

Best Practice Newsletter

The Maryland Center
for Character Education

Volume 5, Issue 4
April 2011



CEP Announces 48 schools and 2 districts as National Finalists in its National Schools of Character (NSOC)

<http://www.character.org/>

2011 National Finalists & Honorable Mention

<http://www.character.org/2011nationalschoolsofcharacterfinalists>

The Maryland Center for
Character Education at
Stevenson University



**2011 Maryland Center for Character Education
at Stevenson University Awards Program**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING
2011 SCHOOL OF THE YEAR APPLICATIONS**

JUNE 3, 2011

For More Information contact Linda Muska at MCCEcharacter@aol.com
or visit our website at www.mdctrcharacter.org; click on Best Practices
Application

**MARK YOUR CALANDERS
MCCE@SU AWARDS PROGRAM WILL BE HELD ON
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2011
AT STEVENSON UNIVERSITY**

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Best Practice for the Month of April
St. Mary's County, Leonardtown Elementary
<http://www.mdctrcharacter.org/best%20practices.shtml>

BEST CHARACTER EDUCATION PRACTICES

School: Leonardtown Elementary School
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Title of Best Practice: Learning, Experiencing, Succeeding for all students

Objectives:

To help students learn that good character is important in every aspect of their life.

Primary Principles Emphasized: 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5

Brief Description

Our School Climate Expectations: We are a school of greatness that promotes:
 Learning for every student

Be prepared for school and take pride in your work
 Be respectful in listening to others and sharing ideas
 Follow directions the first time

Experiencing and building positive relationships with each other

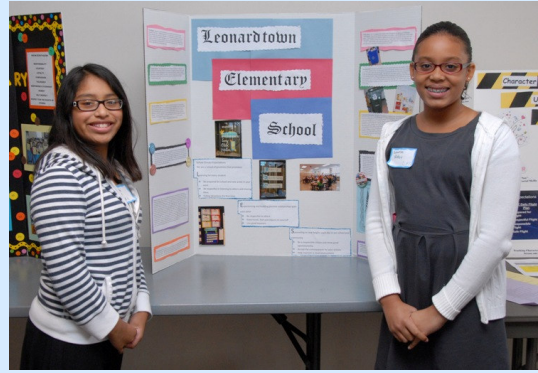
Be respectful to others
 Keep hands, feet and object to yourself
 Use good manners

Succeeding to new heights each day in our school and community

Be a responsible citizen and show good sportsmanship
 Accept the consequences for your actions
 Help maintain a clean environment

Best Practice for the Month of April Continued — Leonardtown Elementary School

At Leonardtown Elementary School we understand each student's uniqueness and work with the student, meeting them where they are academically, socially, and emotionally. We have several programs in place to encourage and support our students' growth in all areas, but realize some of these programs may not work for individual students. We encourage staff, students, parents and community to work together to model these characteristics and to help our children be the best people they can be. Character education is incorporated in everything we do at Leonardtown Elementary and the practices listed here are a focus of the character education program.



Principles #1 and #2:

Caught Being Good Coins: This program was started 4 years ago at Leonardtown Elementary School and has really had an impact. The students may be give coins by any school staff member or bus driver. Coins are given to students when they go "above and beyond" in character what is normal for that student. The students are responsible for holding onto the coins they earn and once each month, students may turn in their coins for a prize. Students are encouraged to exhibit good manners, citizenship, respect, and responsibility. Parents are aware of this program and have had positive comments regarding this program.

Behavior Cards: This year Leonardtown Elementary School implemented a school-wide program involving a listing of expectations in each classroom and in the hallways of the school and color cards to indicate levels of behavior. By doing this school-wide, we have noticed students pay more attention to how they behave in all areas of the school. Any staff member may have a student "flip a card" if behavior is not what is expected. Students begin on a "green" card each day. If behaviors are not what is expected, the student may be asked to "flip a card". The progression of colors in the cards will allow students to be reminded of their behavior and also is used as a tool to let parents know how behavior at school was for that day. Each student colors a chart to take home to his/her parents each day—the color that appears on the chart will notify the parent and the parent can help encourage the child at home to follow the expectations of the school. Cards progression is beginning on green for good-to yellow, then orange, then red, and finally to purple. If a purple card is reached, the student spends some time in the Behavior Management Center and a call is made to the parent regarding behavior that day. This program has proven to be very successful this year. The students are very aware of the color card they end up with and are very proud if they get a "blue", which means they have went above and beyond in some way and were awarded a "blue" card.

Best Practice for the Month of April Continued—Leonardtwn Elementary School

Good Citizen Tea: The good citizen tea is a once-a-month event that highlights the students who exhibited the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship) consistently throughout the month. Teachers, bus drivers and other school staff may nominate students for Citizen of the Month. Parents of students chosen for Citizen of the Month are invited to attend a ceremony to honor all of the students who have been chosen for that particular month. Parents and students receive a snack and drink during the recognition ceremony. The principal reviews the character traits exhibited by the students who receive the award and then the students are called to the front of the room individually to accept a certificate, button, and a pencil, and to get his/her picture taken with the principal. The pictures are printed and hung on a bulletin board in the hallway, designated for Citizen of the Month, for a month. After the month of displaying the picture, the student receives the picture to take home.

