PBIS team is integral in identifying issues and developing response to promote a climate of excellence, ethics, safe, and respect. In addition to developing the school-wide PBIS plan, the team monitors behavior data. This is important as existing data is analyzed and critical issues are problem-solved. Creative responses include interventions that support students as a whole in addition to their individual needs. The program consists of students regularly checking in with an adult at the start of school to obtain a goal sheet and support, each teacher furnishes feedback on the sheet during the day, when the day is finished, students check out at the with the same adult earlier and the process is repeated the subsequent morning at check in.

A reentry program is also in place at Central High School for students who have been caught abusing drugs or fighting. If a student has been suspended, they are placed in this program to deter them from committing the same offence again. While a student is in this program, they attend lunch detention overseen by an intervention counselor. During this time, the student also completes a mini-unit on the negative effects of either drug use or fighting

Diverse student leaders are used at Central High School to develop understandings and solutions related to school issues. Students in the SPRC and CLAWS clubs work with staff from the PBIS

team on issues and provide input on ways to best address the issues. Students in Peer Connectors classes, study active listening skills, decision-making strategies and other basic helping skills to help a peer with an issue without giving any advice, so that the peer can make his/her own decision.

Civic responsibility, leadership and meaningful service for all by the common good, is practiced at great length by students at Central High School. Started in the 2012-2013 school-year, the Cultural Arts Interact Club of Central High School practices the motto, “service above self.” This school-year over 200 students have carried out hands-on service projects and fostered leadership abilities while having fun.

This year, a focus has been on helping our Central community more and the Interact group has helped at the opening of our newest elementary school – Hanh Phan Tilley Elementary and the Central Unified School District Qualifying Robotics Tournament. More events are planned for the rest of the school-year, as the Interact Club is held in such high esteem that over 100 students are waiting to participate in an event.

After service projects, the Interact Club submits project data forms that address that answer the following: How did your club determine the need for this project? How did the project progress? (Describe it from the planning stage to completion.) Who benefited, either directly or indirectly, from this project? Why was this project successful? A personal testimony to the importance of participating in service activities is given by a student as he called to say he was not feeling well and could not attend one Friday and then he showed up because “...it is important for the kids.”

Central High School encourages multicultural expression and understanding with its numerous clubs and targeted programs. At each English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC) meeting, a parent workshop is also available to assist families with understanding critical information for high school

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## **FOWLER HIGH SCHOOL**

**Fowler Unified**

**701 E. Main Street**

**Fowler, CA 93625**

**Principal: Mr. Hank Gutierrez**

Fowler High School promotes core ethical values in its day to day activities, whether they be in the classroom, on the athletic field, in after school programs, in their extra-curricular programs, or even walking around campus. Displaying awesome character is expected schoolwide and districtwide. In fact, “Responsible Citizens” is one of Fowler High School’s Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLR’s). The students have learned about Character Education throughout their years of schooling, starting in Kindergarten and continuing throughout high school. Ethical values are expected from not only our students, but also from our staff. At Fowler

High, students and staff know that a “Responsible Citizen” contributes to community, respects the rights and safety of others, adheres to campus rules and policies, and demonstrates positive personal character and responsibility.

Students begin the day with the flag salute, the reading of the bulletin which gives the District’s “Pillar of the Month” and the definition. Also, students are surrounded by a staff of teachers, classified, and administrators who model these expectations.” We, at Fowler High School, expect to Win the Day at whatever it is that we do. T-shirts have been made and teachers can recommend a student receive a t-shirt when a student exhibits or establishes excellent character. When other students see good character, it becomes infectious campus wide. It is our principal’s goal to see that everyone in our school earns a t-shirt.

Character Education goals are developed from various sources at Fowler High School. The goals are often guided by the district goals created by the district Character Education Committee. This committee is made up of district personnel, including our Superintendent, parents, students, and representatives from each school site.

The Fowler Big 10 is posted in every classroom for everyone to see. The Fowler Big 10 states, “We, the Board, administration, teachers, support staff, and classified personnel envision working as a team that is committed to guiding our students toward the goal of academic excellence. We will provide stimulating and challenging learning experiences that maximize each student’s potential and enhance self-esteem through Responsibility, Respect, Courage, Citizenship, Caring, Fairness, Honesty, Work Ethic, Trustworthiness, and Duty.

At the beginning of the 2014 school year, Fowler High School implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS). With the diverse cultural makeup of the school, this program has allowed every student to develop a better understanding for self-discipline and the character traits that can be exhibited in all aspects of school and community. Fowler High School’s PBIS team made a huge effort to engage students and staff to address school climate with democratic opportunities to participate through Google Docs, Google Classroom and the use of the QR code reading app. . “FAMILY” stands for **F**ocused, **A**cademic Achiever, **M**otivational, **I**nspirational, **L**eadership, **Y**our Success. Once the acronym of expectations was established, teachers led students on yet another lesson to determine how positive behavior would look around the entire campus.

