

Civic and character education are fundamental elements of the Utah public education system's core mission. Utah's legislature recognizes that the cultivation of a continuing understanding and appreciation of a constitutional republic and principles of representative democracy in Utah and the United States among succeeding generations of educated and responsible citizens is important to the nation and state. Though the primary responsibility for the education of children within the state resides with their parents, public education has the role to support and assist parents in fulfilling that responsibility. Utah charter schools fulfill a vital purpose in the preparation of future generations of informed and responsible citizens who are deeply attached to essential democratic values and institutions.

Civic and character education begins in the kindergarten classroom and continues in every grade. Utah standards, approved by the Utah State Board of Education, are rich with concepts that support civic and character education, helping to develop the moral and intellectual growth of Utah students.

The State Charter School Board and staff visit most charter schools annually and informally observe the civic and character education practices of the school. Many thanks to Utah's 124 charter schools and over 71,000 students for allowing us to visit and observe how they met their statutory responsibility of preparing students to be upright, productive, and well-informed participants in our compound constitutional republic. It is with great pleasure that we share these observations with the Utah Commission on Civic and Character Education.

We were most impressed with Utah charter schools which clearly incorporated civic and character education into all aspects of the school rather than isolating it to the legislative session or social studies classes. Several charter schools are shining examples of teaching character education lessons in all classrooms, choosing related character building themes for each month of the school year and having related activities to support the selected theme, displaying related student projects in the school building, empowering the student government, and requiring service learning for graduation. However, to keep this report succinct and still meaningful, we selected ten outstanding charter school examples to share in detail.

American Preparatory Academy

Link to video of students participating in APA's character/leadership development programs:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B6mzMISqGWZuVIFnVGduQ0NIUEk>

American Preparatory Academy's Character Development curriculum is taught through the Builder and the Ambassador Programs. The Builder Program begins in Kindergarten and centers on the monthly Builders Themes, Poem and motto – "We are builders." Students know that Builders show respect for one another by exemplifying positive attitudes, language, and behavior. The Ambassador program begins in fifth and sixth grades with hands-on opportunities for students to learn civility and professional skills through orchestrated after-school events, field-trips and classroom lessons. In seventh through twelfth grades, students move to a premier leadership model emphasizing daily opportunities to change the world for the better. Students learn how to advocate for themselves and others. They emerge as leaders through our seven areas of focus:

Social Graces and Professional Behavior: Faculty led themed station events allow students to learn life skills in a small peer environment. Skills such as meeting and greeting, asking intelligent questions, avoiding social media pitfalls, dressing successfully, communicating effectively and more. A weekly social dance class serves as a medium to teach respect and the importance of being everyone's friend. Culminating events include receptions, formal dinners and dances called Balls. These events allow students to put into practice the social and professional behaviors they have learned throughout the year.

Self-Management and Life Skills: In leadership lessons, students use Sean Covey's teen books on building executive and decision making skills to prepare them to meet the increased demands of high school, college and adult life. Additionally,

the school incorporate Scholar Academy training and other student-driven research modules centered on vocational, collegiate and philanthropic opportunities to help students see their potential.

Leadership Experience: Student councils engage in a rotating 14-week training program with specific assignments in setting agendas, running meetings and following through with assignments. Council members work together as a team to recognize the needs of their peers, and then execute “Social Programs” designed to fill those needs.

Community Service and Involvement: Traditions of service begin in seventh grade with students visiting elderly care centers. Each year the opportunities continue with trail re-building, city works projects, Head Start mentoring, cemetery clearing, special needs dances, and the Down Syndrome Buddy Walk. The culminating highlight in twelfth grade is participating in the United Way Day.

Civic Awareness: In January, a full-day Legislative Training Workshop is held with mock voting, elections and House Floor discussions to prepare students to attend the Capitol. seventh and ninth grade students visit during the Session and eleventh grade students visit during the November Interim Hearings. tenth grade students focus on the issues facing city governments preparatory to visiting City Halls. Twelfth grade students tour the Matheson Courthouse.

