



Creating Caring and Capable
Citizens

Highland Park Elementary Austin, Texas

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Highland Park Elementary

- Grades K – 5th
- 550 Students including transfers
- Neighborhood school in an urban district
- Teachers averaging 14 years experience
- Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
- Active parent and community involvement
- Tradition of educating the whole child

Highland Park Scotties Have C.L.A.S.S.

Character Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility,
Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship

Leadership Student leadership training and
opportunities

Active Minds Thinking about thinking

Skills Strategies for fully using our minds

Service Opportunities for school and community
volunteer service



*"I am a Highland Park Scottie, I am a partner in my education.
I pledge to make decisions that will help me become
the best person I can be."*

Caring and Capable Citizens:

Have zero tolerance for bullying

Practice ethical behaviors

Develop strategies to use personal strengths
and strengthen personal weaknesses

Accept and support others with different
strengths and weaknesses

Family Groups

School Needs:

- Reinforce positive school environment

Community Program:

- Families of 2nd – 5th grade students

- Regular meetings with Family teacher

School and Student Results:

- Stronger campus connections

- Acceptance of leadership roles

The Mind That's Mine



Teachers go beyond labels:

- Become keen observers
- Provide Brain Training
- Model self-reflection
- *Demystify* students
- Offer accommodations
and interventions

Neurodevelopmental Constructs

Attention

Temporal-Sequential Ordering

Spatial Ordering

Memory

Language

Neuromotor Functions

Social Cognition

Higher Order Cognition

Mind That's Mine Fair



Strategies for Learning



Student Opportunities for Service



Preparing for the Future

Fame is like a vapor

Popularity an accident

Riches take wings

Those who cheer today, curse tomorrow

One thing only endures

Character

Robert Allen Shivers

Governor of Texas, 1949-1957

Creating Caring and Capable Citizens

Systematically teach and guide students in the practice of ethical behaviors

Help them understand their own strengths and weaknesses so they develop tolerance for those of others

Provide opportunities to experience the satisfaction of serving others

As always, the obstacle is time

Creating Caring and Capable Citizens

Jane Knowles and Sally Hunter, Highland Park Elementary



C – Character	Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility Caring, and Citizenship
L – Leadership	Student leadership training and opportunities
A – Active Minds	Thinking about thinking and learning
S – Skills	Strategies for fully using our minds
S – Service	Opportunities for school and community service

C.L.A.S.S. Program Components and Sample Activities:

Committee of teachers, parents, and community members maintains program and provides related information through newsletter and postings on C.L.A.S.S. bulletin board

Integrated emphasis and consistent use of vocabulary describing ethical behavior, zero tolerance for bullying, and the power of courageous bystanders

Monday Morning Announcements reinforcing ethical behaviors and Weekly Character Raffle drawn from tickets awarded to students displaying *Character Counts!* Traits

Leadership training through Student Council, Safety Patrol, and Class Meetings

Volunteer service planned by students and built into each grade level's curriculum

Example – Fourth graders adopted Pioneer Farm as part of their study of Texas history and economics. They chose to create Thank You cards the Farm sends to volunteers and donors and hold a Bake Sale to raise money for replacing student costumes.

After-school community service and citizenship opportunities for students and families

Example – Students created Thanksgiving tray decorations for local Hospice patients after hearing from one of the Hospice caregivers. A student whose own grandfather was receiving Hospice care suggested this opportunity.

Recognition of student volunteers in school ceremony and on C.L.A.S.S. board/Students have documented over 1400 hours of community service each of the last three years

Annual *Hall of Stars* and Veteran's Day program honoring family veterans

Brain Training including brain structure and function as well as strategies to utilize brain fully
Example – Exploring the role of the amygdala (represented by “Amy” pictured above) which takes over in times of fear, anger, and stress. Though useful for lizards, it interferes with student thinking at school.

Discovering individual strengths and weaknesses through *The Mind That's Mine* curriculum

Example – Students test their short-term memory and attention under a variety of conditions to realize they can take steps to improve these skills.

Providing additional insight and assistance to students with special needs through *Schools Attuned* training and materials

All Kinds of Minds Fair in which 5th graders examine and present their own neurodevelopmental strengths and weaknesses along with personal learning strategies

Family Groups Meetings of 2nd through 5th graders to build relationships, discuss school environment, and practice ethical behavior through games and role-plays

Example – Students formed a living web to illustrate our interdependence on one another when working or playing in a group. In another meeting, students explored “The Secret Life of Schools” to discover how decisions are made about rules, procedures, etc.

We believe that tolerance and good citizenship begin when students understand their own strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies to be responsible for their own progress and behavior. Only then can they consider the needs and welfare of others.

Organizing Student Observations

Use this form to begin observing a student whom you think is struggling with some aspect of learning. On the left, record three to five concerns and three to five strengths. These can be academic and/or non-academic in nature.

In the right-hand corner, cite supporting evidence for each concern and strength. These should be observable behaviors. Be as specific as you can (e.g., “Stares out the window when I’m giving instructions.”; “Accurately completes math problem sets faster than other students.”). Examples have been included below.

CONCERNS

Example – Reading

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Example – Has trouble recognizing words when reading aloud.

STRENGTHS

Example – Gets along well with others

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Example - Is sought out by other students as a playmate.