Fowler High School continues to engage students in service learning, connected to the Common Core curriculum with projects solving real problems in the school and community, including critical reflection on those experiences through their classes, sports teams, and after school programs.

Undoubtedly, the most prestigious Service Learning merits are the Presidential and County Awards given to the students at the end of the school year. The award each student receives depends upon their age and the number of hours worked. Students must keep track of their hours and various means of service. The person the student worked for must verify the hours served. The student records all of this information in their student planners and must submit it at the end of the school year.

Students learn and practice civic responsibility, leadership, and meaningful service through their Freshman Orientation classes. In the Freshman Orientation classes, every freshman is part of a group project of two to four people. The project is a semester long endeavor with each group exploring and participating in a different social service. The students establish a goal for making something better in our school, our community, even exploring national or statewide initiatives

The Redcat Men's Alliance and the Redcat Women's League are the newest classes at Fowler High School geared towards fulfilling academic gaps and promoting character education. Students will engage in community service projects at the school site and off campus in the surrounding communities of Fowler and Malaga. Both groups will team up with community organizations to find ways to better serve the needs of the Fowler/Malaga community and gain valuable service learning opportunities. The goal of the Redcat Men's Alliance and Redcat Women's League is for each member to complete at least 50 hours of service learning per year. Weekly, these two groups will go to the elementary schools and read to the students, help the students with homework and play games with them.

Fowler High School also has many clubs that produce service learning projects. Spanish Club has an "Angel Tree" project.. This is where the club sponsors children who have parents who are in prison. Key Club is an organization that is community service based. The Key Club does many service activities for the community and schools here in the Fowler/Malaga area. Link Crew is a club that has upperclassman who mentor underclassman. Each Link Crew member will partner with another member and will mentor about ten freshmen students. Fowler High School is a school of diverse ethnic groups. Helping people or making things better is what they do and has become second nature for Fowler High students. Service learning and character education has helped to make Fowler High School a "FAMILY". Every day as a "FAMILY", we try to "Win the Day" - whatever that day has in store for us.

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**SANGER HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Sanger Unified School District**  
**1045 Bethel**  
**Sanger, CA 93657**  
**Principal: Mr. Dan Chacon**

At Sanger High School, developing quality character is embedded in the daily function of the school. In 2012, after much discussion on a school-wide level, our school shifted away from a punitive approach in discipline and incorporated a positive behavioral system highlighting our Apache Four. Our Apache Four consists of: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity and Tolerance. It is introduced to all students by their teachers at the beginning of each year and is embedded in daily practices throughout campus including the classroom and even through our Apache Notes student broadcast programs.

Our goal is to build awareness in students so that they can better self-monitor and assess the behaviors that affect their ability to learn and function as part of a large comprehensive school. In addition, through the use of our school-wide records server, we frequently monitor referral rates and parent contact logs to ensure that appropriate measures are being taken so that no child falls through the cracks. As we continue to refine our student support systems, we anticipate the climate of the school to further improve commensurate with fostering of positive character traits.

With the combined efforts of students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and community traits. Each individual had valuable input in establishing the behaviors that we expect all Apaches to display throughout campus, during co-curricular activities, and within our community. As teachers acknowledged students for respecting the classroom structure, as well as being responsible for their academic success, student awareness regarding the impact their choices made on their performance heightened. Attending programs, such as our morning tutorial sessions and our after school intervention, no longer was considered punitive, but seen as an opportunity to improve academic achievement.

One of the strengths the community of Sanger, and specifically Sanger High School prides itself on is found in the power of its diversity. Positive character traits amongst our students is due, in part, to the success of our student government class and the partnership it has with our community to support vital issues within our school and community. Clubs such as our Gay Straight Alliance, Black Student Union, Asian Club, Interact, Link Crew, Hope Sanger, Apache Closet, Know More and Hype are on the forefront in addressing issues that impact our students' well being. For example our Know More club members engage in campaigns that take the issue of domestic violence head on. Students present skits to classes that not only show their peers what the negative behaviors look like, but also provide coping mechanism, outreach opportunities, and tools to stop the cycle of violence.

Our faculty also engages in activities that value collaboration and address student needs and desires. Our professional learning communities (PLC's) are a valuable asset for our staff to communicate and discuss school issues. Over the last eight years, we have been able to create an atmosphere that operates on trust and respect of each individual's opinions and concerns. As with our Apache Four and diverse involvement opportunities, the common core has opened the door for students to engage in learning beyond the classroom walls. As a school, we are committed to extending and enriching the learning to connect students to their education and to the world in which they live.