Arts and Cultural Appreciation: Every fifth grader participates in choir. Every sixth grader plays an instrument in Band or Orchestra opening opportunities for self-discovery. Advanced performing groups enforce the importance of developing talents, leading peers, and speaking publicly in their areas of interest.

City Academy

City Academy is one of the original 2002 National First Amendment School (FAS) project schools. Continuing with their FAS project work, they view their school as a civic gathering place bringing together a wide variety of seventh through twelfth grade students specifically to learn with and from each other.

This year, as a general election year with particularly controversial issues being very public, City Academy was provided with an excellent opportunity for authentic meaningful civic education. As some of their students prepared to vote, many more looked forward to when they would have the opportunity to exercise that right. Their students joined in study and debate on the issues of the election and the issues that animate them as they approach voting age. They then hosted an event on the eve of election, November 7. It was an inspirational opportunity for community members of all ages to come together in civic conversation. City Academy students shared their thoughts, and invited those of others, on the issues of the day. Students led the school in practicing a civic and character virtue cherished at City Academy: the ability to disagree without being disagreeable. The students shared their perspectives, and engaged with adult and student audience members of varying political persuasions on issues such as immigration, race, healthcare, and, of course, education. For their school, this civic engagement event and the preparation for it was a unique opportunity to share with and to invest in the education of the voters of this and our future elections.

Ongoing preparation for this election eve event in history and civics classes, and in grade level advisory group meetings during the fall was one example of our school-wide emphasis on both building knowledgeable and engaged future adult citizens, as well as helping the students develop strengths of character as critical and ethical thinkers, self-disciplined capable public speakers, and respectful contributing community members.

At school students learn history and science concepts that provide evidence for their own ideas. In classrooms they learn to listen carefully to other's ideas as they discuss issues and develop knowledge. They have opportunities to collaborate and create, and learn the synergy of solving problems together. They learn to respectfully disagree with each other, and to be good citizens of their classroom and school community. The school's goal is to help Utah's young people become lifelong learners and to nurture them as they develop into able and responsible participants and leaders in our communities.

Civic and character education are carefully woven into the fabric of all the learning and interactions at City Academy. They believe that becoming civically aware and developing personal character must be seen as an approach to everything they do. Their board has adopted, and all teachers are guided by a school-wide principles of college, career, and civic readiness (CCCR) and personal excellence. Teachers establish the grounding principles of respect, responsibility, and purposeful learning in each classroom. City Academy's motto: We are hardworking, positive, respectful, and focused on learning.

Early Light Academy at Daybreak

At Early Light Academy character education is a critical component of their school culture. Desired Results of Student Learning, such as "ELA students will be responsible leaders," also define the culture. Becoming a leader at Early Light Academy is supported with school programs and supports in place that address academic, social, and emotional skills. Over the last seven years, they have implemented two school wide programs that have directly benefited the school culture.

The Leader in Me: This program teaches Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People to a younger audience in a school setting. Its language and principles have become woven into the school's day-to-day business of teaching and learning. The Academy's annual leadership week each fall supports ongoing implementation and the belief that every student can be a leader. An eighth habit added recently, "Find Your Voice," encourages students to take a stand on issues or ideas that are important to them.

The Second Step: This program is used to directly teach emotion management, assertive communication, empathy, compassion, and problem-solving skills. Lessons from the Second Step curriculum are taught weekly in kindergarten through ninth grade and reinforced by teachers when difficulties with these topics arise. Students learn the definition of bullying, different types of bullying, and the role that they have in preventing bullying and stopping it if they witness or experience it. The skills taught in Second Step promote Early Light Academy's culture of kindness toward all students, empathy, and awareness of one's own emotional regulation

PRIDE: All junior high students participate in a homeroom/leadership PRIDE class four days per week that is a mixture of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students. In these classes, students develop connections with each other as well as their teachers. In addition to school announcements and team building, PRIDE provides dedicated time for teaching Second Step lessons, the 7 Habits, and promoting study skills and habits that will lead to success as they look ahead to college and future careers.

Hope Squad: This year, they also added a peer support network, a Hope Squad, for the junior high students to help develop a positive school climate and prevent bullying and suicide.

Leadership Roles: Students have many opportunities to serve in leadership roles and become leaders and take on various tasks that would typically be done by adults. This builds a culture of high trust. Students are not only leaders in their classes or their grade levels, but across the whole school. Many junior high students have a period scheduled to work as teacher assistants in elementary classrooms. Older elementary students read with younger reading buddies. Students Making a Change (SMAC), ELA's student council, helps with charitable service projects such as food drives, coat drives, fundraisers, and school spirit activities.

These opportunities not only allow students to act as leaders in the school, but allow younger students to have positive student role models. When students see these acts of leadership, they are aware there are many people who are invested in the school and its positive culture, which encourages them to be part of the positive school culture as well.

Freedom Preparatory Academy

At Freedom Preparatory Academy they strive to meet the needs of the whole child. While they pride themselves on high academics, they also want their students to be responsible citizens with the utmost integrity. At this school they place a big emphasis on leadership and teach the students how leaders behave and the qualities one must possess to be an effective leader. For the last couple of years this school has used The Leader in Me program produced by Franklin Covey.

The Leader in Me focuses on 7 Habits that teach children how to be highly effective in different areas of their lives. Children are taught that they are ultimately responsible for their own actions. As a society we tend to place blame on others or our circumstances rather than taking responsibility for decisions we make and things we say or do. A proactive person realizes they are in charge of themselves. The 7 Habits also teach children how to best interact with others and solve problems. Teaching children to problem solve and find win-win solutions have eliminated the need for teachers or administrators to intervene in every situation. The students show great leadership by working well with their peers and seeking outcomes that have the best interest in mind for all involved. All over this school they have seen a decrease in behavior issues and an increase in respect for peers and teachers. Learning how to treat others well and be respectful will go a long way in a child's life. They need those necessary skills to be able to interact successfully as they grow older and enter their college and career. Freedom Preparatory Academy is very proud to teach their students good citizenship that will benefit them now and in the future.

Another way that they teach leadership is through what is called "Everyday Leaders." Each staff member in the school can nominate a student for superior behavior demonstrating great leadership skills. For example, a lunchroom worker may nominate a student for staying behind to help pick up trash without being asked. A teacher can nominate a student that helps another student in need. Students that are nominated are recognized at the end of every month with a certificate and have their picture taken for the leadership wall. Student's names are also read on the morning announcements that have earned this honor. Students look forward to this each month and are very proud when they have been nominated. At Freedom Preparatory Academy they are investing in their student's future by teaching them the importance of leadership and respect. Students leave Freedom prepared to face the world around them. While they highly value academics, they also greatly uphold ethical behavior and preparing students to become the great leaders of our future.

Good Foundations Academy

Good Foundations Academy celebrates and reinforces character development in a variety of ways. They come together as a school for monthly character assemblies on the first Friday of each month. They recognize and reward students and staff members for demonstrating the foundation stones through U Rock! cards, Stepping Stone Awards, and Foundation Awards. They set aside 90 minutes per week for character instruction using the Character First curriculum and related resources. They actively connect positive examples of character from history, science, and literature to the students' lives. The Good Foundations Academy community regularly seeks to demonstrate the foundation stones through service to each other and our community. At Good Foundations Academy, character education is a continual process, guided by clear expectations and great examples from history, literature, and our community.

Good Foundations Academy has seven foundation stones that are interwoven through all that they do and teach. These foundation stones are Respect, Cooperation, Citizenship, Integrity, Perseverance, Self-Control, and Responsibility. The "Seven Foundation Stones" are meant to be actualized behavior among the faculty, parents, and student body. As part of the ongoing development of the school culture, we see the director, teachers, parents, and great literature as the four main avenues by which the foundation stones will become part of the student core.

The Stones are:

Respect: Showing consideration for others and their property; listening to and following instructions of those in authority; honoring others; following the Golden Rule; being courteous and polite.

