



**New Jersey Alliance for
Social, Emotional, and
Character Development**

2020 Schools of Character Recognition Booklet





2020 School of Character Honorees



2020 NEW JERSEY SCHOOLS OF CHARACTER

Aaron Decker School
Camden County Technical School, Gloucester Campus
Camden County Technical School, Pennsauken Campus
Catherine A. Dwyer School
Central Jersey College Prep
Cherry Hill High School West
Crescent Elementary School
Dennis B. O'Brien Elementary
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School No. 52
**Eastern Christian School Association
Grice Middle School
Hilldale Elementary School
Horace Mann Elementary School
Jefferson School
John E. Dwyer Technology Academy
Joseph H. Brensinger PS #17
Juan Pablo Duarte- Jose Julian Marti No. 28
Kindergarten Success Academy
**Lawrence Township Public Schools
M. Scott Carpenter Elementary School
Macopin Middle School
Marcus W. Newcomb Middle School
Memorial Elementary School
Old Bridge High School
**Old Bridge Township Public Schools
Oxford Central School
Pemberton Township High School
Saint Leo the Great School
Saint Peter School
Southwood Elementary School
Thomas Paine Elementary School
Valley View School
Victor Mravlag School No. 21
Waldwick Middle School
Walter M. Schirra Elementary School
**West Milford Township Public Schools
William A. Miller Elementary School
William F. Halloran School No. 22

Butler, NJ
Sicklerville, NJ
Pennsauken, NJ
Rockaway Township, NJ
Somerset, NJ
Cherry Hill, NJ
Waldwick, NJ
Rockaway Township, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
North Haledon, NJ
Hamilton, NJ
Montville, NJ
Cherry Hill, NJ
Union, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Jersey City, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Roselle, NJ
Lawrenceville, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
West Milford, NJ
Pemberton, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
Oxford, NJ
Pemberton, NJ
Lincroft, NJ
Point Pleasant Beach, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
Cherry Hill, NJ
Montville, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Waldwick, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
West Milford, NJ
Old Bridge, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ

2020 HONORABLE MENTION SCHOOLS

Applegarth Elementary School
Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy
Charles Harker School
Christopher Columbus School No. 13
Dr. William Mennies School
Englewood Cliffs School District
John Marshall School No. 20
Katherine D. Malone School
Lumberton Alternative School
Mabel G Holmes School #5
Montgomery Upper Middle School
Roebbling Elementary School
Spotswood Memorial Middle School
Theunis Day Elementary School
West Deptford Middle School

Monroe Township, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Woolwich, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Vineland, NJ
Englewood Cliffs, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Rockaway Township, NJ
Lumberton, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Montgomery, NJ
Roebbling, NJ
Spotswood, NJ
Wayne, NJ
West Deptford, NJ

2020 EMERGING SCHOOLS

Alexander Elementary School
Academy of the Most Blessed Sacrament
Benjamin Franklin School No. 13
Dickerson School
Rossi Elementary School
Samuel Yellin School
Traphagen Elementary School

Hamilton, NJ
Franklin Lakes, NJ
Elizabeth, NJ
Chester, NJ
Vineland, NJ
Stratford, NJ
Waldwick, NJ



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Aaron Decker Elementary School

Grades: Pre-K-4

School District: Butler Public Schools

Contact Person: Daniel Clark

Title: Anti-Bullying Specialist

Email: dclark@butlerboe.org

Address: 98 Decker Road

City/State/Zip: Butler, New Jersey, 07405

Telephone: 201-400-0756

Website: <http://www.butlerboe.org/ads>



At **Aaron Decker Elementary School**, a common language based on the core values of Kindness, Respect, and Responsibility has positively influenced Decker's 400 children in preschool through fourth grade. The student-centered Culture and Climate Committee includes third- and fourth- grade students who, at arrival and dismissal each day, extend high fives to the other students. They also give daily announcements, hand out Kindness Awards, read stories focusing on social and emotional growth, and perform skits demonstrating core values. Rounding out the program are daily mindfulness breaks that serve as wonderful reflection opportunities.

Camden County Technical School Gloucester Campus ★

Grades: 9-12

School District: Camden County Tech Schools

Contact Person: Jessica Tosti

Title: Assistant Principal

Email: jtosti@ccts.net

Street Address: 343 Berlin Cross Keys Road

City/State/Zip Code: Sicklerville NJ 08081

Telephone: 856-767-7000

Website: <https://gloucester.ccts.org/>



Camden County Technical School, Gloucester Campus has done remarkable work in adding to its "Living and Learning the Warrior Way" program and in performing exemplary outreach. In collaboration with the Camden County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Camden County Community College and Penn Tech, it hosts an annual "Camden County Middle School - School of Character Award." Among its innovative practices are PLC-created character lessons, a 21st Century after-school program, and service-learning projects in which students of many disciplines work together to create sets for the school play.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Camden County Technical School Pennsauken Campus ★

Grades: 9-12

School District: Camden County Technical Schools

Contact Person: Charene Scheeper

Title: Assistant Principal

Email: cscheeper@ccts.net

Street Address: 6008 Browning Road

City/State/Zip Code: Pennsauken, NJ 08109

Telephone: 856-663-1040 x7201

Website: <https://www.pennsauken.ccts.org/>



Penn Tech continues to do excellent work in promoting character education both in its Pennsauken campus and throughout the state. Service learning abounds here: students feed the homeless at Cathedral Kitchen; Allied Health students work at nursing homes; automotive and carpentry students service the school by working on school vehicles and assisting in building projects; culinary students prepare food for school functions. Sustained administrative support despite changes and a new student mentoring program are major contributors to the school's continued growth.

