Character Education Plan

Orlando Science School – Technology Campus

What is Character Education?

Character education 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.

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.

Character education responsibility is shared between parents, teachers, and members of the community.

Description

Our school has a Character Trait of the Month. OSES Teachers are using Sanford Harmony as the primary resource for social emotional learning this year.

Month	Trait	ORCA value
August	Responsibility	Ownership for my actions
September	Respect	Respect myself and others
October	Courage	Strive for excellence
November	Gratitude	Caring for my community
December	Empathy and Acceptance	Appreciating differences
January	Self-awareness	Ownership for my actions
February	Kindness	Caring for my community
March	Honesty	Respect myself and others
April	Cooperation	Appreciating differences
May	Perseverance	Striving for excellence

OSES Core Values

Ownership for my actions

Respect myself and others

Caring for my community

Appreciate differences

Strive for excellence

Orbit the ORCA, our school mascot, helps promote our core values to create a positive school climate and culture. 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).

Character.org/ National Schools of Character

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 was named a National School of Character in October 2021.

Implementation

1. **Character Trait of the Month**
   a. A Character trait has been already selected for every month of the school year. There will be a bulletin board for a display of the Character Trait of the month. Each trait will also be announced monthly in the newsletter.
   b. Teachers will be given lesson plans to help teach and reinforce each trait.
2. **Embedding character in daily activities and subjects/lessons**
   a. Teachers are encouraged to add/use/teach character education and social emotional learning in all subjects. When creating lesson plans the language can be added to the script.
3. **Selection of Student Character of the Month**
   a. Enter commendations consistently OSS Connect
   b. If you use other systems like Class Dojo, transfer the info to OSS Connect
   c. A reminder through the month to enter commendations
   d. If a teacher didn't enter commendations, the class will not have representation
4. **Selection of Staff Character of the Month**
   a. A decorated, labeled box will be placed at the front desk (both) with pre-made forms to fill out
   b. Staff, parents and students will be encouraged to place commendations for staff members
   c. Based on commendations, a teacher per building will be selected every month and her picture posted in the bulletin board with students.

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.