

# A Measure of Character

## *A Pioneering National Study Investigating the Effects of Character Education.*

*"... when we walk into a school that is beating the odds in achievement, we find that school embracing character education along with standards based education."*

Jack O'Connell  
California State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
from February 6, 2007, State of Education Address

## Be Part of History

To participate in this groundbreaking study that allows schools to develop their character education program with the support of the Tulare County Office of Education and CHARACTER COUNTS! (CC!).

Join the Tulare County Office of Education's partnership with the U.S. Department of Education's Character Education Program (PCEP) as it conducts a four-year study on the effectiveness of character education on students in elementary, middle and high school grade levels. Our goal is to evaluate the ability of a strong CHARACTER COUNTS! program to affect a culture of achievement, improve student performance and behavior, and maintain a safe and orderly school climate for teaching and learning.

## Help Design the Study

Benefits of the study for select schools will include a wide range of CHARACTER COUNTS! training and support unique to each school and its community. Implementation ideas include:

- Training for school, student and community representatives in CC!
- Further in-depth training in other CC! modules such as *Ethics in the Workplace*, *Foundations for Life*, *Pursuing Victory With Honor*, and *Honor Above All*
- Integrating CC! into California Content Standards and lessons
- Developing recognition events for CC! role models among students, staff and community
- Aligning school and classroom behavior plans with CC! common language
- Providing youth development organizations with CC! strategies for teens and advisors
- Providing parent trainings with CC! strategies to use at home
- Training on how to integrate CC! strategies into sports programs
- Training on how to integrate CC! strategies to promote academic integrity and combat cheating
- Training on how to enhance the reading, critical thinking and composition skills through reflecting and writing talents

## Partners

 **Bonner Center  
for Character Education**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

  
**JOSEPHSON  
INSTITUTE  
CHARACTERCOUNTS!**

# The Big Picture

Participating schools will fully embrace character education “hand in hand” with state academic standards. The study is designed to meet the following goals through valid, rigorous evaluation:

- Integrate CC! schoolwide, including parents and other stakeholders
- Integrate the decision-making process to participating students
- Integrate CC! into curriculum content standards
- Integrate CC! into co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
- Decrease in absenteeism rate
- Increase in student achievement
- Provide indepth training for student and adult participants. Modules will include the Institute’s *Character Development Seminar, Ethics in the Workplace, Foundations for Life, Pursuing Victory With Honor* and *Honor Above All*



*Once again, the Tulare County Office of Education is showing true leadership. This is such an important grant project, and it will go a long way toward advancing character education and validating its impact in the classroom.*

Michael Josephson, founder of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Program, and president of the Josephson Institute of Ethics

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## Everyone Doing Their Part

During the course of the study, schools will partner with TCOE CC! staff to complete the following activities:

### Project Schools

Participate in pre and post surveys for school’s staff, students and parents conducted in Fall of 2007 and May 2009

Secure parent permission forms for student surveys through school enrollment packets of August 2007 and August 2008

Select site leaders as stipend-paid participants to assist in the school site’s implementation plan. Incentives offered to teachers participating in the school implementation plan

Formally commit to the school site’s implementation plan developed by school staff and TCOE CC! team from Fall 2007 to Spring 2009

Incentives offered to participating teachers in the school implementation plan

### Comparison Schools

Participate in pre and post surveys for school’s staff, students and parents conducted in Fall of 2007 and May 2009

Secure parent permission forms for student surveys through school enrollment packets of August 2007 and August 2008

Continue existing character education efforts at the school site during the course of the study from Fall 2007 to Spring 2009

Invited to participate in training and strategies offered during the study after Spring 2009

*The opportunity to study the effects of character education on students is an awesome one. For over ten years, we have wholeheartedly supported character education in Tulare County schools and beyond. It’s an honor to be chosen for a project which could have positive benefits for schools throughout the nation.*

Jim Vidak, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools