



# Hillside Elementary School Character Education Plan 2020 – 2021

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this plan is to provide staff and other members of the school community with information regarding our character education program and initiatives. Included in this plan is a description of Hillside's core values and associated guiding principles, as well as a calendar of events and activities that support the development of character and social emotional learning in our students.

## **Core Values**

Hillside School has had a long-standing tradition of having H.E.A.R.T. The acronym stands for *Helpful, Empathetic, Accepting, Responsibility and Together*. These values along with the values that form the Six Pillars of Character, including Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Citizenship and Caring, form our current core values. The logo depicted on the cover of this plan was designed to honor tradition and embrace the present by bringing old and new values together to form what is currently considered the Hillside Core.

## **Guiding Principles**

Eleven guiding principles as described by the Character Education Partnership ([character.org](http://character.org)) support the work done with our core values. They are as follows:

- Principle 1: The school community promotes core ethical and performance values as the foundation of good character.
- Principle 2: The school defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and doing.
- Principle 3: The school uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development.
- Principle 4: The school creates a caring community.
- Principle 5: The school provides students with opportunities for moral action.
- Principle 6: The school offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.
- Principle 7: The school fosters students' self-motivation.
- Principle 8: The school staff is an ethical learning community that shares responsibility for character education and adheres to the same core values that guide the students.
- Principle 9: The school fosters shared leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.
- Principle 10: The school engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.
- Principle 11: The school regularly assesses its culture and climate, the functioning of its staff as character educators, and the extent to which its students manifest good character.

## Social-Emotional Learning

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines social-emotional learning as:

*“...the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”*

CASEL has identified five sets of interrelated cognitive, behavioral and affective competencies essential to effective SEL. These “Five Core Competencies” are described as follows (as taken from [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)):

- **Self-awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
- **Self-management:** The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.
- **Social awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.
- **Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.
- **Responsible decision-making:** The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

Hillside will continue incorporating the work of social-emotional learning into our character education program this year for grades K – 5; specifically, with focus on “self-awareness”, “self-management”, and “responsible decision making”. Kindergarten and first grade can continue to utilize materials published by Jed Baker (*The Social Skills Picture Book and Social Skills Training*). Grades 2 – 5 will utilize lessons from the *Social Decision Making/Social Problem Solving* curriculum by Maurice Elias and company, as provided in the binder.

## **Service Learning**

Service learning is defined as follows:

*“a research-based teaching method where guided or classroom learning is applied through action that addresses an authentic community need in a process that allows for youth initiative and provides structured time for reflection on the service experience and demonstration of acquired skills and knowledge.”* (Cathryn Berger Kaye, *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*).

This year students in all grades will, once again, participate in an age/grade appropriate service learning project. The project is not included in the implementation calendar below as to allow flexibility. Included in the appendix of this document is a service learning planning sheet that grade level teams must complete and forward to the principal.

## Character Education Implementation Calendar 2020 – 2021

Dates of Implementation	Pillar Unit of Study/Core Competency
September	<p><b><i>Respect</i></b> - <i>Being tolerant and accepting of others</i>  <b><i>Peace Place Set-up and Classroom Routines</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish classroom &amp; school rules, routines and procedures</li> <li>• Complete the three Respect lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Introduce/Review Peace Place - discuss HEART and Six Pillars with students, and “Our Human Rights” poster (see picture in binder)</li> <li>• “Character Day” observance activities</li> <li>• Complete “Opening Activity/Icebreaker Lesson One – What Do You See?” (see binder)</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
October	<p><b><i>Respect/Conflict Resolution</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete “Opening Activity/Icebreaker Lesson One – Listening to Hear” (see binder)</li> <li>• Begin Six Essential Lessons in the Bully-Busting Curriculum</li> <li>• Prepare for/participate in Pep Rally</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly</li> <li>• <i>Week of Respect</i> activities</li> <li>• <i>School Violence Awareness Week</i> activities</li> <li>• <i>Red Ribbon Week</i> activities</li> </ul>
November	<p><b><i>Respect/Self-Awareness</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish Six Essential Lessons in the Bully-Busting Curriculum</li> <li>• Complete “Understanding the Origin of Conflict Lesson 3 – Sources of Conflict” (see binder)</li> <li>• Complete “Understanding Skills to Productively Address Conflict Lesson Five – How to Brainstorm” (see binder)</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #2 (Citizenship)</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #1</li> </ul>
December	<p><b><i>Citizenship</i></b> - <i>Doing your share to improve your school and community</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship Lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #2</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>

January	<p><b><i>Responsibility/Self-Awareness</i></b> - <i>Doing what you are supposed to do</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility Lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Self-Awareness Lesson (see binder)</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #3 (Responsibility)</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #3</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
February	<p><b><i>Caring/Self-Management</i></b> – <i>Being kind and showing that you care</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring Lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Self-Management Lesson</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #4</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #4 (Caring)</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
March	<p><b><i>Fairness/Self-Management</i></b> – <i>Playing by the rules</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairness Lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Self-Management Lesson (see binder)</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #5 (Fairness)</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #5</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
April/ May	<p><b><i>Trustworthiness/Responsible Decision Making</i></b> – <i>Being honest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustworthiness Lessons (see binder)</li> <li>• Responsible Decision-Making Lesson (see binder)</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #6 (Trustworthiness)</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #6</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #7</li> <li>• Caring Communities Session #7</li> <li>• Complete activities/lessons as outlined in the “Study Skills Continuum” throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
June	<p><b><i>Reflections</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character Color Wars Hall Decorating</li> <li>• Character Colors Wars Field Day</li> <li>• Student Council Assembly #8, Election Edition</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and reflect upon character work with students</li> <li>• Character Education Committee seeks input from staff regarding implementation of program</li> <li>• Caring Communities Farewell Session #8 (Preceding annual <i>Fifth Grade Talent Show</i>)</li> </ul>
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## SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT PLANNING SHEET

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Due by December 18, 2020*

**Grade level team & other faculty involved in project:**

**Anticipated Timeline (Estimated is fine; include start/end dates):**

**Describe your project.** If you are working with any individuals, groups, organizations, or businesses in the community, please list them. Also include benchmark activities and culminating activity, as appropriate.

**Student Input:** How (and to what degree) were students involved in selecting and/or organizing the project? Note the curricular point(s) of entry.

**Anticipation/Building Background (i.e., what's your hook?)**

**Academic Component:** What curriculum goals will be achieved? How? Please be specific and list any and all relevant curricular connections.

**Service Component:** How will the community benefit? How will the students benefit?

**Reflective Component:** In what ways will the students reflect on this experience? (journals, class discussions, etc.)

**Character Component:** In what ways will this project contribute to the personal development of your students in our core values? (Six Pillars of Character & H.E.A.R.T.)

**Tangible Product(s) From the Experience:**