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## **Character.org Designates 83 Schools 4 Districts as 2017 National Schools of Character**

### **Program developed in 1998 has positively impacted the lives of 2 million students**

**Washington, D.C.** (May 8, 2017)— [Character.org](http://Character.org), the nonprofit organization that validates character initiatives in schools and communities around the world, today designated 83 schools and 4 districts from 21 states as 2017 National Schools and Districts of Character.

The School District of South Milwaukee is the only Wisconsin district currently designated as a National District of Character. South Milwaukee School Superintendent Rita Olson announced the news at a recent staff meeting. "This recognition is a testament to the hard work and relentless focus on character that our schools and community support. We are committed to educating the whole child and this is one way that we prepare our students for a successful future," remarked Olson.

Since the inception of Character.org's Schools of Character program in 1998, 474 schools and 30 districts have been designated as National Schools or Districts of Character, impacting more than 1.5 million students' lives. (*A complete list of the 2017 National Schools and Districts of Character is included at bottom of this release*). In addition, this year, 3 Mexico schools have applied for our Mexico School of Character designation. All designees will be announced at a [press event](#) in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., on May 23. The event will be held in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, room G11 from 10:00-11:00 ET and will be live-streamed across the nation. The announcement is being sponsored by Senator James Lankford (R-OK).

Each year, Character.org (formerly The Character Education Partnership) and its state affiliates select schools and districts that demonstrate a dedicated focus on character development programs and a positive impact on academic achievement, student behavior, school climate and their communities. Schools and districts selected in January as State Schools of Character, along with those schools who reapplied in their 3-year designation, were forwarded to Character.org for consideration for national recognition as [National Schools of Character](#).

Through an in-depth and rigorous evaluation process, these schools were found to be exemplary models of character development. Of the schools named today, 17 schools are former National Schools of Character reapplying for the national designation. Criteria for selection are based on Character.org's [11 Principles of Effective Character Education](#), a framework to assist schools in providing students with opportunities for moral action, fostering shared leadership and engaging families and communities as partners in the character-building effort.

"At Character.org, we are extremely proud of this year's National Schools of Character as well as our district recipients. Their dedication to character development has proven over time to increase the well-being of so many students, their families and their communities across the United States and beyond," said Doug Karr, Character.org's President & CEO. He continued, "Validating character initiatives is at the core of what we do because it creates fertile conditions for multi-generational character growth where



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students and those in their lives thrive as ethical members of our society. The students of National Schools of Character are developing a lifelong skillset that they will leverage well into their adult lives.”

Character.org will honor the designated schools and districts at its 24th [National Forum on Character Education](#) to be held the weekend of October 20-21, 2017, in Arlington, VA. Visit [www.character.org](http://www.character.org) to learn more about the National Forum, the Schools of Character program (State & National) and the 2017 national honorees.

**About Character.org:** Founded in 1993, Character.org, is a national nonprofit based in Washington, D.C. The mission of the organization is to provide leadership and advocacy for character worldwide. It is dedicated to help people everywhere become educated, inspired and empowered to be ethical and compassionate citizens. Character.org validates character initiatives in schools, sports, families and the workplace through certifications and sharing of best practices. Results of effective character initiatives in schools typically include improved academic achievement, a decline in behavioral problems and an increase in an overall positive school climate.

**About Character Education:** Character education is an approach to school culture and climate improvement that supports the social, emotional and ethical development of students. It is the proactive and intentional effort by schools, districts, communities and states to help students develop important core ethical (recognizing what’s right) and performance (doing what’s right) values such as caring, honesty, diligence, fairness, fortitude, responsibility, grit, creativity, critical thinking and respect for self and others.

## 2017 National Districts of Character

### Illinois

#### Belleville Public Schools District

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Belleville, Illinois

Public•Pre-K-8

### New Jersey

#### New Providence School District

New Providence, NJ

Public•K-12

### Missouri

#### Parkway School District

Chesterfield, MO

Public•K-12

### Wisconsin

#### School District of South

#### Milwaukee

South Milwaukee, WI

Public•Pre-K-12

## 2017 National Schools of Character

\*indicates that the school is re-certifying as a National School of Character.

### Alabama

#### \*Shades Cahaba

Homewood, Alabama

Public•K-5

### Arizona

#### Imagine Desert West

Phoenix, AZ

Charter•K-8



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**Imagine East Mesa**

Mesa, AZ

Charter•Pre-K-8

**Imagine Prep Surprise**

Surprise, AZ

Charter•6-12

**California**

**Wells Middle School**

Dublin, CA

Public•6-8

**Colorado**

**Imagine Charter School at**

**Firestone**

Firestone, CO

Charter•Pre-K-8

**Parker Core Knowledge Charter  
School**

Parker, CO

Charter•K-8

**Connecticut**

**Breakthrough Magnet School**

Hartford, CT

Public•Pre-K-8

**District of Columbia**

**Sheridan School**

Washington, D.C.