Catherine A. Dwyer School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Rockaway Twp. Public Schools

Contact Person: Michael McGovern

Title: Principal

Email: mmcgovern@rocktwp.net

Street Address: 655 Mt. Hope Ave.

City/State/Zip Code: Wharton, NJ 07866

Telephone: 973-361-7450

Website: <http://cad.rocktwp.net>



Embracing the district's core H.E.A.R.T. values (Honesty, Empathy, Acceptance, Respect, and Trust) **Catherine A. Dwyer**, a school literally with "no walls," excels in building relationships. A caring and welcoming place for students to thrive and grow, the school is characterized by an exceptional camaraderie exhibited by the staff, students, and parents. Service learning that honors the heroes of the community and strong family activities go hand-in-hand here, and attendance is always high at events such as the Family Picnic, Family Night, ESL Night, and Movie Nights. Dwyer enjoys being one big FAMILY.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Central Jersey College Prep ☆

Grades: K-12

School District: Central Jersey College Prep

Contact Person: Tasha Mosconi

Title: Curriculum Director

Email: tmosconi@cjcollegeprep.org

Address: 101 Mettlers Road

City/State/Zip: Somerset, NJ 08873

Telephone: 732-649-3954

Website: <http://www.cjcollegeprep.org>



Central Jersey College Prep charter school has made its core values (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship) the very center of school life, evidenced in its mission statement, interviewing protocols, program offerings, newsletters, and behavioral matrix. The behavioral matrix outlines school expectations and highlights what acceptable behavior looks like in various settings in school. Student leadership is always on the front burner, shown in successful initiatives such as the “Personal Development” class, Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE), Global Citizenship Club, and Social Awareness Club.

Cherry Hill High School West ☆

Grades: 9-12

School District: Cherry Hill Public Schools

Contact Person: Allison Staffin

Title: Assistant Principal

Email: astaffin@chclc.org

Street Address: 2101 West Chapel Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Telephone: 856-663-8006

Website: <http://west.chclc.org>



Cherry Hill HS West continues to go both broad and deep in its character education efforts with a multitude of programs that encourage full inclusion of all students and also serve community needs. No student is alone here, shown in initiatives such as the Circle Club, “No Place for Hate” activities, and the Gay Straight Alliance. West students are alert to the wider community: they perform plays for seniors, support local food pantries, and the Latinos at West Club supports under-privileged children in the local area through the Mi Casita celebration. West truly strives to be a family with connection at its core.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Crescent Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Waldwick Public Schools

Contact Person: Janet Sobkowicz

Title: Elementary Supervisor

Email: sobkowiczj@waldwickschools.org

Address: 165 Crescent Ave.

City/State/Zip: Waldwick, NJ 07463

Telephone: 201 445 3131

Website: <https://www.waldwickschools.org/Domain/10>



Crescent Elementary School embeds character education throughout the fabric of its school. Its commitment is evident in its daily Morning Meetings, themed lesson plans, curriculum development, and community outreach projects.

Programs such as the Backpack Fundraiser, the Toy Drive, and the One Book, One School initiative expose faculty and students to the importance of helping one another. Equally important is the school's stress on understanding and appreciating the views of others by intentionally providing challenging lessons that examine happenings from multiple viewpoints.

Dennis B. O'Brien Elementary School ★

Grades: PreK-5

School District: Rockaway Twp. School District

Contact Person: Chris Marangon

Title: Principal

Email: cmarangon@rocktwp.net

Street Address: 418 Mineral Spring Drive

City/State/Zip Code: Dover, NJ 07801

Telephone: 973-361-7330

Website: <https://dbo.rocktwp.net/>



Dennis B. O'Brien, a school with a long history in character-building, received a new shot in the arm when the district embraced H. E.A.R.T (Honesty, Empathy, Acceptance, Respect, and Trust) as its core values. This PBSIS school, which is also a Grief Sensitive School, is committed to applying the values creatively to all phases of school life. Books such as *Mean Jean the Recess Queen* and *My Secret Bully* as well as class discussions on current events (bullying, dishonesty, natural disasters) develop empathetic students. Fifth graders serve as strong character leaders, presenting original skits on the core values.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Dr. Martin Luther King School No. 52

Grades: PreK

School District: Elizabeth Public Schools

Contact Person: Kerry Sullivan

Title: teacher

Email: sullivanke@epsnj.org

Address: 130 Trumbull Street

City/State/Zip: Elizabeth, NJ 07206

Telephone: 201-436-6450

Website: <https://www.epsnj.org/domain/960>



This delightful early childhood center has developed a strong core value focus based on “Caring and Sharing,” a concept that is proudly displayed in all classrooms and hallways. The little ones recite the motto each morning, find it as a constant in all classes and are able to practice it in a number of ways. Through one-on-one interactions, small group activities, and anecdotal notes, teachers and students demonstrate their understanding of expressing emotions, developing positive relationships with peers and adults, and making sensible decisions. Children learn relationship-building through learning and play.