Models of Respect: This is an acknowledgement that really encourages students to show respect for one another and adults. Any staff member of the school may recommend a student for being a “model of respect”. When a staff member notices a student doing something exemplary, the staff member informs the principal and the principal acknowledges the student and the act that got him/her recommended as a model of respect.

Principle #3:

Classroom Guidance Lessons: The counselor visits each classroom (grades K-5) each month to focus on character activities. The Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship) are the focus of grades K-2 and for grades 3-5 the focus is on respect and standing up for yourself and others in a difficult situation (saying “no” to a friend, aggression, or bullying). Strategies are presented and role plays help the students to practice the strategies. “A Bug and A Wish” is a strategy many teachers use with their students in the classroom. The students fill in the blank “It bugs me when _____, I wish you would _____.” This is a simple strategy with great results.





Best Practice for the Month of April Continued—Leonardtown Elementary School

Principle #4:

Safety Patrol: This is a program that promotes safety throughout our school and on the buses. Approximately 12 students are chosen each quarter from grades 4 and 5 to be members of the safety patrol. These students must complete an application and write an essay about why they want to be safety patrol. Students are then chosen and are given a Safety Patrol badge to wear while they are “on duty”. These students report back to the appropriate staff if there are issues regarding students who may be showing unsafe behavior on the bus or at school.

Peer Helpers: Students in grades 3-5 are chosen for peer helpers based on their character and interactions with others. Teachers from each of the classrooms choose 3-4 students to be peer helpers throughout the school year. These students complete activities to help them know who, in their lives, supports them and how the support is given. Then the peer helpers are asked to offer support to students in our school community who are not so obvious to have these supports in place. Some students do this by offering others to sit with him/her at lunch or play at recess. Others have offered to help with school work and home work.

End-of-the-Year Farewell: Each year on the last day of school, the staff gathers outside of the school where the buses are loaded. Once the buses are loaded, the drivers drive a loop 2 times around the parking area so the staff can wave, blow bubbles, and cheer for the students. This is a great way to say “a great summer farewell” to students.

Principle #5:

Community Fundraising: Each year we encourage our students to learn about their community and to help others in the community who may be having a difficult time. We do this by offering several ways throughout the school year that students may help their community. Some of the community fundraisers are Harvest for the Hungry-- students bring in food to help supply the local food pantry; Clothing fundraise--students may bring in clothing to donate to those in need; Christmas in April—students may bring in money to help purchase supplies for the local program that helps people make repairs on their homes; Jump Rope for Heart—students collect money for the American Heart Association by getting sponsors and then jumping rope for a certain amount of time; St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital—students raise money by completing a certain number of math problems in the Math-a-thon; Relay for Life—students help to raise money for the American Cancer Society by participating in events at school, including mini-relay for life, hat day, sunglasses day, mix-n-match day, etc.

Best Practice for the Month of April Continued—Leonardtown Elementary School

Recycling Club: This club is sponsored by one of our teachers and run by the students. This club encourages students to recycle to help preserve their environment. Students learn how so many things we use on a daily basis can be bad for our environment and how they can recycle much of this to help the earth and to keep them healthy. Also this club encourages student to use more “environmental friendly” items. Each classroom has a recycling bin and students from this club travel throughout the school 2 times each week to collect the recycling and place it in the proper recycling bin. Also recycled are juice pouches and potato chip bags. The students help to make sure these are in recyclable condition and help to package them and send them to the appropriate place for recycling.

L.E.S. Newscast: This is a great way to reach out and remind students of rules, safety and social issues that face them. Students are working hard with one of the teachers to get a show ready to air each Friday morning. The newscast has role plays for students to see how behavior should not be and then how behavior should be (such as running in the halls vs. not running in the halls).

Cafeteria Cleanup: This is a great opportunity for students to be responsible and take pride in cleaning up their environment. After each lunch period staff appoint 4-5 students to help clean up the cafeteria. Students are paired up, one with a broom and the other with a dustpan, to clean the floors under the tables. In grades 3-5, the task of wiping down the tables also is assigned to students. The students very much enjoy this and we always have many students raising their hands to volunteer to do these tasks.

Check it out: <http://www.mdctrcharacter.org/best%20practices.shtml>

Calendar of Events:



**18th National Forum on Character Education
Building Ethical Communities
October 19 - 22, 2011
San Francisco, CA**

CEP invites you to the 18th National Forum on Character Education, October 19-22, San Francisco, CA.. We anticipate participants from more than 40 states and 20 foreign countries.

