Elkin City Schools

...Where Character Counts

Character Education Program

“A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting and, when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important.”

-Abraham Lincoln
CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Mission of the Elkin City Schools

Elkin City Schools, in partnership with students, families, and the community, will provide excellent educational opportunities that encourage lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.

Program Overview

Attached is the Character Education Plan as reviewed and revised by a committee of K-12 educators including administrators, counselors, parents, and curriculum leaders.

In 2000, Elkin City Schools formed a Character Education Committee. In 2001, a legislative directive was given for the development of Character Education as a part of the existing standard curriculum, and in 2002 the original ECS Character Education Plan was completed. K-12 implementation became a reality in 2002-2003, and for the past five years our school system has focused on Character Education as an integral part of the school culture. It is taught through natural integration and infusion into course content.

The Character Education Committee has met to discuss updates to the original plan, and each school has given input so the plan will reflect the changing culture and current initiatives for Elkin City Schools. The attached plan reflects these revisions.

Following the plan is the Annual Progress Report for 2007-2008 that highlights some of the areas in which Character Education is implemented in our schools.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Realizing that schools contribute to the character development of young people, Elkin City Schools implements a character education program that encourages students to develop the knowledge, skills, and habits needed to become responsible citizens in our global society. The program creates an environment in which elements of character are modeled and internalized by students and staff in all aspects of school life. We seek the support of families and the community in developing these qualities that make a positive difference in students’ attitudes and behaviors.

VISION STATEMENT

Character Education should be an integral part of school life. With intentional, thoughtful character education, schools can become communities in which virtues such as responsibility, hard work, honesty, and kindness are taught, expected, celebrated, and continually practiced.
## CHARACTER EDUCATION

**GOAL 1: Create a positive moral culture in the school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Strategy</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Evidence of Completion</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Distribute school climate surveys or other surveys such as the School as Caring Community Profile to staff, students and parents to determine areas needing improvement | • SACS Climate Committee  
• School Improvement Team |  
Completed Surveys |
| Prioritize Character Education as part of the School Improvement Plan | • School Improvement Team |  
School Improvement Plan |
| Establish a character education team to lead efforts in each school. | • Principal |  
Functioning Character Education Committee |
| Invite renowned character educators to speak to students, staff and parents. | • Staff Development Coordinator  
• Principal |  
Contracts |
| Ensure that a democratic student government operates within the school | • Principal  
• Student Council Advisor |  
Successfully functioning Student Council  
Focus Groups  
Clubs  
Informal discussions |
| Utilize the language of character education in various aspects of school life | • School-based Administrators  
• Staff  
• Student Leaders |  
Observation  
Announcements  
Media Print |
| Ensure that student handbooks clearly state expectations for student behavior | • School-based Administrators |  
Handbook |
| Enforce discipline in the school in a fair and consistent manner | • School-based Administrators  
• Teachers |  
Discipline Notices  
NCWISE Discipline Report  
Surveys |
| Emphasize respect for diversity | • Staff  
• Student Leaders  
• Coaches |  
Focus Groups  
Informal Discussions  
Surveys  
Clubs  
Athletic Contracts |
| Capitalize on opportunities to encourage students and offer praise | • Staff |  
Good News items  
Surveys  
Notes to students and parents |
| Provide a strong system of mentor and peer support | • Guidance Counselors |  
Mentor program and support program in place |
| Promote Advisor/Advisee Program at the Middle School Level | Principal  
School Improvement Team  
Teachers | Minutes of School Improvement Team meetings  
Observations  
Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|
| Develop a Welcome Kit for new students, new student tour, and assign student buddies | Guidance Counselors  
Media and Technology leaders  
Student Council Members | Video  
Booklet  
Buddy Assignment List |
| Identify and purchase character education resources for the professional libraries in each Media Center and/or Guidance Office | Character Education Committee  
Media Coordinators  
Guidance Counselors | List of Character Education Resources  
Teacher Resources for lesson plans |
| Conduct periodic assessments of the program and make improvements as needed | School Improvement Team  
SACS Climate Committee  
Character Education Committee | Surveys  
Minutes from Discussion Groups |
## CHARACTER EDUCATION