Eastern Christian School Association ★

Grades: K-12

School District: Eastern Christian School
Association

Contact Person: Jesse Wright

Title: Director, Student Internship Program

Email: jessewright@easternchristian.org

Street Address: 50 Oakwood Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: North Haledon, NJ 07508

Telephone: 973 427-0900

Website: <http://www.easternchristian.org>



Eastern Christian Association (ECA) continues to do outstanding work in enriching its character education program, “Engaging the Mind, Nurturing the Spirit, Transforming the World” in all its schools on three campuses as well as in doing remarkable outreach both nationally and internationally. Among ECA’s innovative initiatives are “Becoming a Better You” book series, “The Incredibles” movie to work through the core values, and the high school SOAR program. Service leaning continues to be ECA’s strength as the entire school community comes together for “Hands Dirty Day.”

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Grice Middle School ★

Grades: 6-8

School District: Hamilton Township Public Schools

Contact Person: Jessica Belmont

Title: School Counselor

Email: jbelmont@hamilton.k12.nj.us

Street Address: 901 Whitehorse Hamilton Square Rd

City/State/Zip Code: Hamilton, NJ 08610

Telephone: 609-631-4152 ext 3510

Website: <https://www.hamilton.k12.nj.us/grice.cfm>



Grice Middle School has been building character in its students since 1996, adopting the motto, “Pride + Spirit + Excellence” in 2006. Its diverse population has truly embraced its engaging approach, which is characterized by Mindful Mondays and other reflective practices, strong teaching of SEL skills matched with curricular infusion of character, active student involvement in service-learning projects, and multiple ways of involving parents. Its Renaissance Program is a school-wide initiative that provides opportunities for students to understand, practice, and reflect on the core values and apply them to their lives.

Hilldale Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Montville Township Public Schools

Contact Person: Brittany Bucci

Title: School Counselor

Email: Britany.Bucci@montville.net

Street Address: 123 Konner Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: Pine Brook, NJ 07058

Telephone: 973-331-7100 x1215

Website: <https://www.montville.net/4/Home>



A strong sense of community is the hallmark of **Hilldale’s** character approach, exemplified in its motto, “Where Likenesses Unite and Differences Enrich.” Moreover, the school’s “HUSKIES” values of Helping, Unify, Sensitivity, and Kindness in Every Student are more than words; they find their way into every aspect of school life from weekly character lessons to all-school activities such as the Great Kindness Challenge to the multiple student-created service projects. A very high level of parental participation both in committees and the classroom adds another level of connection to the total school program

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Horace Mann Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Cherry Hill Public Schools

Contact Person: Dr. John Cafagna

Title: Principal

Email: jcafagna@chclc.org

Street Address: 150 Walt Whitman Blvd.

City/State/Zip Code: Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Telephone: 856-428-1144

Website: <https://mann.chclc.org/>



Every day at this sunny school begins with the Eagle pledge: “As an eagle of **Horace Mann**, I pledge to be all that I can. Each day I’ll do my best, and won’t do any less! Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship. Our Eagle Spirit soars above the rest!” For the rest of the day, students do soar as they practice Eagle Eye behavior, which is reinforced at Morning Meetings, classroom lessons, assemblies, and even at project-based recess. An important focus at Mann is the development of the student voice as teachers encourage students to suggest and implement school improvement changes as well as service-learning projects.

Jefferson School ★

Grades: 5

School District: Union Township Schools

Contact Person: Laura Damato

Title: Principal

Email: ldamato@twpunionschools.org

Street Address: 155 Hilton Ave

City/State/Zip Code: Vauxhall, NJ 07088

Telephone: 908 370-2482

Website: <http://jefferson.twpunionschools.org/>



Through the *Leader in Me* program, **Jefferson School** has transformed student lives by extensively emphasizing character education in novel ways. The staff is viewed as “paparazzi” observing their subjects. They believe that change begins with themselves and make certain they observe the tenets of the *Leader in Me* program. In a newly-established leadership period, students learn habits of good character and also use this time to participate in various committees, thus taking on leadership roles. Community outreach is featured at fun monthly activities such as Socktober or preparing for Leadership Day.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

John E. Dwyer Technology Academy ★

Grades: 9-12

School District: Elizabeth Public Schools

Contact Person: Sulisnet Jimenez

Title: Principal

Email: Jimenesu@espnj.org

Street Address: 123 Pearl St

City/State/Zip Code: Elizabeth, NJ 07202

Telephone: 908 436-6565

Website: <http://www.epsnj.org>



This large urban high school began its character initiative in order to improve its academic performance, behavior and community involvement. Not only have all three objectives been fulfilled, but also this improvement has enabled Dwyer to emerge from its "FOCUS" designation. The staff, nurtured by a dynamic principal with a strong background in character education, has worked consistently to transform school culture and raise student aspirations. Dwyer's participation in the ASCENT project, working with a National School of Character, has resulted in new initiatives such as the student mentoring project.

