DON’T FORGET TO APPLY.

Mark your calendars!
MCCE@SU 2015 Awards Program
"2014 - 2015 School of the Year"
October 8, 2015
Stevenson University, Owings Mills Campus
Rockland Center

The Maryland Center for Character Education at Stevenson University (MCCE@SU) is planning the 2015 Awards Conference to honor schools throughout MD who have instituted, developed, and are continuing comprehensive character education initiatives in their school communities. It is a goal of MCCE@SU to promote Character Education throughout the state of Maryland. This year we are encouraging every school throughout the state that has developed a comprehensive character education program to apply for this prestigious award. Our goal is to encourage all schools that have a character education program to apply for recognition and a MCCE@SU School of the Year award.

The recognized schools in 2015 will receive a specially designed School of the Year Character Education banner which can be displayed proudly along with a certificate of recognition from the Maryland Center for Character Education at Stevenson University. These recognized schools will be honored for their leadership at the 2015 MCCE@SU Awards Conference on October 8th. However, it should be noted that the Maryland Center for Character Education and Stevenson University strongly believes that the most important reward is the satisfaction of observing the strengthening of character in Maryland’s youth.

Download application at [www.mdctrcharacter.org](http://www.mdctrcharacter.org).

Left hand menu under

“2015 School of the Year Application.”

All applications must be e-mailed to: MCCEcharacter@aol.com.

The deadline for submitting applications is June 26, 2015.

For more information contact -
Linda Muska at MCCEcharacter@aol.com.
Best Practice for the Month of May
Churchville Elementary School
http://www.mdctrcharacter.org/best%20practices.shtml

BEST CHARACTER EDUCATION PRACTICES

School: Churchville Elementary School
Address: 2935 Level Road
Churchville, MD 21018
Phone: 410-638-3800
Contact: Edith Buckler- Principal
Email - edith.buckler@hcps.org

Title of Best Practice: Character Development Program highlighting “Character Counts Week”

Primary Principles Emphasized: 1, 2, and 5

Objectives:
The purpose of the “Churchville Charger” character development program is to build a community with a caring and empathetic culture in which students feel cared for by each other and staff. The “C-H-A-R-G-E-R Way” means to demonstrate Courtesy, Honesty, Fairness, Respect, Good choices, Effort and Responsibility each and every day.

ASCA School Counseling Objectives:
Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others. Students will identify values, attitudes and beliefs.

Brief Description:
Character Education Program

The character education program at Churchville is based on the belief that adults are the teachers and role models of developing good character in students. All stakeholders are expected to demonstrate courtesy, honesty, fairness, respect, good choices, effort, and responsibility each day. These character traits are defined for students through classroom lessons by teachers, administrators, the school counselor, school-wide events such as character counts week wellness fair, school-wide assemblies such as Taekwondo “Self-Esteem and Confidence” demonstrations, children’s authors, classroom management routines and expectations, and recognition of students demonstrating these positive character traits through charger awards and good news assemblies. The school improvement team reflects on the success of the character education program at the end of each school year and makes changes and improvements for the following school year. Students and adults are held to a high moral standard of conduct throughout the school. Although good character is emphasized and promoted at Churchville everyday throughout the school year, The Character Counts week Best Practice celebrates each character trait individually and gives us a better understanding of how when we demonstrate these traits, we impacts the lives of others.
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Character Counts week is a school-wide initiative celebrating one positive character trait each day (of the Six Pillars of Character); respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and trustworthiness. During the week students participated in classroom and family discussions, watched videos sang songs, set character goals, created character trait posters, and demonstrated good character by participating in a variety of grade level appropriate activities. The week began with a video skit of Churchville teachers demonstrating good and bad character. Each day teachers viewed the Power Point slides for the daily character trait, followed up with a class discussion and activity relating to that trait. Each classroom teacher was provided with a character bin with all the supplies and materials they would need for the week. Teachers were encouraged to emphasize the character trait of the day throughout the school day. Each evening, parents were encouraged to discuss the character trait of the day using the Character Discussion Cards provided. Proclamations from County Executive Craig and Maryland Governor O'Malley were read over the morning announcements. Students were rewarded for demonstrating good character throughout the week with character trait charms to add to their school key chains.

Principle #1 Effective character education promotes core ethical values as well as supportive performance values as the foundation of good character.

Goal #2 of the School Improvement Plan states that all students are educated in school environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning. One way that Churchville promotes this goal is through the “C-H-A-R-G-E-R” character program. The character committee sets high expectations of moral character for students and staff to demonstrate courtesy, honesty, fairness, respect, good choices, effort, and responsibility each day. Street signs displaying each character word are hung throughout the school. The CHARGER character posters are displayed in each classroom. Classroom teachers work with students to develop and chart how these traits will “look” and “sound” in their classrooms.
Examples of how classroom teachers support the character program include (but are not limited to) morning meetings, goal setting, teaching of character & bullying lessons created by the character committee, the 5 P’s of 5th grade (polite, productive, patient, prepared, and prompt), positive reinforcement of good character by recognizing students with daily charger awards and choosing quarterly CHARGER students to be recognized at Good News Assemblies. Curriculum themes tied to good character are embellished and emphasized by classroom teachers. Other examples include classroom meetings to celebrate accomplishments, problem solve, discuss issues, etc. Displaying good character in the cafeteria is also an expectation. Classes earn pom-poms for good behavior which “fill their class buckets.” When the class “bucket” is full of pom-poms each class is rewarded with fun activities such as extra recess, pajama day, crazy hair day, bring a stuffed animal day, lunch & a movie, etc. Student behavior referrals are always addressed through character development discipline methods. A “Think Sheet” was developed by the School Improvement Team that ties into the Character Education Program. Students reflect upon their behavior and identify the character trait that the behavior is associated with. Then make a plan for improvement.

