



Character Education Plan

2018-2019

Orlando Science School – Technology Campus



What is character Education?

Character education is a learning process that enables students and adults in a school community to understand and manage emotions, care about themselves and others, establish and maintain positive relationships, learn and use ethical values in everyday life, and make responsible decisions.

Through the implementation of our social-emotional curriculum, Second Step, and the infusion of character education across our curriculum and daily life, OSES creates an environment where students feel safe, respected, and cared about by their classmates and school staff. When students feel this way, their levels of motivation and commitment to school increase. They develop skills that help them to maintain positive relationships and to display values such as empathy, kindness, respect, and responsibility, as well as create a welcoming and positive school climate. They grow as caring citizens that will make a difference in our society.

Character education has been the shared responsibility of parents, teachers, and members of the community. Therefore, we continuously encourage our school community to join us on this fantastic journey.

Purpose

Orlando Science School _ Technology Campus has committed to the development of core ethical values such as respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty in all members of our school community. Our character education plan has been designed with the purpose of increasing positive social behaviors and relationships with peers and adults, increasing academic achievement, and developing a safe and enjoyable school climate.

Description

Our program is inclusive of Social Emotional Learning curriculum, **Sanford Harmony**, by National University, www.sanfordharmony.org, and by the instruction of monthly character traits. Character education is embedded in all subjects, places, and interactions that the students have throughout the school.

Students in grades K-6 develop their social-emotional skills including making friends, managing emotions, and solving problems – to set them on the path for social success and academic readiness. The program is taught every other week and practiced daily combined with our Social Studies curriculum. This program is designed to teach children how to understand and manage their emotions, control their reactions, be aware of others' feelings, and develop the skills to problem-solve and make responsible decisions.

Philanthropist, T. Denny Sanford, has always had a passion for inspiring others to create positive change in the world. His vision resulted in Sanford Harmony. Sanford Harmony was researched and developed by educators at the Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics at Arizona State University. Researchers identified practical strategies, stories, activities, and lessons for improving relationships, teaching empathy, increasing student confidence and reducing bullying.

Each grade level kit includes:

- Grade-specific lesson plan book
- Storybooks per grade that focus on core themes
- Games for upper elementary levels
- Quick Connection cards—Quick Community Builders, Quick Conversations, and Quick Collaborations

Our school takes advantage of *Orbit the ORCA*, our school mascot, to encourage our staff and promote our core values to create a positive school climate and culture. By promoting our school core values and our mascot at the same time, students feel part of a very engaging process. Our students identify with their mascot (ORCA) and the ways ORCAS do things around school. Posters and banners throughout school will remind our students and help determine which behaviors, expectations, rules, and values are supposed to be part of our culture. Our teachers use the visual posters to review and remind expectation throughout our building (hallways, cafeteria, and restrooms).

OSS Core Values



Character.org/ National Schools of Character

Character.org is an organization of passionate people advocating for integrity, honesty, respect, and other core ethical values to be fused into education for the betterment of our nation. In schools of Character, adults embrace their critical role as models. Teachers work together as professionals—and with parents and community members as partners—to positively shape the social, emotional, and character development of the young people entrusted to them each day. Students in these schools feel safe, respected, and connected to those around them, allowing them to thrive academically and socially and be motivated to give back to their communities.

Character.org has created a way to recognize schools in and out of the United States for their strong character development efforts by offering a certification as National Schools of Character. National Schools of Character are schools, early childhood through high school, that have demonstrated through a rigorous evaluation process that character development has had a positive impact on academics, student behavior, and school climate.

Orlando Science School is committed not only to develop a strong character education program, but also to be certified as a National School of Character by 2019.

Promising Practices

Each year, Character.org recognizes schools in the United States and elsewhere who have implemented unique, specific, and effective character education strategies that make an impact in the school. These strategies are called Promising Practices. Promising Practices are indicators that the school is moving forward to becoming a National School of Character.

Orlando Science School defines school wide practices that could eventually become Promising Practices, as well as a way to achieve our final goal of becoming a School of Character. Last school year, OSS participated in 2 Promising Practices and both of them were awarded.



Implementation/Good Practices

Implementation of the character education program for 2019-2018

1. Implementation of Sanford Harmony program
2. Selection of Student Character of the Month
3. Selection of Teacher Character of the Month
4. Implementation of daily Meet Up (15 minutes)
5. Student commendation of the week in announcements (Fridays)
6. Teacher commendation of the week in announcements (Mondays)
7. Character Box Staff commendations
8. Character Trait of the Month
9. Character Binder Character Trait goals (Commendations, Character traits of the month with goals, academic tracking system)
10. Character videos during lunch time
11. Periodic sessions for parents/students (guest speakers)
12. Embedding character in daily activities and subjects/lessons
13. Teachers training
14. Character Team
15. Character Pep rally
16. Character day rotation per grade level
17. Monthly Character Trait newsletter
18. Application for National School of Character
19. Yearly activities and celebrations: Red Ribbon Week, Hispanic Heritage Night, NHJS, Character Day, Kindness Challenge.
20. Reading/Character buddies

11 Principles for Effective Character Education by Character.org

The 11 Principles of Effective Character Education explains each of the 11 Principles and includes a scoring guide. It defines each principle more specifically in terms of two to four items that describe what the principle should “look like” when implemented.

1. The school community promotes core ethical and performance values as the foundation of good character.
2. The school defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and doing.
3. The school uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development.
4. The school creates a caring community.
5. The school provides students with opportunities for moral action.
6. The school offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.
7. The school fosters students’ self-motivation.

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.
9. The school fosters shared leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.
10. The school engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.
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.

Character Traits of the Month 2018 - 2019

<i>Month</i>	<i>Character Trait</i>
September	Empathy
October	Kindness
November	Respect
December	Responsibility
January	Honesty
February	Courage
March	Self-Control
April	Caring
May	Tolerance

This year, we have an amazing goal: To continue incorporating character education in everything we do, in everything we think, and in everything we say. We will change the school climate, and make it better than what it already is today, and for this we need you: parents, teachers, and staff.

We will do it together.

We will be a School of Character!