Joseph R. Brensinger School No. 17

Grades: PreK-8

School District: Jersey City Public Schools

Contact Person: Janeen Maniscalco

Title: Assistant Principal

Email: jmaniscalco@jcboe.org

Street Address: 600 Bergen Ave

City/State/Zip Code: Jersey City, NJ 07304

Telephone: 201-915-6120

Website: http://www.jcboe.org/boe2015/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=403&Itemid=1025



When **School 17** realized it had many aspects of character education but no core values, the staff rolled up their sleeves, elicited everyone's input, and the school chose R.I.S.E. (Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Service and Excellence). R.I.S.E. is now firmly embedded into school culture, translated into three languages, and observed in all school practices. A major contributor to its success is the passionate Character Ed Team, first trained by Maurice Elias and then active participants in the ASCENT Project, where they worked with a National School of Character, School 28 in Elizabeth0, to perfect their program.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School No. 28 ★

Grades: PreK-8

School District: Elizabeth Public Schools

Contact Person: Elizabeth McLaughlin

Title: 8th Grade ELA Teacher

Email: mclaughlinel@epsnj.org

Street Address: 25 First St.

City/State/Zip Code: Elizabeth, NJ 07206

Telephone: 732-754-8533

Website: <https://www.epsnj.org/Domain/37>



In its five years of service as a National School of Character, **School 28** has been the role model for extraordinary outreach. Not only has it opened its doors to other Elizabeth schools, to districts such as Dover, Jersey City and New Brunswick and to a three-state alliance of 18 schools called ASCENT, but also it has served as a mentor to School 17 in Jersey City, guiding it to become a NJ School of Character. Moreover, it has consistently enhanced its own character-building at home while team members have served as national evaluators and state and national presenters.

Kindergarten Success Academy ★

Grades: K

School District: Roselle Public Schools

Contact Person: Chantae Benson

Title: School Counselor

Email: cbenson@roselleschools.org

Address: 150 East 3rd Avenue.

City/State/Zip: Roselle, NJ 07203

Telephone: 908-298-2040 ext 2209

Website: <https://ksa.roselleschools.org/>



KSA strives every day to fulfill its mission statement (actually recited by the children each morning): “to motivate, engage, and inspire students to become academic and lifelong learners in a safe and nurturing environment.” Intrinsic to that safe and nurturing environment is a strong emphasis on the core values: “to be respectful, responsible, kind, caring, safe, and to show integrity.” The administration, counselor and staff are relentless in finding creative ways of helping their little ones overcome challenges (27.6% English Language Learners, 68% poverty) and build a firm foundation to lead successful lives.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Lawrence Township Public Schools ★

Grades: PreK-12

School District: Lawrence Twp. Public Schools

Contact Person: Amy Amiet

Title: Principal

Email: Aamiet@ltps.info

Address: 2565 Princeton Pike

City/State/Zip: Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Telephone: 609 462-4238

Website: <https://www.ltps.org>



This diverse district continues to do admirable work in building the character of their students while doing noteworthy outreach. Not only did it host a trauma-informed ED-Camp which provided outreach to many local districts, but all schools continue to add exciting initiatives to their individual programs. Among the many innovative practices implemented are: Happy and Healthy Initiatives; Mindfulness; mentoring; goal-setting and individual school themes; Teen Pep Outreach; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; abundant service-learning projects; and parenting workshops on a variety of timely issues.

M. Scott Carpenter Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Old Bridge Township Public Schools

Contact Person: Christopher McCue

Title: Principal

Email: cmccue@obps.org

Street Address: 1 Par Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Telephone: (732)360-4452

Website: <https://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/Domain/146>



Since 2003, **Carpenter** has embraced character education as the vehicle for academic and emotional/social growth. Using the six pillars of Character Counts as its framework, it still continues to grow while doing outreach to other schools. The school has added many new practices such as establishing annual character-related themes and expanding its K-Kids program. Service learning involving the wider community has grown by leaps and bounds as students provide meaningful help to a local animal shelter, food banks, nursing homes, Parks Department, Relay for Life, and Children's Specialized Hospital.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Macopin Middle School ★

Grades: Pre 7-8

School District: West Milford Twp. Public Schools

Contact Person: Krista Provost

Title: Teacher

Email: krista.provost@wmtps.org

Address: 70 Highlander Drive

City/State/Zip: West Milford, NJ 07480

Telephone: 201-230-2445

Website: https://wmtps.org/schools/macopin_middle_school



Macopin Middle School continues to provide a positive school culture and climate that fosters many successful activities, programs, routines, and practices to promote character development while it also supports the efforts of other West Milford schools. Thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of the staff and students, new and revamped initiatives such as the Homework Handbook, abundant service activities, a school trip to promote relationships, the Spectrum Social Club and the Peer Ambassador Program have received a hearty reception here and have become models for other middle schools.

Marcus W. Newcomb Middle School ★

Grades: 6

School District: Pemberton Public Schools

Contact Person: Ashley Walulak

Title: Principal

Email: awalulak@pemb.org

Street Address: 300 Fort Dix Road

City/State/Zip Code: Pemberton, NJ 08068

Telephone: 609-893-8141 ext. 1149

Website: <https://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us/Newcomb>



This caring middle school aims to affect students' lives forever. To fulfill this lofty goal, the enterprising staff works together in using the Nurtured Heart approach to help students understand, feel and practice the core values. Through direct SEL teaching and curricular infusion of values and the addition of novel programs (Digital Citizenship class. First Four Days of School, military mentors), Newcomb manages to keep its lively students on target for character education and on fire for participation in its abundant service projects. Multiple surveys serve to assess the school's progress and to plan the next steps.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Memorial Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Kimberly Sautner

Title: School Counselor

Email: ksautner@obps.org

Street Address: 11 Ely Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: Laurence Harbor, NJ 08879

Telephone: 732-290-3876

Website: <http://oldbridgeschools.org/memorial>



Memorial has intentionally built a community that understands that “diversity of thought, race, religion, geography, income, sexual identity, and background” is the key to enriching “the education of all our students and prepares them for the world beyond.” Accordingly, this message is infused into its curricular readings and discussions as well as in practices such as Heritage Day. The school’s motto, “Serving others is in our DNA,” is evident in a host of service projects that run the gamut from cleaning school grounds on Earth Day to arranging for the free acquisition of Halloween costumes in “Swap & Shop.”

Old Bridge High School ★

Grades: 9-12

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Sally Fazio

Title: Vice Principal

Email: sfazio@obps.org

Address: 4209 Highway 516

City/State/Zip: Matawan, NJ 07747

Telephone: 732-290-3900

Website: <https://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/Domain/954>



Skilled in both outreach and innovation, this dynamic high school has made great strides in both areas. It has opened its doors to many New Jersey high schools, and its principal served as the keynote speaker at the NJPSA convention. Not only does the school share how its Project Unify program, Unify Generation course and Special Olympics partnership work to connect all students, but new practices such as the “Back to School Caravan” which welcomes all students, as well as the expanded roles of the Peer Leadership Program and the Heroes Program have made this large high school into one happy family.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Old Bridge Township Public Schools ★

Grades: PreK-12

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Dr. Kathleen Hoeker

Title: Assistant Superintendent

Email: Khoeker@obps.org

Street Address: 4207 Route 516

City/State/Zip Code: Matawan, NJ 07747

Telephone: (732)290-3970

Website: <http://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/>



This large diverse district can well serve as a model of effective character education. All 15 schools have been named NJ Schools of Character and National Schools of Character. To date, Old Bridge schools have received 38 Promising Practices! The secret to its extraordinary success is strong administrative support, extensive professional development for all staff, a growth mindset, a specific character ed action plan, amazing online /personal communication with parents and community, and extensive service learning. Truly, all—administration, staff, students, parents , community—function as a team.

Oxford Central School ★

Grades: PreK-8

School District: Oxford Public Schools

Contact Person: Patricia Carr

Title: Teacher/CORRECT Advisor

Email: pcarr@oxfordcentral.org

Street Address: 17 Kent Street

City/State/Zip Code: Oxford, NJ 07863

Telephone: 908-453-4101

Website: <http://www.oxfordcentral.org>



Oxford Central School continues to develop its outstanding “CORRECT” character program as well as do exemplary outreach. Staff and students are visibly involved in practicing the core values—in school, at home, in the community, and on the road when they demonstrate them to other schools. The school has created a caring community, evidenced in student survey results, after-school activities, teachers’ personal involvement with students, and staff get-togethers. A school wide service- learning project helping the military brings all grade levels, as well as staff and community, together for a worthy cause.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Pemberton Township High School ★

Grades: 9-12

School District: Pemberton Public Schools

Contact Person: Alissa Trossbach

Title: Teacher

Email: atrossbach@pemb.org

Street Address: 148 Arney's Mount Rd.

City/State/Zip Code: Pemberton, NJ 08068

Telephone: 609 893-8141 ext. 1906

Website: <https://www.pemberton.k12.nj.us/>
Domain/8



Pemberton High has done superior work in establishing core values as the real center of student life. Not only do the students in each grade teach each other how to practice them, but also the staff has made certain that the values are connected to the curriculum. Parents have become an integral part of the process with the school providing professional development for them and town meetings to hear their voice. Based on survey data, the school has clearly emerged as a caring community, and professional development on Teaching Circles has proven to be an effective way of building connections.

Saint Leo the Great School ★

Grades: PreK-8

School District: N/A

Contact Person: Cornelius Begley

Title: Principal

Email: stleoprincipal@saintleothegreatschool.com

Street Address: 550 Newman Springs Road

City/State/Zip Code: Lincroft, NJ 07738

Telephone: (732) 741-3133

Website: <http://www.saintleothegreatschool.com/>



Saint Leo the Great has clearly made service learning an intrinsic part of its character-building approach. Teachers blend course content, critical reflection, and meaningful service into their lessons. Not only is each classroom required to have at least one service-learning project each year, but also the practices of teachers sharing the projects at faculty meetings and keeping a student-led calendar of service activities have created greater interest and participation. Moreover, students learn leadership skills as they now have a voice, select and design projects, and have accountability for helping others.

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2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Saint Peter School

Grades: K-8

School District: Point Pleasant, NJ

Contact Person: Tracey Kobrin

Title: Principal

Email: principal@stpschool.org

Street Address: 415 Atlantic Ave.

City/State/Zip Code: Point Pleasant Beach, NJ
08742

Telephone: 732 892-1260

Website: <http://stpschool.org>



Saint Peter School has incorporated character education into all aspects of its students' lives through focusing on the core values of Respect, Reverence and Responsibility. Visually, these values are found everywhere in the school; practices such as class-established rules, cross-grade Prayer Partners, strong anti-bullying training, Breakfast Bunch and Coffee Club with parents successfully implement the *11 Principles*. The partnership of the Student Council, Parent-Teacher Association, along with the principal and her staff create an environment conducive to social-emotional development.

