

# A Measure of Character PCEP CHARACTER COUNTS! Study

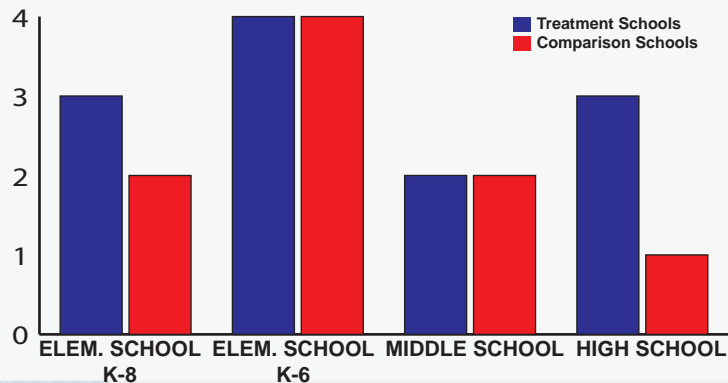
The Tulare County Office of Education, in conjunction with CHARACTER COUNTS! (CC!) and the U.S. Department of Education's Character Education Program (PCEP), recently completed a groundbreaking, four-year study which involved 21 Tulare County schools and over 9,000 students. The goal of the program was to measure the effectiveness of character education on students in elementary, middle and high schools. The study was funded by a \$1.9 million PCEP grant awarded in October 2006, one of the largest grants given that year.

The four-year, experimental research study tested the impact a fully-implemented character education program can have in enhancing a school's instructional environment. After four years of testing, researchers concluded that the study met the federal research measure, known as GPRA, with *statistically significant positive results on seven of the nine subscales assessed*.

## Subscales Assessed

| Subscale                     | GPRA Met |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Access to Alcohol & Drugs    | Yes      |
| Anti-Social Attitudes        | Yes      |
| Ethical Attitudes            | No       |
| Hurtful Behavior             | Yes      |
| Non-Confrontational Behavior | Yes      |
| Pro-Social Values            | Yes      |
| Religious Values             | Yes      |
| Suffered Injustice           | No       |
| Superficial Behaviors        | Yes      |

Number of PCEP CC! Grant Schools  
Total Surveyed Population: 9,215



*"We have long known that CHARACTER COUNTS! works in creating healthier school cultures where teachers can focus on instruction and student achievement. We are delighted to have this study to support schools in their efforts to make Character Education a priority."*  
Jim Vidak, Tulare County Superintendent of Schools.

A major requirement of the study was to design and conduct a valid, rigorous evaluation that included a group of treatment and comparison schools. Twelve treatment schools were charged with developing a CC! implementation and evaluation plan that would positively impact student achievement and behavior. Treatment School implementation plans were designed around six focus areas: **student behavior, curriculum, parent awareness, school environment, staff training** and **sportsmanship**. For the purposes of the study, the comparison schools did not produce full-scale implementation plans; rather they continued without any significant increases or decreases in character education during the first four years.

Each year of the study, treatment and comparison schools were evaluated using the "Student Report Card Survey." This survey was administered to all students in grades 6-12 at both program and comparison schools. It was from these subscales that researchers saw statistically significant positive growth from students in the treatment schools. The results of this study indicate the Tulare County CC! implementation model can be successfully utilized by school districts throughout the nation.

# A Measure of Character PCEP CHARACTER COUNTS! Study Highlights

## Monte Vista Elementary, Porterville CA Bullying

Over the course of the PCEP CC! Study, Monte Vista Elementary in Porterville, CA reported a positive change in bullying behaviors from the Report Card Survey data collected. This data indicates that bullying behaviors decreased over the course of the study providing a correlation to the school's campus-wide character education efforts.

A Bullying Report for Monte Vista Elementary School

| <i>The following occurred at least once in the past year:</i>       | 2007-08 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | Behavior % Change 2007-08 to 2010-11 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Hit a person because I was angry.                                   | 54%     | 38%     | 22%     | - 59%                                |
| Bullied, teased, or taunted someone.                                | 44%     | 30%     | 34%     | - 23%                                |
| Mistreated someone because he or she belonged to a different group. | 15%     | 5%      | 7%      | - 53%                                |
| Used racial slurs or insults.                                       | 28%     | 20%     | 10%     | - 64%                                |

"We use CC! as a theme for the whole-school to assist with the culture, sports, and after school arenas."  
Tulare Western Principal, Lucy Van Scyoc

## Divisadero Middle School, Visalia CA Discipline

Divisadero Middle School in Visalia, CA collected discipline data to illustrate the behavior spikes or decreases over a nine-year period. The highlighted data indicates the school's CC! implementation phase. Data shows a continual decrease in behavior problems which can be correlated to the school's CC! campus-wide implementation plan. During the PCEP CC! Study, Divisadero had a 36.9% decrease in suspensions.

A Suspension Report for Divisadero Middle School

|           | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | Month Totals |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| August    | 6       | 14      | 21      | 12      | 27      | 7       | 13      | 1       | 106          |
| September | 56      | 31      | 67      | 50      | 110     | 60      | 57      | 36      | 508          |
| October   | 90      | 88      | 82      | 109     | 95      | 74      | 74      | 41      | 686          |
| November  | 69      | 55      | 61      | 90      | 80      | 57      | 51      | 39      | 552          |
| December  | 26      | 54      | 40      | 47      | 42      | 36      | 23      | 35      | 336          |
| January   | 52      | 20      | 30      | 93      | 31      | 31      | 52      | 15      | 360          |
| February  | 71      | 39      | 65      | 124     | 82      | 48      | 51      | 46      | 574          |
| March     | 108     | 54      | 143     | 99      | 34      | 122     | 72      | 77      | 709          |
| April     | 47      | 81      | 53      | 71      | 55      | 69      | 53      | 42      | 471          |
| May       | 93      | 74      | 108     | 89      | 59      | 122     | 67      | 53      | 665          |
| June      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 12      | 3       | 1       | 1       | 5       | 22           |
| Totals    | 618     | 510     | 670     | 796     | 618     | 627     | 514     | 390     |              |

Divisadero Middle School

