



# 2015 National Promising Practices Poster Session

## FINE ARTS, ROOM 263



Gloucester County Campus of the Camden County Technical Schools, Sicklerville, NJ

### HOPE Program

Dr. John Hourani, Assistant Principal, [jhourani@ccts.net](mailto:jhourani@ccts.net)

Description: The HOPE program recruits victims and potential victims of harassment, intimidation or bullying to unite and develop plans to help other people which, in-turn, helps them connect with each other. HOPE stands for Helping Other People Evolve. Each year, administrators, counselors, and teachers nominate students that have the potential to be harassed for the HOPE program. Because research shows that one of the greatest determining factors for bullying victims is that they are alone, the HOPE program's unspoken purpose is to provide members with an organization where they feel they belong. Once in the HOPE program HOPE members discuss ways to help other students. Members have group discussions, listen to guest speakers, elect officers, create posters, attend team building field trips, and conduct service learning projects. While the HOPE program focuses on helping other people, the HOPE program has profound benefits for those doing the helping, the HOPE members.

Berlin Community School, Berlin, NJ

### Kindness Blogging

Maureen DiBella, Curriculum Supervisor, [dibellam@bcsberlin.k12.nj.us](mailto:dibellam@bcsberlin.k12.nj.us)

Description: "Graduation Matters" is a practice that recognizes the aspirations and unique qualities of each 8th grade graduating student. It is an inclusive practice that encourages community and not competition. Toward the end of winter, parents/guardians complete a survey about their child's accomplishments, outstanding personality traits, which Gibbsboro Super 7 core value their child best exemplifies, and their child's future goals. Gibbsboro staff use the information to compose short tributes for each student. The tributes are then read at graduation as students walk across the stage to receive their diplomas. Adaptations of this practice include, but are not limited to recognizing a different student each day leading up to graduation, displaying the tributes on the school's website, and/or including the tributes in the graduation program.

New Brunswick Middle School, New Brunswick, NJ

### Life, College, and Career Advisory

Macey Marko-Baicher, Teacher, [macey\\_marko-baicher@nbpsnj.net](mailto:macey_marko-baicher@nbpsnj.net)

Description: A small group of up to fifteen students and one mentor meet each morning. This group of students remains with the same mentor throughout their middle school experience. The purpose of the program is to help students develop and expand on interpersonal, social, and emotional skills through monthly themed activities. Monthly character themes are designed around skills that are progressively tiered from one grade level to the next. These monthly themes are infused throughout all academic classes. Students are encouraged to apply these skills to help achieve academic success.

Oxford Central School, Oxford, NJ

### Holiday Character Connections

Patricia Carr, Character Ed Coordinator, [pcarr@oxfordcentral.org](mailto:pcarr@oxfordcentral.org)

Description: The OCS "Character Connections" practice revisited holiday stories & provided students the opportunity to explore them through connections to our core C.O.R.R.E.C.T. values (courage, optimism, respect, responsibility, empathy, citizenship, trustworthiness). Our school reflected on these values with skit-like messages delivered by our CORRECT Crusaders (OCS's student/character superheroes) during the weeks prior to the holidays (a time typically absorbed with presents & parties). We used these stories to teach the importance of having good character every day. Rudolph taught about bullying & how it feels to be left out. We learned about self-respect & respecting others. The Grinch helped us analyze poor behavior. It also demonstrated the importance of being optimistic, working together (citizenship) and not placing value on extrinsic rewards. Anna (Frozen) exemplified empathy & courage by never giving up on her sister Elsa; showing her a better way. An OCS original Night Before Christmas poem brought together our values & challenged the entire school community to begin the new year with a renewed focus on good character. Students eagerly embraced the new look to these old stories.

Oxford Central School, Oxford, NJ

### Spread the Word

Patricia Carr, Character Ed Coordinator, [pcarr@oxfordcentral.org](mailto:pcarr@oxfordcentral.org)

Description: The "Spread the Word" practice challenges our school community to reach out to others regarding the importance of living each day in a purposeful, positive way. At OCS we not only recognize the importance of maintaining strong character values within the confines of our school, but recognize the responsibility of spreading what we know about having strong values forward past school boundaries, into the community, and beyond. We understand that it takes a conscious effort, continuous dialogue, and activities to not only maintain the positive practices that led to our 2014 NSOC recognition, but to take this outside school day. Through this practice students are reminded that good character needs to be a conscious, ongoing, inclusive effort that reaches out from what they have learned at school, to the community, and out into the world. Through this practice students are reminded that their efforts count. As "students of character" they bear a responsibility to take what they have learned about the importance of good character out into every aspect of their lives. This practice provides the opportunity to take our core values to others; it gives student ownership to making wise choices.

North Plainfield High School, North Plainfield, NJ

### Rebirth-Resilience-Respect: Avenue of Flags

Dr. Hope Blecher, Supervisor of ELA, [hope\\_blecher@nplainfield.org](mailto:hope_blecher@nplainfield.org)

Description: Our Promising Practice, Rebirth-Resilience-Respect: Avenue of Flags in North Plainfield involves our NJROTC, our advisors, staff, students, and members of the community. Students prepare and deliver speeches that include historical information and their understanding of how the specific event such as September 11, 2001, Pearl Harbor Day, Memorial Day, or Veterans Day connects people of the past to the present. There are displays in the showcases of the school that include artifacts such as the uniforms of our veterans on staff. Purple Heart medals, books, song lyrics, and artwork corresponding to the historic event. Our students' words are literally etched in stone as a local granite artisan carved their motto into a memorial that stands outside of the high school.