Southwood Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Samantha Fazio

Title: School Counselor

Email: sefazio@obps.org

Street Address: 64 Southwood Drive

City/State/Zip Code: Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Telephone: 732-360-1232

Website: <https://www.oldbridgedadmin.org/southwood>



Since its recognition as a National School of Character, **Southwood** has helped other schools develop programs while enhancing its own character approach in many ways. The CE weekly challenge and the use of think sheets and I-messages have given students ample opportunities to practice the core values. Among its many commendable practices are: the use of Morning Meetings, programs such as Character in Action (CIA) and PALS, Student Shout-Outs during announcements, the use of Kelso's Choice Conflict Resolution Model, and service-learning projects through Sustainable Southwood.

★ indicates a 2020 National School of Character



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Thomas Paine Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Cherry Hill Public Schools

Contact Person: Melissa Gleason

Title: Principal

Email: mgleason@chclc.org

Street Address: 4001 Church Road

City/State/Zip Code: Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

Telephone: 856-677-1350

Website: <http://paine.chclc.org>



Thomas Paine has done amazing work with other schools in the Cherry Hill District, mentoring them to become Schools of Character. Moreover, it has worked equally hard in enriching its own character program. Service projects such as the letter to the troops, breast cancer event and fundraisers for the needy were successful. Staff planning, collaboration and buy-in are highly visible in the way the school has implemented the “Leader in Me.” Not only has parental participation and volunteerism increased, but also Paine has experienced significant gains in standardized testing and academic achievement.

Valley View Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Montville Twp Public Schools

Contact Person: Dr. Patricia Kennedy

Title: Principal

Email: patricia.kennedy@montville.net

Street Address: 30 Montgomery Ave.

City/State/Zip Code: Montville, NJ 07045

Telephone: 973 331-7100

Website: <https://www.montville.net/5/home>



Valley View Elementary School has made great strides in promoting its core values with PANDA PRIDE and has intentionally embedded them into all segments of the school. Students have responded enthusiastically to many innovative practices such as the Kick-off Assembly, follow-up assemblies and touchstone, the TREP\$ Entrepreneurs and Peacemakers and the Panda Pride Ambassadors. The principal has served as a strong leader of the character initiative, and the staff takes pains to model desirable behavior. Lastly, quantitative and qualitative methods are used to assess progress in character-building.

★ indicates a 2020 National School of Character



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Victor Mravlag School No. 21

Grades: PreK-8

School District: Elizabeth Public Schools

Contact Person: Gabrielle Richa

Title: Music Teacher

Email: richaga@epsnj.org

Street Address: 132 Shelley Ave.

City/State/Zip Code: Elizabeth, NJ 07208

Telephone: 908 436-5850

Website: <https://www.epsnj.org/domain/3006>



Victor Mravlag has set a strong foundation to address the social/emotional and character development of its students, beginning at an early age with the Pre-K-2 “Peekapak” program. Moreover, teachers intentionally teach the values in their classes through curricular infusion, their modeling and class management style, and class discussions. Aiming to replace extrinsic rewards with intrinsic motivation, the staff has emphasized “doing the right thing when no one is looking.” This focus, repeated at school-wide events, assemblies and programs, has helped to transform school culture.

Waldwick Middle School

Grades: 6-8

School District: Waldwick Public Schools

Contact Person: Dianna Angelli

Title: Secondary Schools Supervisor

Email: angellid@waldwickschools.org

Street Address: 155 Wyckoff Ave

City/State/Zip Code: Waldwick, NJ 07463

Telephone: 201-652-9000

Website: <https://www.waldwickschools.org/Domain/9>



The administration, staff and students of **Waldwick Middle School** have worked passionately and creatively to maintain a positive and nurturing atmosphere in their school and to practice the ten pillars of Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, Perseverance, Respect, Citizenship, Generosity, Resilience, Courage, and Fairness. Programs such as Making Connections and Quest exemplify this focus, and students find inspiration in the Points of Light Ceremonies highlighting the monthly pillars and displays of good character. Service learning abounds with the Life Skills Program preparing meals for the community.

★ indicates a 2020 National School of Character



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

Walter M. Schirra Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Kristen Todd-Matos

Title: School Counselor

Email: ktoddmatos@obps.org

Street Address: 1 Awn Street

City/State/Zip Code: Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Telephone: 732-360-4495

Website: <https://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/Do-main/563>



Schirra has clearly established a data-driven culture and climate of excellence through its SEL/character initiatives, evidenced by the whole-hearted support of staff, students and parents. The number and scope of its innovative programs is extraordinary. Practices such as Art Soup, Project BLUE, Kelso's Choices, Daily Kindness Challenges, Kindness Ninjas, Character Ambassadors, Kindness Ambassadors, and Tiger's Den show high student involvement. Finally, the school's support among parents and the surrounding community is outstanding, shown in the positive data from parent surveys and comments.

