

Build Character/Build Success: Celebrating Character at TDSB

About the project ...

Toronto District School Board's annual *Celebrating Character* initiative was developed to honour students and to celebrate their achievements in demonstrating the positive character attributes that the board and its school communities have identified for focus. The process expands on the *Build Character/Build Success* theme implemented throughout the board over the past two years. *Build Character/Build Success* pins and certificates were created for the award recipients and criteria for nomination were established. All schools and their communities were invited to submit the names and stories of students from their schools who met the expectations for recognition; in the final selection, at least one student from each school in the board received a *Celebrating Character* award. Their stories were posted on the board's website to extend the recognition and inspire others.

Impact on student learning and school culture ...

- This celebration of students' demonstrations of positive character honours the whole child, recognizes good citizenship and contributes to improvements in learning and achievement.
- The congruence of the *Celebrating Character* process with the board's Safe Schools Policy and its emphasis on good citizenship contributes to positive learning environments.
- Sharing the stories on the board's website has allowed for wide distribution of positive stories about TDSB students and has the potential to positively impact other students and the wider school community.

Lessons learned for moving forward ...

- Aligning the TDSB character attributes with many of the learning skills on the report card has emphasized the importance of an explicit, connected focus on developing both character and the learning skills required for learning success.
- Character development will continue to be a TDSB focus through the *Safe and Caring* pillar as aligned to outcomes in the Board Improvement Plan.