Cooperation: Listening and paying attention to others, sharing and taking turns, doing a fair share of the work, acknowledging the contributions of others; serving others with patience and a positive attitude; working well with others.

Citizenship: Using the rights and privileges one has a member of the community to make that community a better place; being socially responsible; obeying the laws and rules; doing one's part for the common good; respect authority; helping your community by volunteering service.

Integrity: Knowing the difference between right and wrong and having the courage to do what is right, even when it is not easy to do so; living up to the highest ethical standard not compromising one's value; building and guarding your reputation.

Perseverance: Sticking to a purpose and never giving up on what one has to do; being determined to improve; being committed to justice; not leaving things unfinished; striving for excellence.

Self-Control: Being rational - acting out of reason, not anger; knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do; being in control of yourself, not letting others influence your decision as to what is right or wrong; being disciplined; having power over what you do.

Responsibility: Doing what we have said we will do; being accountable for our actions and consequences because we know right from wrong; being dependable and reliable; not making excuses or blaming others.

Hawthorn Academy

Hawthorn Academy achieves civic and character education through an integrated school curriculum and in course work. Hawthorn Academy integrates school curriculum through the school's International Baccalaureate focus. In each curricular area, students are guided to identify and practice the traits and attitudes of International Baccalaureate Students. This happens both in the individual content areas and when students are working in cross curricular projects. Students are praised for demonstrating a trait or attitude during their regular course work and teachers help to identify the expectations for learning by couching it in the traits and attitudes that will be used in the learning process. Teachers then facilitate the application of these traits. The Hawthorn Student Leaders teach the meaning of two traits at the beginning of each month's assembly and also develop videos of examples of the traits in action.

Students are taught to be:

Thinkers: students take responsible action on complex problems and make ethical decisions

Communicators: students collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups

Principled: students act with integrity and honesty with accountability for their own actions, with a strong sense of fairness and justice with respect for the dignity and rights of people

Open-minded: students value one's own culture and point of view as well as that of others

Caring: students show empathy, compassion and respect with a commitment to service

Risk-takers: students learn to be resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change

Reflective: students thoughtfully consider the world and each person's own ideas and experiences

Hawthorn Academy also instructs students on civic and character education through the Second Steps program, where students learn friendship skills and problem solving, emotional management, and empathy. In addition to integration throughout the curriculum, students give service through grade level service projects and a school wide service drive in December.

Mountain Heights Academy

At Mountain Heights Academy, an online school, civic and character education occurs in abundance as part of our school culture and mission, both online and at in-person events.

Girl Talk: Mountain Heights Academy guidance counselors provide Girl Talk curriculum and groups to their middle and high school students. Girl Talk is an international non-profit peer-to-peer mentoring program that supports high school girls as they mentor middle school girls, building leadership skills, self-esteem, and participating in community service. Weekly meetings are facilitated by high school Girl Talk leaders, who act as mentors and positive role models. Middle school girls have the opportunity to learn that they are not alone in the issue that they daily deal with. The Girl Talk

curriculum focuses on communication, kindness and compassion, self-confidence, service-minded, and building strong leaders.

Chill: Mountain Heights students join snow enthusiasts for a youth development program that uses snowboarding to teach life skills and increase self-esteem in participants. Lessons are provided during the ride up the mountain in patience, persistence, responsibility, courage, respect, and pride. These lessons are reinforced through lessons and time on the board.

Student Advisory Board/Leadership: All students at Mountain Heights are able to take the Leadership class that emphasizes leadership skills and service learning. Students are grouped and tasked with planning a service learning activity for the school. This year the students have organized a donation drive for the Valor House. They will be collecting winter coats, hats and gloves as well as nonperishable food. The Valor House is a Transitional Housing Program for homeless veterans.

Service Learning: As part of Mountain Heights Academy's mission, students, faculty, and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide sustained service each year. Those who do are eligible to earn the President's Volunteer Service Award. As a school, they provide monthly service learning activities. Students set up an account and record their service learning hours, even those outside of Mountain Heights, as students are encouraged to find ways to serve in their individual communities. Awards are given at the end of year gala.

As a school they are participating in the following charities or causes during the 2016-2017 academic year:

- National Reading Day - Mountain Heights students reading to elementary students across the state, including Spanish and American Sign Language classrooms.
- Asian Association of Utah Refugee & Immigration Center in Salt Lake City—donating classroom supplies as a student body and providing babysitting and English practice for families learning English.
- Primary Children's Medical Center - gathering donated supplies to make entertainment kits for children at the hospital.
- The Road Home - serving meals and doing activities for the children of homeless families.
- Terracycle (Recycling Project) - recycling various items to donate to Heifer International.
- Provo Youth Detention - collecting items for and delivering holiday treat bags to several youth detention facilities in Utah County
- Festival of Trees - donating time and materials to make a tree that benefits Primary Children's Medical Center
- Utah Food Bank & Provo Food Bank- collection of food items and two activities, providing service at food bank.

Odyssey Charter School

At Odyssey Charter School they have created a character program they refer to as the HEROES program. They have eight character traits they desire their students to exhibit. They are excellence, courage, dedication, resilience, loyalty, trust, service, and dignity. Each trait is highlighted for one month of the school year and is represented by a color. During the first week of each month the school counselor visits every classroom to give a presentation on that HERO trait including what students can do to develop that trait in themselves. Following the presentation, teachers choose one student from their class who they think best exemplifies the character trait for the month. They become the Ambassador of that character trait for the month. On the last day of the month, the chosen Ambassadors get to eat lunch with the Assistant Director, receive a bag of popcorn, and a certificate. They sign their name on a poster displayed in the lunch room.

Teachers also award HERO cards to any student who exhibits the monthly character trait. Any member of the staff can award HERO cards to students. HERO cards are little slips of yellow paper with the hero traits and a place for the student's name. Students place their HERO cards in a box in their classroom. Every Friday, one name is pulled from each classroom and those students stop by the Assistant Director's office for a small prize. Each week all cards are counted and students are encouraged to earn more HERO cards than the previous week, striving for a free dress day or class party.

Students also have the opportunity to earn wristbands each month. The wristbands are the color of the character trait for the month. To earn a wristband, students must arrive at school on time, every day, and remain all day. They must be

in correct uniform and do their best work each day. If they receive 100% on their HERO points for the month they receive the wristband the first day of the following month. For two days there are awards for students with wristbands such as homework passes, free dress days, reading time with the Assistant Director, and more.

In addition, at the end of each quarter, an Academic Hero and a Citizenship Hero is chosen from each class and acknowledged in front of the school in an assembly. Academic and Citizenship Heroes receive a certificate and a local business coupon. Odyssey has also created a leadership council in their sixth grade. They have been given the responsibility of making announcements, conducting assemblies, helping with school events and other high profile occasions. This develops their leadership skills and helps give the younger students someone and something to look forward to. Odyssey Voyagers look forward to these weekly, monthly, and quarterly recognitions of character. They feel it has made the school a more positive, safe environment for all.

Providence Hall

Part of developing students into effective contributors to society is ensuring that they develop core moral, civic, ethical, and cognitive abilities. At Providence Hall, these values are taught daily in the classroom as part of the International Baccalaureate program where key concepts and learner profiles provide an educational framework that teaches students to be local, global, and international citizens through service learning.

Students at Providence Hall learn to develop 10 specific attributes in all their classrooms called the Learner Profiles: thinker, communicator, balanced, inquirer, courageous, knowledgeable, principled, caring, reflective and open-minded. As inquirers, they learn to nurture curiosity and how to learn independently. As communicators they learn how to express themselves in various forms and in other languages. Students learn to be principled by developing integrity and honesty through taking responsibility for their actions. They are reflective by thoughtfully considering the world and their own ideas and experience. Balance is taught through understanding the importance of balancing different aspects of their lives; intellectual, physical, and emotional. They are challenged to be courageous by approaching uncertainty with forethought and determination. They learn to be caring by showing empathy, compassion, and respect as well as demonstrating a commitment to service. Students become opened-minded through teaching them to critically appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. They are taught to be knowledgeable and develop and use conceptual understanding across all range of disciplines. Critical and creative thinking skills are used to analyze and solve problems.