West Milford Township Public Schools ★

Grades: preK-12

School District: West Milford Twp. Public Schools

Contact Person: Joseph Trentacosta

Title: Director of Athletics/Health PE Supervisor

Email: joe.trentacosta@wmtps.org

Street Address: 46 Highlander Drive

City/State/Zip Code: West Milford, NJ 07480

Telephone: 973-697-1701 ext7067

Website: <https://www.wmtps.org>



During a journey that began in 2004, this enterprising district has consistently nurtured the character development of its students so that all eight schools are now National Schools of Character. Many factors contribute to its success: exemplary district fiscal support, data collection and professional training; adaption of the "Full Value" framework; cultivation of staff and student leadership in every school; encouragement of innovative practice, shown by over 30 Promising Practices; mentoring, peer buddies, athletic codes of excellence; strong community ties and service learning; and lastly, PERSISTENCE!

★ indicates a 2020 National School of Character



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Summaries

William A. Miller Elementary School ★

Grades: K-5

School District: Old Bridge Public Schools

Contact Person: Dr. Kimberley Giles

Title: Principal

Email: kgiles@obps.org

Street Address: 2 Old Matawan Road

City/State/Zip Code: Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Telephone: 732 360-4589

Website: <http://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/Miller.cfm>



William A. Miller Elementary School demonstrates exemplary commitment to character education, continually growing since its previous certification. It has expanded its commitment through additional innovative programming. For example, its student-centered pro-active educational units related to character cause students to examine situations from many angles of vision, and they learn to monitor their own behavior in conflict resolution lessons. Moreover, its outreach activities, including nursing home visits and Veterans' Day presentations, build powerful ties with the larger community

William F. Halloran, School No. 22 ★

Grades: PreK

School District: Elizabeth Public Schools

Contact Person: Maria Torres

Title: Teacher

Email: torresmaria@epsnj.org

Street Address: 612 Pulaski Street

City/State/Zip Code: Elizabeth, NJ 07202

Telephone: 908-436-4861

Website: <https://www.epsnj.org/Domain/40>



School 22 has designed a comprehensive character program that suits the needs of its students by adapting research-based programs and integrating them with its own "PAW"-sitive acronym. In a robust academic approach, students are encouraged to think critically and work together. The school offers myriad clubs, enrichment activities, problem-based learning, and technological opportunities. Staff motivates students to become intrinsically motivated by setting and tracking their own goals. Moreover, a parent academy with pertinent topics connects with parents in a meaningful way.

★ indicates a 2020 National School of Character



2020 NATIONAL SCHOOLS OF CHARACTER!

Arthur L. Johnson High School	Clark
Barclay Early Childhood Center	Cherry Hill
Broad Street School	Bridgeton
Camden County Technical School, Gloucester Campus,	Sicklerville
Camden County Technical School, Pennsauken Campus	Pennsauken
Catherine A. Dwyer School	Wharton
Central Jersey College Prep	Somerset
Cherry Hill High School West	Cherry Hill
Crescent Elementary School	Waldwick
Dennis B. O'Brien Elementary School	Dover
**Eastern Christian School Association	North Haledon
Grice Middle School	Hamilton
Hilldale Elementary School, Montville Township	Pine Brook
Horace Mann Elementary School	Cherry Hill
Jefferson School	Vauxhall
John E. Dwyer Technology Academy	Elizabeth
Juan Pablo Duarte - Jose Julian Marti School No. 28	Elizabeth
Kindergarten Success Academy	Roselle
**Lawrence Township Public Schools	Lawrenceville
M. Scott Carpenter Elementary School	Old Bridge
Macopin Middle School	West Milford
Marcus W. Newcomb Middle School	Pemberton
Memorial Elementary School	Laurence Harbor
Old Bridge High School	Matawan
**Old Bridge Township Public Schools	Matawan
Oxford Central School	Oxford
Pemberton Township High School	Pemberton
Saint Leo the Great School	Lincroft
Southwood Elementary School	Old Bridge
Thomas Paine Elementary School	Cherry Hill
Valley View School	Montville
Walter M. Schirra Elementary School	Old Bridge
**West Milford Township Public Schools	West Milford
William A. Miller Elementary School	Old Bridge
William F. Halloran School No. 22	Elizabeth

** indicates National Districts of Character



2020 New Jersey Schools of Character Program Volunteers



2020 BLUE RIBBON PANEL

Eileen Dachnowicz (Chair)
William Trusheim
Nina Kemps
Thomas Santo
Kathy Hoeker and Maryann Villegas
Laurie Coletti and Phyllis Bloom
Elizabeth McLaughlin and Cassandra Pedrosa
Mary Reinhold

NJASECD Trustee
NJASECD President
Former NJASECD Trustee
Zane North Elementary School
Old Bridge Township Public Schools
James A. McDivitt Elementary
Juan Pablo Duarte - Jose Julian Marti School No. 28
NJASECD Secretary

2020 NATIONAL EVALUATORS

Andreia Milano and Nicole Webb
Bill Kane
Brett Thorp
Carlos Gramata and Lisa Bowe
Chris Kelly
Cindy Dacey and Ann Wilmot
Courtney Lowery
David Wangaard
Eileen Dachnowicz
Elizabeth McLaughlin and Cassie Pedrosa
Kirk Rickansrud
Laurie Coletti and Phyllis Bloom
Mary Reinhold and Melissa Cavagnino
Michelle dos Santos and Marilyn Quinones
Nina Kemps
Rene Rovtar, Doug Stech, and Dominic Esposito
Todd McCabe