Student Opportunities for Service Grade Level/Class Guidelines

1. Grade levels choose a month on the school calendar in which to complete their project(s). Teachers can decide to do one project for the entire grade level or separate projects in each homeroom.
2. Demonstrate to students that each individual is a part of many larger communities - family, class, school, neighborhood, city, state, nation, and world. An illustration can be made with concentric circles that increase in size or with a set of measuring cups that fit inside one another.
3. Help the students brainstorm ways children can show they care or are responsible to each of these communities. Examples might include:

Family - Chores	Class - Be a friend
School - Follow rules	Neighborhood - Pick up after dog
City - Pick up trash	State/Nation - Get parents to vote
World - Don't waste water or other resources	
4. Discuss how people can help even more when they work together. Ask them to spend a few days talking with their parents about needs in our community and learning about groups in our area who help solve problems.
5. Help the students compile either a list of problems they would like to work on or a list of community organizations they would like to help. From the list, the class selects either a problem or an organization. Some teachers may choose to create both lists by choosing the problem first and then a community organization that addresses the selected problem.
6. Students brainstorm ideas for helping. Ask student (or parent) volunteers to research the feasibility of each idea by contacting the agency and gathering needed information.
7. After listening to information on each idea, the class chooses a service project. Teachers may have to "guide" students to select reasonable projects. Raising money is fine as long as the students themselves must make the effort to earn contributions.
8. Check with other grade levels before involving their students in your project. The best advertising methods are sending small groups of students to talk to classes or attaching flyers to emails so teachers can choose whether or not to post them. We will not advertise grade level projects in the main hall.
9. Confirm your service project with any involved community organization. Try to give each child a specific responsibility in the class activity.
10. Be sure to take pictures of your students as they work on each step of their project. Have your CLASS Advocate send pictures and information to *The West Austin News* and other news agencies.
11. Guide students in recording their experiences while planning and carrying out their service project - What was successful? What would they do differently next time? How do they feel about the process and the finished project? Send a brief report to the C.L.A.S.S. Committee when finished.

C.L.A.S.S. Resources

- All Kinds of Minds: Understanding Differences in Learning.* <http://www.allkindsofminds.org>
Resources for educators, parents, and clinicians.
- Betz, Adrienne, editor. *Scholastic Treasury of Quotations for Children.* New York: Scholastic, 1998.
- Brain Gym International.* Educational Kinesiology. www.braingym.org
- Brain-Mart.* www.brain-mart.com Books, models, and visual aids.
- Brooks, Dr. Robert. *Resilience, Self-Esteem, Motivation, and Family Relationships.* Surveys of current research. www.drrobertbrooks.com
- Bullyproof: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth and Fifth Grade Students and Quit It! A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Students in Grades K – 3.* Wellesley Centers for Women.
- Caine, Renate Numela and Geoffrey Caine. *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain.* Outlines changes in education to reflect current brain research.
- Character Counts!* Josephson Institute of Ethics. www.charactercounts.org
- Estes, Eleanor. *The Hundred Dresses.* In winning a medal she is no longer there to receive, a little Polish girl teaches her classmates a lesson. Bullying.
- Fox, Mem. *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge.* Wilfrid lives next door to a nursing home and sets out to find Miss Nancy's memory. Respect and caring.
- Hall, David. *Ox-Cart Man.* Describes commitment of an early American family.
- Houston, Gloria. *My Great-Aunt Arizona.* Life-long joy of learning and exploring.
- Kincher, Jonni. *Psychology for Kids.* Free Spirit Pub. Activities for self-reflection.
- Levine, Dr. Melvin. *A Mind at a Time.* Educator's Publishing Service. Identifying individual learning patterns in children and maximizing their potential to succeed in school.
- Levine, Dr. Melvin, Dr. Carl Swartz, and Dr. Melissa Wakely. *The Mind That's Mine Teacher's Manual.* Educator's Publishing Service. A program to help young learners learn about learning. Plans for teaching neurodevelopment and an optional workbook for students.
- Levine, Dr. Melvin. *Jarvis Clutch, Social Spy.* Educator's Publishing Service. Social Skills.
- Lewis, Barbara A. *What Do You Stand For?.* Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1998.
- Lickona, Thomas. *Educating for Character.* New York: Bantam Books, 1991. Comprehensive examination of character education and how schools can teach positive traits.
- Lord, Betty Bao. *In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson.* In 1947, a Chinese girl starts to feel at home in Brooklyn when she discovers the Brooklyn Dodgers. Tolerance.
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.* Information, resources, and assistance for implementing projects in schools. www.servicelearning.org
- Neuroscience for Kids.* <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html>
- Polacco, Patricia. *Babushka's Doll, Chicken Sunday, Pink and Say, Tikvah Means Hope.* Beautiful picture books, each with a valuable character lesson.
- Project Wisdom.* Elementary Series 1 and 2. Collection of announcement scripts reinforcing positive character traits and decision-making. www.projectwisdom.com
- Schwab Learning.* Helping Kids with Learning Disabilities. www.schwablearning.org
- Simon, Seymour. *The Brain.* Detailed information and great photographs.
- Taylor, Mildred D. *Mississippi Bridge and The Gold Cadillac.* Experiences of black families in the South from the children's point of view. Respect, fairness, responsibility.
- "Teaching to Student Strengths". *Educational Leadership.* September 2006. Vol. 6, No. 1.
- Yashima, Taro. *Crow Boy.* Classmates finally understand the value of a shy mountain boy.