Additionally, students learn to be internationally minded and reflect on the different ideas and traditions of other cultures. They are taught to take action on what they are learning in the classroom. This can be manifested in ways such as a student helping his family conserve water at home after learning about it in his elementary classroom, or junior high students designing a recycling plan for the school during a lesson on conservation. At the end of fifth, third, tenth and twelfth grades students are required to do an action project in groups or individually with the help of an adult supervisor.

Salt Lake Arts Academy

At Salt Lake Arts Academy students learn the values Respect, Inclusion and Integrity, Safety and Empathy through the leadership program, RISE (Respect, Inclusion, Safety, Empathy). At the beginning of each year, students are placed in small, grade-specific RISE Advisory groups, led by a RISE Advisor teacher. Students meet every Friday with their RISE groups to work on developmentally appropriate lessons and activities that explore how to live these values at school, at home and in the larger community. A student's advisor is another adult at school who is watching over a student, checking in regularly on each student's overall well-being, and collaborating with other teachers to make certain each student is well-known, well-supported and well-challenged.

Salt Lake Arts Academy's RISE groups also teach students about being citizens in the community. Each student has a UTA/Trax pass which is used to travel throughout the city, to performances, exhibits, and other community activities. Students travel with their Advisory Groups learning to use public transportation on field trips, doing service projects and exploring the rich resources of downtown Salt Lake.

In addition to the RISE Leadership Program this year Salt Lake Arts Academy has introduced “No Bully,” a national, research-based program that improves school climate. Through the “No Bully” program students, parents and teachers have created a “social vision” for the school that follows the RISE values – treating each other with respect, working to be inclusive, making sure students feel safe, and learning to be empathetic to those around us. Teachers and students have been trained in a “No Bully Protocol” for handling social aggression and bullying involving a team of students led by a trained teacher. These “Solution Teams” are formed upon request – from a student, a teacher or a parent – to address specific problems within the school. The Solution Team includes the “bully” or “aggressor” and a small group of pro-social students, but not the “target.” Students are called to a meeting and immediately told “you are not in trouble.” Then, without naming the bully/aggressor, The Solution Team discusses what has been happening to a targeted student. Together, the solution team (which includes the aggressor) comes up with strategies to help end the aggressive behavior. Our “Solution Team” teachers have been astounded at how effective this process has been, and attributes it to the power of positive peer pressure.

Thomas Edison Charter Schools

As part of a well-rounded education, civic and character training provides students appropriate skills in addition to academic learning. At Thomas Edison civic responsibility is an essential part of every students’ education. Each morning students gather as a group to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. They also sing the national anthem every Tuesday as a group. There are three assemblies throughout the year, one on the Constitution, one for Veterans Day, and the other for President’s Day. The fifth grade students participate in the Great American Award, which is a recognition they can earn for memorizing the Preamble, the 50 states and capitals, the presidents, and other patriotic trivia. Citizenship parties are earned by students in grades six through nine for outstanding behavior in and out of class. The school also recognizes individuals in morning greeting for personal accomplishments like the Eagle Scout Award, community involvement, state athletic competitions, history and science fair winners, etc.

Character training is also an essential part of our school. At Thomas Edison the focus on creating a safe learning environment for everyone. Grade level lessons are provided monthly by the counselor in grades three through nine and bi-monthly for kindergarten through second grade. The lessons center on developing high functioning students in a positive environment. They reinforce appropriate attention, personal accountability, responsible behavior, conflict resolution skills, multicultural respect, emotional recognition and control, organization, and developing a positive attitude and self-esteem. All lessons relate social interactions to academic success. One of the school’s philosophies is to reinforce behavior through the Glenn Latham model of classroom management. Teachers provide at least eight positive interactions with students for every one negative interaction. Teachers also provide several home contacts for each student each year to reinforce gains in academic and behavioral achievement.