

WHAT DOES CHARACTER EDUCATION LOOK LIKE AT HARLAN?

Birmingham Public Schools adopted the **Character.org** 11 Principles of Effective Character Education as part of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Below are some examples of intentional and meaningful ways we provide effective character education at Harlan. Harlan is a Character.org Model School and became a *National School of Character* in 2014.



Harlan Habits

Our touchstone proudly displays our habits of Respect, Responsibility, and Kindness, and creates a common language of our school's core values. Collaboratively developed with staff, students, and parents, our touchstone is the foundation of all our character education initiatives.

(Principle 1)



Husky Pack /Town Hall Meetings

Twenty multi-age groups meet each month. Packs are K-5 and provide opportunities for character education lessons (particularly empathy and upstander behavior), role-playing, cross age mentoring and community building and service learning.

Students remain in their same "pack" through the 5th grade. School-wide Town Hall meetings are held 3-4 times a year and reinforce Husky Pack lessons.

(Principles 2, 4, 5, 9)

Empathy In Action Initiative

The Harlan community commits to Empathy in Action by participating in integrated experiences to promote the necessary knowledge/thinking, attitude/feeling, and skills/doing required of upstanders. This year students have focused on strategies to help when others need it, and have enjoyed community visitors such as a local police officer and high school volunteer club students.

(Principles 2, 3, 4)



Service Learning Projects

All learners are given opportunities to participate in classroom service learning, and school-wide community service activities that help others. With each community service project, we include education about the issue and organization that we are helping. Service learning projects are long-term classroom activities and tied to the curriculum.

(Principles 5, 10)



Class Meetings

Regular meetings are held in classrooms to practice the skills of greeting, listening and responding, speaking to a group, and group problem-solving. The meetings create a caring classroom community by addressing class specific social emotional learning and character education needs.

(Principles 2 and 4)



Visit [Character.org](https://www.character.org) for more information!

PRINCIPLE 1

The school community promotes core ethical and performance values as the foundation of good character.

PRINCIPLE 2

The school defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and doing.

PRINCIPLE 3

The school uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development.

PRINCIPLE 4

The school creates a caring community.

PRINCIPLE 5

The school provides students with opportunities for moral action.

PRINCIPLE 6

The school offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed.

PRINCIPLE 7

The school fosters students’ self-motivation.

PRINCIPLE 8

The school staff is an ethical learning community that shares responsibility for character education and adheres to the same core values that guide the students.

PRINCIPLE 9

The school fosters shared leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.

PRINCIPLE 10

The school engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.

PRINCIPLE 11

The school regularly assesses its culture and climate, the functioning of its staff as character educators, and the extent to which its students manifest good character.