

Wesley D. Tisdale Elementary School School Climate and Anti-Bullying Initiatives

Tisdale Elementary School is committed to academic excellence in a caring environment where independence, critical thinking, problem solving, and a sense of individual and collective responsibility are developed. We provide a safe and supportive environment with classroom experiences designed to address the academic, social, and emotional needs of each child and to insure that all of our students develop the necessary skills and strategies to become lifelong learners while demonstrating the ability to respect and get along well with others. The students at Tisdale Elementary School thrive in an atmosphere that promotes a culture of understanding, acceptance, respect, citizenship and positive regard for all individuals. Our goals are achieved by developing strong bonds between our students and their teachers, by emphasizing and reinforcing the values of respect, honesty, kindness, responsibility, and empathy throughout the school community and curriculum, and by holding clear expectations that bullying is not tolerated at Tisdale Elementary School. The students at Tisdale Elementary School are nurtured by a caring network of teachers, parents, administrators and community members who recognize the vital role of a neighborhood school and who all play a part in providing the students with a variety of experiences that foster the development of positive character traits and a strong sense of community and citizenship.

Social-Emotional and Character Development lessons are taught deliberately and purposefully at the primary level and are woven into all areas of the preschool-3 program. Specific efforts to promote a positive school climate at Tisdale Elementary include:

- Code of Conduct – A Code of Conduct emphasizing individual and social responsibility was developed by staff and is displayed in every classroom. It is displayed in the main hallway and contained in the staff handbook and parent handbook. The Code of Conduct is taught and reinforced throughout the school year.

- Character Theme of the Month – Each month the students and staff focus on a character theme such as friendship, respect, cooperation, etc. The theme is integrated into the curriculum in all classrooms through literature, song, projects, and discussions.

- Student of the Month – Students recommend a third grade student who exemplifies being a good friend or citizen by placing that student's name in a

designated box outside the main office. Each month a student is chosen from the entries to lead the flag salute and introduce the character theme of the month.

- All School Spirit Day – Students and staff wear blue and gold and support a community organization such as Marine Moms of Mahwah, the American Cancer Society, Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, Relay for Life and the Center for Food Action.
- The Giving Tree Committee – School wide initiatives that support the Tisdale, Ramsey and community at large and have included Pennies for Peace, Souls for Souls, book drives and food collections.
- Morning Meeting – All classrooms have a morning meeting, which is a daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning, and reinforces academic and social skills. Morning meeting is a teaching practice from The Responsive Classroom.
- Character Education Lessons – Specific lessons are taught in every grade on character education including bullying through our physical education classes.
- Kids Caught Caring – This is a program implemented school-wide to reward and encourage the students to exemplify the character traits that are emphasized throughout the curriculum.
- Assemblies designed to promote character education and foster a sense of community occur on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.
- All School Sing – Monthly assembly that announces the “Student of the Month” and launches our character theme of the month. The efforts of the students recognized through the “Kids Caught Caring” program are also highlighted.
- The PTO sponsors an annual assembly program that focuses on character education.
- The Ramsey Police Department sponsors an “Officer Phil” assembly that focuses

on character education annually.

- The “Kids on the Block”, a program to promote tolerance and acceptance of individual differences.
- Culture Club – A program that involves a collaboration between the third grade classes that promotes the development of empathy as well tolerance and acceptance of individual and cultural differences.
- Friendship Club Sessions – Our school social worker and/or the school psychologist work with small groups of students or individual classes on an “as needed basis” to assist identified students or classes of students to develop stronger social skills.
- Banana Splits Program – a peer support program for children whose families have been impacted by loss, divorce, or traumatic event.
- “Second Cup of Coffee” – A parent outreach program regarding relevant school community and child development topics.
- Use of Technology – The school district’s website and a television, donated by a parent, on display outside of the main office are utilized to foster a sense of community by sharing information about and displaying pictures of school wide events.
- Videos and Books – Materials that include classroom posters, books, videos and professional resources are available for staff and students.
- Habits of Mind – Each month the Character Education Committee introduces a “Habit of Mind” from the text, Developing Habits of Mind for the Elementary School by Karen Boyes and Graham Watts. This theme is revisited throughout the month during lessons and discussion.
- Staff Development – There is ongoing professional development in a variety of areas that reinforce social-emotional and character development through book study, REAL workshops and in-services.
- Additional school wide events that promote a positive school climate and a sense of community include Exhibit Night, Third Grade Clap-out, Grand Friends Tea,

Father's Day Celebration, Ice Cream Social, Third Grade Bike Rodeo, and the Harvest Festival.

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