Terence Reilly, School No. 7, Elizabeth
West Milford Public Schools
Pemberton Public Schools
Hillside Elementary School
Whippany Park HS
Hamilton Township School District
Raymond E. Voorhees Elementary School
SCLC Member
NJASECD Trustee
Juan Pablo Duarte - Jose Julian Marti School No. 28
Cherry Hill Public Schools
James A. McDivitt Elementary School
Macopin Middle School
West End School
NJASECD Trustee
Montville Township Public Schools
Denville Public Schools

2020 REVIEWERS

Andreia Milano and Nicole Webb
Anthony Tumolo and Ann DeRosa
Ashley LaRose
Caitlin Helder and Jennifer Miller
Caroline Grossi, Lillian Halden, and Jennifer Ariston
Cindy Dacey and Ann Wilmot
Dana Swarts
Dominic Esposito, Doug Stech, and René Rovtar
Eileen Dachnowicz
Elizabeth McLaughlin and Cassie Pedrosa
Erin Brannigan and Christine Genardi-Fisher
Ines Simoes and Leslie Castillo
Jennifer Braverman
Jocelyn Rodriguez, Juliette Smith, and Carla Kokoszko
Jennifer Frederico and Leslie Smith
Joan Barbagiovanni and Michelle Delaney
Kathy Jensen
Laurie Coletti and Phyllis Bloom
Laura Gertel and Wendy McDermott
Leslie Finke, Krista Provost, and Joseph Andriulli
Lisa Bowe and Carlos Gramata
Melissa Cavagnino and Mary Reinhold
Michelle dos Santos and Marilyn Quinones
Mona Noyes
Nina Kemps
Thomas Santo
Todd McCabe
Tom Gaglione and Chris Kelly
Tricia Graney and Kristi Clave
William Trusheim

Terence Reilly, School No. 7
Whitehouse School
Morgan Elementary School
Paradise Knoll Elementary School
Rosa International Middle School
Hamilton Township School District
West Milford Public Schools
Monville Township Public Schools
NJASECD Trustee
Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School No. 28
West Milford Public Schools
North Plainfield Public Schools
Yardville Elementary School
Donald Stewart, School No. 51
Pauline J. Petway Elementary School
Burlington County Schools
Lawrenceville Elementary School
James A. McDivitt School
Cherry Hill Public Schools
Macopin Middle School
Hillside Elementary School
Retired Macopin Middle School
West End School
NJASECD Trustee
Former Trustee, NJASECD
Zane North Elementary School
Denville Public Schools
Hanover Park Regional HS District
West Milford Public Schools
President, NJASECD



New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD)

njasecd@gmail.com • <http://njasecd.org/>

The New Jersey Alliance for Social Emotional and Character Development is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization, composed of volunteers who work throughout the New Jersey to support that work that schools do to improve school culture and climate by focusing on character education and social-emotional learning. One of the important missions of NJASECD is to provide useful resources for all the educators, schools and individuals interested in promoting the social, emotional and character development of the students in our public and private schools in New Jersey.

NJASECD Officers

Dr. William H. Trusheim, President
Laurie Coletti, Vice President
Mary Reinhold, Secretary
Ted Frynkewicz, Treasurer
Dr. Philip M. Brown, Past President

NJASECD Members at Large

Pat Carr	Mona Noyes
Cindy Dacey	James Sarto
Eileen Dachnowicz	Cindy Westhead
Nina Kemps	

NJASECD Committee Chairs

Advocacy/Fund Raising	Mona Noyes
Conference Committee	Peter Clark, Leigh Cline, Carol Lawrence, William Trusheim
Communications	Leigh Cline and Jim Sarto
Schools of Character	Eileen Dachnowicz, Mary Reinhold, Laurie Coletti
Regional Centers	Marc Citro, Chris Kelly, Mona Noyes, Joe Marinzoli,
	Jeff Havers, Cindy Dacey, and Jennifer Frederico
Membership	Peter Clark



State and National Schools of Character Program Description



The School of Character Program was initiated by the Character Education Partnership (now Character.org) to recognize schools across the country demonstrating an exemplary level of implementation of the *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education*. Originally, this program was competitive with only ten schools being chosen each year as National Schools of Character. Teams of reviewers knowledgeable in the field of character education and familiar with the *Eleven Principles* evaluated applications from schools applying to be Schools of Character.

In 2006, the School of Character Program was expanded to include State Schools of Character (SSOC). New Jersey was the first state to conduct state-level evaluations and the first four State Schools of Character were named by New Jersey in 2006. The New Jersey School of Character Program was initially sponsored by CEP, the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University (CSCD) and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). The Rutgers Center coordinated the program from 2006 to 2010. The responsibility for the NJSOC program was transferred to the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD), a volunteer professional organization envisioned by CSCD in 2011. The New Jersey Schools of Character program recognizes schools and districts that excel in exemplifying the *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* and demonstrate an outstanding character education initiative that yields positive results in student behavior, school climate, and academic performance. State Schools of Character are then evaluated by national site visitors for recognition as National Schools of Character. National Schools of Character serve as models and ambassadors of effective character education.