The school celebrated “Character Counts Week” during the month of October. Each day the school emphasized one of the 6 Pillars of Character including respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and trustworthiness. Each day began with a morning announcement quote for the character trait of the day and students and staff were encouraged to wear the color assigned to each character trait. A PowerPoint presentation was created for teachers to use each day to introduce the character word of the day to students. Other activities throughout the week included, a character trait poster contest, a random acts of kindness button jar, a teacher skit about character, a school-wide hands mural with ways students display character in school, “family talk” discussion cards each night for homework, and a canned food drive to help needy families in the school community. Participation in this school-wide initiative was 100%.

Principle #2 Effective character education defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.

The Charger Character Program is a springboard for how each teacher establishes a developmentally appropriate behavior management routine in the classroom. Examples of classroom management techniques include (but is not limited to), green/yellow/red stop light of behaviors, happy/sad faces, high expectation charts, cloud nine, and charger award stickers. Think Sheets are used to have students reflect on behaviors that are inconsistent with the “C-H-A-R-G-E-R” way. Students in grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade draw pictures of their behaviors, while students in grades 3-5 write a narrative to explain their behavior. Teachers discuss with students the ways in which they can make better choices as reflected on the think sheet. Each think sheet is sent home for discussions with parents, then signed and returned to school. School administration also use think sheet to help students reflect on their behaviors.
A library of character trait lessons and bullying lessons were created by the character committee and are available to all teachers throughout the school year. Two lessons are available for each character trait for both the primary and intermediate grades. Lessons contain a variety of media including literature, movies, and/or activities that promote an understanding of the core values. All teachers begin the school year by reading, *The One Book*, by Kathryn Otoshi to help students understand the importance of working together against bullying. Students feel safe about reporting incidents of bullying to all adults in the building. Character education is also integrated into literacy choices in reading and other content areas. Second grade teachers use the book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* to promote positive behaviors and demonstrating kindness, appreciation, and love to others every day. Fifth grade students create class and individual goals and work together to achieve those goals. Students are expected to self-evaluate/assess their participation and work habits after each special area class. Cooperative learning is evident across all grade levels in all contents of the curriculum. The school counselor reinforces character development through classroom guidance lessons, small group interventions with students needing extra support, and individual counseling for those students having behavioral difficulties in school. The special education team facilitated a social group to help struggling needs students develop friendships and interact with others appropriately.

**Principle #4 Effective character education creates a caring school community.**

Fostering caring attachments between adults and students and students to students is a high priority at Churchville Elementary. Many staff members participate in after school events that occur throughout the year. These include (but are not limited to), Back-to-School picnic, the Winter and Spring concerts, Reading Night, Breakfast and Books, Wellness Night, the PTA Spring Carnival, two Art Show Nights, Rita's Night, Artic Circle Night, and Chuck E. Cheese Night. Often you will see staff members scooping shaved ice, sitting in dunking booths, selling tickets, running in a healthy food relay race, playing in a faculty basketball game, acting out parts in a play and chaperoning during these well attended events.

Faculty and staff establish a positive relationship with parents/guardians early in the school year. They communicate frequently with parents/guardians about accomplishments and concerns about students via telephone, email, Ed Line and newsletters. Teachers and students create a classroom environment that is caring and safe through class meetings and class discussions about incidents that may occur. Many classes pair up with another class as reading buddies. Students in the intermediate classes read with students in the primary classes. Quarterly Good News assemblies recognize students’ efforts academically and behaviorally.
National Nonprofit Seeking Nominations
for
2015 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN CHARACTER EDUCATION

How To Nominate:
Character.org is now accepting nominations for the 2015 “Sandy Award,” as it is informally called. The deadline for all submissions is Friday, May 29th. Please email your nominations to Iris Wyatt at iris@character.org. You may mail them to her, c/o of Character.org, 1634 I. Street, NW, Suite 550, Washington, DC 20006.

Important Requirements:
All nominations are for individuals only (no groups). They must be limited to a one page, single-spaced narrative summary that describes the candidate’s long-term achievements and contributions relative to the award criteria (see Award Criteria). Please be very specific when describing the candidate’s work, showing reach and impact where possible. Also, provide e-mail addresses and phone numbers for the candidate and yourself, as nominator. Self-nominations are not accepted for this award.

Selection Process and Presentation of Award:
The winner of this year’s award will be chosen by a committee comprised of previous Sandy Award winners and Character.org leaders. The winner will be announced in July. He or she will receive transportation, two-night hotel accommodations, and free registration for the 2015 National Forum on Character Education, where the award will be presented. The event takes place Oct. 15-17 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Award Criteria:
The recipient of the Sandy Award for Lifetime Achievement in Character Education is an individual who, over a significant period of time, has been an outstanding role model of good character and has also met one or more of the following criteria:

1. Strong and widely influential advocate of quality character education, or

2. Outstanding contributor to any or all of the domains in which character development takes place (school, family, community, sports, etc.); these contributions should reflect the implications for education and, ideally, for character/moral/social-emotional education (as opposed to, say, psychological research that does not address educational applications), or

3. Friend and supporter of character education—for example, by mentoring character education leaders or supporting the field philanthropically—in a way that has made a significant difference.
National Nonprofit Seeking Nominations for
2015 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN CHARACTER EDUCATION

Important Information:
• All nominations must be received no later than Friday, May 29, 2015
• Each person may nominate no more than two candidates
• Self-nominations and group nominations will not be accepted for this award
• Please direct questions to Iris Wyatt, at iris@character.org
• Iris Wyatt can also be reached at (202) 296-7743, extension 19

Happy Spring!
To live a creative life we must lose our fear of being wrong.'

Joseph Chillons Pearce