**GOAL 2:** Create a moral community in the classroom in which students respect themselves, as well as each other, and feel valued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use a variety of classroom management skills to create a respectful, nurturing, orderly and comfortable learning environment</td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Behavior Plan&lt;br&gt;• Posted Rules&lt;br&gt;• Administrators’ Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and enforce classroom rules for self-control and respect for others</td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Behavior Plan&lt;br&gt;• Posted Rules&lt;br&gt;• Administrators’ Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a democratic classroom environment with multiple opportunities to make decisions and share responsibilities</td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Administrators’ Observations&lt;br&gt;• Surveys&lt;br&gt;• Informal Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize multiple intelligences and help students with diverse abilities discover and develop their special talents</td>
<td>• Teachers&lt;br&gt;• Guidance Counselors&lt;br&gt;• AIG Coordinator</td>
<td>• Lesson plans&lt;br&gt;• Administrators’ Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use cooperative learning to teach children skills for helping each other and working together</td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Lesson plans&lt;br&gt;• Administrators’ Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach conflict resolution to give students capacity and commitment to resolve conflicts in fair, nonviolent ways</td>
<td>• Guidance Counselors&lt;br&gt;• Teachers&lt;br&gt;• Peer Helpers</td>
<td>• Discipline reports&lt;br&gt;• Counselors’ schedule and/or lesson plans&lt;br&gt;• Peer Helper Roster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students consciously take responsibility for developing their own character by setting goals and assessing their success</td>
<td>• Teachers&lt;br&gt;• Guidance Counselors</td>
<td>• Agendas&lt;br&gt;• Lesson Plans&lt;br&gt;• Log of Student Conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop lesson plans and/or writing prompts to promote and reflect character traits</td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Lesson Plans&lt;br&gt;• Completed Essays</td>
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</table>
**CHARACTER EDUCATION**

**GOAL 3:** Ensure that the schools model and teach the essential traits of character education specified by the legislature

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<tr>
<td>Ensure that all staff know and understand the character traits that the school system will emphasize</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Minutes from faculty meetings</td>
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<td>• Staff Handbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide staff development to all staff including introduction and implementation of character traits</td>
<td>• Staff Development Coordinator</td>
<td>• Registration Logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on a specific character trait each month as agreed upon by the Character Education Committee and each school</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators • Guidance Counselors • Character Education Committee</td>
<td>• Schedule of Traits</td>
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<td>• Thought of the Day/Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement programs in each school that reward demonstration of good character such as Citizen of the Month and Student of the Week</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators • Guidance Counselors</td>
<td>• Bulletin boards</td>
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<td>• Parent Newsletter</td>
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<td>• Announcements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involve all staff in teaching, modeling, and reinforcing the traits and positive character development</td>
<td>• Principal • Staff</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
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<td>Integrate the traits into the curriculum</td>
<td>• Principal • Teachers</td>
<td>• Lesson Plans</td>
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<td>• Observations</td>
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<td>• Writing Products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquire or develop sample lessons from each grade level and/or subject area that demonstrate effective integration of traits into the curriculum</td>
<td>• Teachers • Curriculum Director/Desigee</td>
<td>• Lessons Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile lesson plans into a resource document to be available at each school</td>
<td>• Media Coordinator • Guidance Counselor • Curriculum Director/Desigee</td>
<td>• Resource Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate goal setting, decision-making, citizenship, and community service in departmental areas</td>
<td>• School Improvement Team • CTE Teachers • JROTC • Character Education Teachers</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
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# CHARACTER EDUCATION

## GOAL 4: Foster development of positive character traits beyond the Classroom

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</table>
| Strengthen existing extra curricular programs and consider others that focus on developing strong character | • School-based Administrators  
• School Improvement Team  
• Coaches  
• Club sponsors | • Program in place |
| Teach and reinforce the traits through intramurals, the sports program, and/or clubs | • Coaches  
• Club sponsors  
• JROTC | • Observation  
• Player/Participant Handbook  
• Field Days  
• Observation of Activity |
| Heighten awareness of community programs that have a service component | • School-based Administrators  
• Media Coordinators  
• Clerical Staff | • Daily Announcements  
• WELK  
• Information table |
| Continue community service programs at the elementary and secondary levels | • School-based Administrators  
• Teachers  
• Grade levels  
• Departments  
• Club sponsors | • Observation of Activity |
| Implement programs that involve older students working with younger students | • Guidance Counselors  
• Teachers | • Observations  
• List of peer helpers, tutors  
• JROTC |
| Invite local leaders and former students to talk with students about the importance of character in other aspects of life besides school | • School-based Administrators  
• Teachers  
• Guidance Counselors | • Observations  
• Visitors’ logs |
| Promote Abstinence Until Marriage through the schools by teaching self-control, respect, and consequences of early sexual activity. | • School-based Administrators  
• Coaches  
• Guidance Counselors  
• Health Teachers | • Assemblies  
• Guest Speakers |
CHARACTER EDUCATION

GOAL 5: Solicit, increase and sustain community and family involvement in the development and implementation of a character education program

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Strategy</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Evidence of Completion</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involve parents and the community in planning and participating in the character education program</td>
<td>• Character Education Committee</td>
<td>• Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussions</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform all parents, businesses and the community the character education program and the traits being specified each month</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Local media</td>
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<td>• Superintendent</td>
<td>• School website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create and disseminate information about the character education program at PTA meetings, Open House, and other events as appropriate</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Character Education Committee</td>
<td>• Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase positive communication between school and home including positive phone calls and notes</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Surveys</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
<td>• Teacher log or portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinforce traits through interactions among parents, teachers, and students</td>
<td>• Staff</td>
<td>• Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use newsletters, billboards, the school system web site and other means to conduct media promotions that promote character education</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Newsletters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Media/Technology Coordinators</td>
<td>• Billboards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• System website</td>
<td>• System website</td>
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<td>Provide opportunities for parent education programs in character education</td>
<td>• Character Education Committee</td>
<td>• Programs/bulletins</td>
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<td>• Staff Development Coordinator</td>
<td>• Registration forms</td>
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<td>Maintain a smoke free school including inside the building, outside areas and all school sponsored events and athletic games</td>
<td>• School-based Administrators</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Guidance Counselors</td>
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<td>• Athletic Department</td>
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### 2007-2008 Annual Progress Report

#### Elkin Elementary School
- Weekly Character Education Classes taught by the guidance counselor for grades 3-6.
- Promotion of and participation in Red Ribbon Week
- Talent Show “I’ve Got Better Things To Do Than Drugs”
- Counseling Groups with discussions about friendship, hygiene, and divorce
- Character Words focused on each month
  - August-Integrity
  - September-Respect
  - October-December-Responsibility
  - December-January-Fairness
  - February-March-Caring
  - April-May-Citizenship
- Numerous volunteer and charitable opportunities to help school families, American Cancer Society, and the Heart Association

#### Elkin Middle School
- Student agenda focuses on character traits
- Daily character education lessons during “Team Time”
- Zero Bullying Policy
- Monthly recognition and incentives for the students who display positive character traits
- Peer helpers
- Orientation for 7th grade students
- Focus on abstinence in health classes

#### Elkin High School
- Guest speakers who promote positive character traits
- Service opportunities to volunteer in the community
- Tutoring program to help other students succeed academically
- Clubs and organizations that promote good decision makers and service to others
- Students Against Drunk Driving
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- JROTC
- Student Council initiatives
- DVDs used as teacher resources and discussion starters
- PBS program
- Peer helpers