Check it out: <http://www.character.org/2011conference>

Way To Go: Eleanor Roosevelt High School Prince George's County



Eleanor Roosevelt High School Cited for AP Success

Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt was cited by the College Board for its Advanced Placement (AP) success in a national report released on February 9. State Superintendent of Schools Nancy Grasmick joined College Board representatives at the school to tour classrooms, highlight AP success in Maryland, and recognize students and staff in the AP program.

Eleanor Roosevelt was selected as one of three schools in Maryland who have the highest numbers of students participating in AP courses, and scoring a "3" or higher on AP exams. In the College Board's national report on AP, Eleanor Roosevelt was selected as one of the top schools in the nation for its number of African American students who have successfully completed AP courses.

Because of this, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) selected the school as the location for their tour and participation in the College Board's national webinar on AP results. Dr. Grasmick and College Board representatives were joined by Board of Education Member Peggy Higgins, Deputy Superintendent of Schools Dr. Bonita Coleman-Potter, High School Consortium Assistant Superintendent Monica Goldson, Principal Reginald McNeill, and AP program specialists and teachers. During the event, several students shared their AP successes and plans for future college and career endeavors.



The Roosevelt Way—Eleanor Roosevelt High School Greenbelt, MD

Eleanor Roosevelt High School has developed a comprehensive Community of Caring program to promote the five-core values. These are the same values that Mrs. Roosevelt, herself, espoused and modeled throughout her lifetime. The staff and students have worked together to build a positive school climate, one in which Mrs. Roosevelt would have taken great pride. As a part of the program, certain positive behaviors have come to be known as “The Roosevelt Way.” In celebration of Mrs. Roosevelt’s birthday on October 11, the school sponsored an essay contest to define “The Roosevelt Way.” The following is the first place winning essay that was submitted by Kim Malinowski

The Roosevelt Way is not a motto, it is not a cheer, it is not a theory, and it is no longer a simple goal. It isn’t a dream, and it isn’t a principle, it’s a way of life, and nothing to do with the Great Depression. So, what is the Roosevelt Way? The Roosevelt Way includes respect and responsibility, it encompasses trust and caring and it is the common thread that links us in a chain that will never end. It is a winning attitude and it is a way to live our lives to the fullest. It allows us to follow our paths and respect others on theirs, and on a good day, it lets us help those who have stumbled along the way.

It’s a senior pointing a freshman in the right direction, a popular student defending an outcast; it’s the weakest student doing their very best to learn, not matter what obstructs them. The Roosevelt Way knows no defeat, only triumph. When the football team loses and we shout, “good game” to the victors, that is the Roosevelt Way. It is a smile to brighten up someone’s day. It’s that hug you get from all your friends when you flunk your AP Chemistry test, and it is the Roosevelt Way when they offer to tutor you and help you out. It’s baking cookies to greet the new members of the marching band, and it is accepting the old as friends to the new.

The Roosevelt Way is all accepting and hurtful to none. It is teamwork and dedication, and it is knowing that at the end of the day you could do no better. It has little to do with academics but rather spirit. For every A, there is a D, but in the end, it is the student who might not have made the grade, but learned in the process that will succeed. There are many hard lessons learned in Roosevelt, and our way helps us to learn. We share a bond like no one else; we really do care about the others. If one of us is hurt, we all feel the pain’ we are a community and more importantly a family. The Roosevelt Way is based on values and fundamental principles but it is summed up in trying your best and doing unto others as they would do to you. So it’s a fundamental principle, the difference is that others theorize about the possibility and talk about it being impossible, while we do. We beat the odds, and hang in there through the rough times. Things go wrong, and they change, but we change too. The Roosevelt Way isn’t stifling, it allows us to grow and flourish. It is the lifeblood of the school and it is in our name. We all have pride but we set it aside to help others. We live each day to the fullest, savoring life and the beauty around us. The Roosevelt Way is a creed we live by, simple in theory and in practice, but difficult with the rising tide of the easy ways.



Eleanor Roosevelt High School on YouTube

GOING TO THE HEAD OF THE AP CLASS

It was no accident that the Annual Advanced Placement Report to the Nation was unveiled at Eleanor Roosevelt HS in Greenbelt. For not only had Maryland once again been named best in the country for having high scores on the AP exam and been cited as having the most improved scores for African American students, but Roosevelt itself was recognized as one of just two Maryland schools with exemplary AP programs. There was celebration all around as students and teachers shared their not so secret recipe for success: hard work, careful planning and a culture of excellence

CHECK IT OUT ON YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27uepni06PI&feature=email>

Check This Out:

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The Maryland Center for
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April 1, 2011
April Fools' Day

April 17, 2011
Palm Sunday

April 18, 2011
Passover Begins at Sundown

April 22, 2011
Good Friday & Earth Day

April 24, 2011 — Easter

April 27, 2011 —
Administrative Professional Day
and Earth Day



Get Outdoors and Enjoy Life!



“You see things and say “Why?” But I see things and say “Why Not?”

—G. B. Shaw