Private•K-8

**Florida**

**\*Carrollwood Day School**

Tampa, FL

Private•Pre-K-12

**\*Cimino Elementary School**

Valrico, FL

Public•Pre-K-5

**Imagine Schools Chancellor  
Campus**

Boynton Beach, FL

Charter•K-8

**Ridgecrest Elementary School**

Largo, FL

Public•Pre-K-5

**Hawaii**

**\*Sacred Hearts Academy**

Honolulu, HI

Private•Pre-K-12

**Idaho**

**Betty Kiefer Elementary**

Rathdum, ID

Public•K-6

**Kansas**

**McClure Elementary School**

Topeka, KS

Public•Pre-K-5

**Massachusetts**

**\*Montrose School**

Medfield, MA

Private•6-12

**Michigan**

**James R. Geisler Middle School**

Commerce Towns, MI

Public•6-8

**Missouri**

**Alma Schrader Elementary School**



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Cape Girardeau, MO  
Public•K-4

**Carman Trails Elementary School**  
Manchester, MO  
Public•K-5

**\*Francis Howell Middle School**  
St. Charles, MO  
Public•6-8

**\*George Guffey Elementary**  
Fenton, MO  
Public•K-6

**Green Pines Elementary**  
Wildwood, MO  
Public•K-4

**Green Trails Elementary**  
Chesterfield, MO  
Public•K-5

**\*Kehrs Mill Elementary**  
Chesterfield, MO  
Public•K-5

**\*Kellison Elementary School**  
Fenton, MO  
Public•K-5

**Kennard Classical Junior Academy**  
St. Louis, MO  
Public•Pre-K-5

**Lindbergh Early Childhood**  
St. Louis, MO  
Public•Pre-K

**\*Northview High School**  
Florissant, MO  
Public•9-12

**Parkway Northeast Middle School**  
Creve Coeur, MO  
Public•6-8

**Parkway Southwest Middle School**  
Manchester, MO  
Public•6-8

**Rockwood Early Childhood**  
Chesterfield, MO  
Public•Pre-K

**Stanton Elementary**  
Fenton, MO  
Public•K-5

**\*Trautwein Elementary**  
St. Louis, MO  
Public•K-5

**Wild Horse Elementary**  
Chesterfield, MO  
Public•K-5

**New Jersey**  
**A. Russell Knight Elementary School**  
Cherry Hill, NJ  
Public•K-5

**Burlington County Alternative School**  
Mount Laurel, NJ  
Public•6-12



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**Campbell Elementary School**

Metuchen, NJ

Public•1-4

**Central Elementary School**

East Hanover, NJ

Public•3-5

**Cinnaminson Middle School**

Cinnaminson, NJ

Public•6-8

**\*Eldridge Park School**

Lawrenceville, NJ

Public•K-3

**Harrison Elementary School**

Roselle, NJ

Public•1-4

**Jonas Salk Middle School**

Old Bridge, NJ

Public•6-8

**Maple Road Elementary School**

West Milford, NJ

Public•PreK-6

**Merriam Avenue School**

Newton, NJ

Public•Pre-K-4

**Morgan Elementary School**

Hamilton, NJ

Public•Pre-K-5

**New Brunswick Middle School**

New Brunswick, NJ

Public•6-8

**Paradise Knoll**

Oak Ridge, NJ

Public•K-6

**\*Richard Stockton Elementary School**

Cherry Hill, NJ

Public•K-5

**\*Rosa International Middle School**

Cherry Hill, NJ

Public•6-8

**Somerset Intermediate School**

North Plainfield, NJ

Public•5-6

**\*South Brunswick High School**

Monmouth Junction, NJ

Public•9-12

**Tinton Falls Middle School**

Tinton Falls, NJ

Public•6-8

**Toms River High School East**

Toms River, NJ

Public•9-12

**Upper Greenwood Lake Elementary School**

Hewitt, NJ

Public•Pre-K-6

**Washington Elementary School**

Roselle, NJ



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Public•1-4

**Whitehouse Elementary School**

Whitehouse Station, NJ

Public•K-3

**Yardville School**

Hamilton, NJ

Public•Pre-K-5

**\*Zane North Elementary School**

Collingswood, NJ

Public•Pre-K-5

**New York**

**Grand Avenue School**

North Baldwin, NY

Public•K-5

**Valley Stream North**

Franklin Square, NY

Public•7-12

**West Patent Elementary School**

Bedford Hills, NY

Public•K-5

**North Carolina**

**Erwin Montessori Elementary**

Greensboro, NC

Public•Pre-K-5

**Grimsley High School**

Greensboro, NC

Public•9-12

**Haynes-Inman Education Center**

Jamestown, NC

Public•Pre-K-12

**James Benson Dudley High School**

Greensboro, NC

Public•9-12

**Sumner Elementary School**

Greensboro, NC

Public•K-5

**Oklahoma**

**Dove Science Academy Elementary**

Oklahoma City, OK

Charter•K-5

**Dove Science Academy-OKC**

Oklahoma City, OK

Charter•6-12

**Eisenhower High School**

Lawton, OK

Public•9-12

**Pryor Junior High**

Pryor, OK

Public•7-9

**Whittier Elementary School**

Muskogee, OK

Public•K-6

**South Carolina**

**Harrisburg Elementary School**

Indian Land, South Carolina

Public•K-5

**Texas**

**Clear Lake City Elementary School**

Houston, TX



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Public•Pre-K-5

**Indian Springs Elementary School**

San Antonio, TX

Public•K-5

**John F. Ward Elementary School**

Houston, TX

Public•K-5

**Lakeside Elementary School**

Coppell, TX

Public•K-5

**\*Mockingbird Elementary School**

Coppell, TX

Public•K-5

**Richard J. Lee Elementary School**

Dallas, TX

Public•K-5

**Samuel Beck Elementary School**

Trophy Club, TX

Public•K-5

**Sandra Mossman Elementary School**

League City, TX

Public•K-5

**T.E. Baxter Elementary School**

Midlothian, TX

Public•Pre-K-5

**Wisconsin**

**Greenwood Elementary School**

River Falls, WI

Public•K-5