Our goal in the classrooms is to provide opportunities for students to engage in their world so as to prepare for life after graduation. We provide a myriad of service leaning organizations, clubs, community events, and classroom projects to propel students into the real world. Common core standards provide a much-needed focus on speaking and listening standards, that the previous standards lacked. The new smarter balanced assessments to measure students' ability to communicate better with each other. This shift in focus was the catalyst for the school's commitment to the improvement of academic discourse. Working with Stanford University researcher Jeff Zwiers, our school has trained teachers to move from being a keeper of knowledge, to a facilitator for a community of learners.

As a one high school town, the student population reflects all parts of the community. This is a proud characteristic of our school. We have adopted the Apache Four that embodies the core values that drive our school including: Integrity, Responsibility, Respect, and Tolerance. These values are also the basis of our disciplinary procedures. This has resulted in a school climate and culture that is accepting, safe, and understanding of all students.

There are a variety of culturally focused clubs and events that exist n campus. Our school site celebrates diversity, and one will find students of a variety of ethnic backgrounds participating in our Black Student Unions, Punjabi and Asian clubs. Our students are proud of our school, but more importantly our community.

The culture of Sanger High School is exemplified in its student body, school and community. Our school is committed to producing well-rounded students who are globally aware, academically motivated and of good character. It is the responsibility of all educators to help shape students' character and morals. Our school believes in the power of the teacher. Henry Adams once stated, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." It is because this influence that Sanger High believes in this moral imperative to improve students academically, socially, and morally.

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**TULARE UNION HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Tulare Joint Union High School District**  
**755 East Tulare Ave**  
**Tulare, CA 93274**  
**Principal: Dr. Michelle Nunley, Principal**

Tulare Union High School values the importance of character education and believes it is a core value for all students. We have seen a change in the structure of many of our families that has resulted in an increased need for the inclusion of character education within our curriculum. Our goal at Tulare Union High School is to educate the "whole" student, this includes character education within the academic, behavioral, social and emotional development of all students.

Our H.E.A.R.T. of a REDSKIN Program was developed over the course of the 2013-2014 school year by a team of teachers, counselors, administrators, and our school psychologist. Multiple meetings were held with the entire school community during the planning year in an attempt to solicit input from and keep all stakeholders updated and involved with the development of the program. The H.E.A.R.T. program is based upon a matrix of expected student behaviors in the areas of Hard Work, Excellence, Attitude, Respect, and Teamwork. Lessons have been developed in each of these 5 areas and they are taught to all students by all staff. A school-wide calendar of H.E.A.R.T. lessons ensures frequent and regular presentations of character education

Although this is our first full year of implementation, we are aware of the need to evaluate the success of the program toward achieving our character education goals. For this reason we have

been documenting all discipline issues in the School Wide Information System in order to track, monitor and disseminate information specific to student behavior. In the first semester, we have already witnessed a positive change on the campus. The tone of the campus is extremely positive, caring and accepting of all students. We have also experienced a decrease in the number of student referrals and suspensions compared to previous years.

The mission of Tulare Union High School's Project Z is to increase the awareness of bullying and intolerance as a serious issue not only on campus, but throughout the community of Tulare, and to create an atmosphere of respect for everyone. Project Z's objectives include:

1. Promote a school-wide student-centered bullying prevention policy which advocates for students. (Student organized anti-bullying clubs can reduce bullying by 50%.)
2. Promote awareness of the various types of bullying by educating students and staff.
3. Promote an atmosphere of respect and tolerance for all on campus and throughout the community by visitation to feeder schools.
4. Show that bullying is not permitted at Tulare Union and to advocate for those who are bullied.
5. Promote education and support to students, staff, and the community in order to establish a harassment free climate.

This vision of Tulare Union High School's Project Z is to create a campus culture of tolerance and respect for everyone by displaying personal pride that is in each and every one. The Project Z motto is: PRIDE – It's in You, it's in Me – Live it, Love it, Share it!

To date, Project Z has hosted 4 Community Forums, 2 School-wide Symposiums with a third one scheduled for January of 2015, presented at 4 local schools (elementary, middle and high schools), and appeared on 6 syndicated radio and 3 television segments. Project Z has also become very active in our community. Members have visited a local Nursing Home to assist with general maintenance efforts, socialize with patients, and provide babysitting services for their families.

Educating all students to be contributing community members has been a long standing goal at Tulare Union High School. Whether it be in the classroom, with clubs or class government, on athletic teams, cheerleading or band, our students are constantly providing service to others. The H.E.A.R.T. of a Redskin Program teaches civic responsibility, leadership, and meaningful service throughout the curriculum. Students participate in H.E.A.R.T. lessons every week that focus on one of the five H.E.A.R.T. principles (Hard Work, Excellence, Attitude, Respect, and Teamwork).

Another area in which we pride ourselves is that of cultural diversity. Our student enrollment represents a very heterogeneous population, and we make sure that we are teaching all students to accept one another for who they are and to celebrate our differences. For the past six years we have partnered with the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) to reach out to our parents and educate and empower them to be involved partners in their students' education.

Our participation in Challenge Day and our “Be the Change Team” are founded on the idea of love and connection through the celebration of diversity, truth, and full expression. The World Language Department does an exceptional job hosting many cultural events to educate everyone on the uniqueness of all cultures. Foreign exchange students are welcomed, and we’ve been fortunate to be able to continue to host these students. Academically, many of our students are now participating in projects that involve the community. We are using more Project-Based lessons in our classrooms that require students to partner with members of the community and work together.

Character education, whether it be in the classroom, on the athletic field, or on the campus is a high priority at Tulare Union. We will continue to infuse character education throughout our curriculum and to celebrate the great work of our students.

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**UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Fresno Unified**  
**2611 E. Matoian Way**  
**Fresno, CA 93740**  
**Principal: Mr. James Bushman**

While some schools may have forgotten the imperative to teach character education, University High School has not. The school offers a liberal arts, college preparatory program. UHS is a charter school and this matters because unlike traditional public schools that may have existed for decades, our school was created only in the year 2000. Only by adhering to our mission do we earn the right to continue existing. The result of this is that more than with traditional public educated, well-rounded, young adults who can enter. Only by adhering to our mission do we earn the right to continue existing. The result of this is that more than with traditional public schools we are mission driven. The core of our mission is to create productive citizens, students well versed in issues of character. Our vision statement speaks to this goal as do our Expected Student Learning Results, and our educational program supports it.

Expert From Vision Statement:

*The school will address the academic, personal, and social development of the students while providing a solid academic foundation for a college career, with the goal that all graduates are prepared to enter the adult world where they will be ready to pursue any goal to which they aspire.*

Around year seven (the school is currently in its 15<sup>th</sup> year) the school began focusing more on the personal and social development. The school created a Code of Character that formally outlined our goal for students akin to the “Performance and Moral Character” talked about in Smart & Good High Schools. Our code, which was created by the faculty and students, will be understanding, Honorable, and Studious.

With the adoption of this code the school began focusing more attention on integrating personal and social development into our curriculum. The school changed several book titles in our 48 books so ALL kids were now reading books like The Seven Habits of Highly effective teens (grade 9), Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do (grade 10), Civil Disobedience or The Wisdom of Buddha (grade 11) and many others. The school created a service learning club (now the largest in the school) and the school board later adopted a community service-learning requirement for gradation.

Teaching student about issues of character is only part of our goal. As a school we also need to give students opportunities to exhibit the character education we extol. School environments do not always reward students for trying to do the right thing , so schools have to intervene. To do this other schools have adopted programs like Restorative Justice or Positive Behavioral interventions & supports (PBIS) as a way to teach kids how to interact with others For our school we have utilized more organic way that have emanated from our distinctive school environments. Teachers and staff, parent while they teach. We actively talk about issues of character and how we should behave, and we created our own honor commission compromised of students elected by their peers, along with some faculty and staff.

UHS monitors our efforts in several ways. While we can't look into the hearts and minds of our students to know successful we are in teaching students to be people of character, we can measure periphery efforts. We currently collect data on what percent of our students read or engage in our character related curriculum work.

The school is very democratic about engaging students and staff to address issues of student learning, and the school climate. The school is small with only a teaching staff of 20, and an office staff of 7 and yet the communication streams between teachers, students and parents are more numerous than at other schools.

Our school has a strong ASB and Honor Commission that brings forth ideas and improvements for our school. The honor commission that brings forth ideas and improvements for our school. The honor commission meets twice a month and has been charged with serving as the keepers of character for our school. The honor Commissioners includes three representatives from each grade level voted by their classmates, as well as the ASB President. When the group meets, a school counselor a couple faculty members and the student Activities Director also attend the meeting.

UHS engages students in service learning, character building and uses structured assignments and projects that foster character development in ways that support the new common core curriculum. The school environment encourages students to get involved with activities, to demonstrate leadership at the school and in the community. But then the school goes one step further in providing students with structured opportunities to ensure students get to practice these things. To help students learn about being responsible citizens, the school passed a policy asking every student to perform 10 hours of community service per semester. And students are required to participate in at least three-extracurricular activities firing their career that they discuss with their counselor.

Every year our entire student body performs together at Saroyan Theatre in front of a sold-out audience in a large musical variety show. This year's show featured music from around the world. As I said in the program "Tonight we can showcase some of this diversity through the music the students will perform. At our school, at the end of every daily bulletin read each morning, we include the words, WE are UHS. UHS is a diverse school, and its students represent dozens of different cultures that we celebrate as we did at Saroyan, but among this diversity is a common denominator: character education. The UHS program is character education based, and all students who attend the school receive it.