

OCDE Project GLAD® Frames Schoolwide Social and Emotional Learning at Valle Vista Elementary School

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Promising practices...

In the 2016–2017 school year at Valle Vista Elementary School, we saw an alarming spike in the number of crisis calls for our students. As we analyzed the data, it became apparent that we needed to take a different approach to the social and emotional learning (SEL) of our students. This necessary change was consistent with the 2017 Aspen Institute’s National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, where leaders from education, science, government, and the private sector agreed on the urgency of integrating social and emotional development into K-12 education (aspeninstitute.org). Our plan for the 2017–2018 school year was to start off the year with integrated language arts units focused on developing the social and emotional skills of our students, K-5. These units would not only provide the initial “teach-tos” for our classroom and schoolwide behavior plans, but could also be used throughout the school year as a resource for re-teaching and extensions.

Valle Vista Elementary School is located in the South Valley of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and we have 515 students Pre-K–5. We are a Title I school, with 100% of our students receiving free lunch. We have a 50:50 dual language program; about 30% of our students are classified as English learners and

30% of our students have Individual Education Plans (IEP). Our mobility rate is between 30% and 40%, approximately 20% of our students have parents who are incarcerated, and about 15% of our students are classified as Title I Homeless.

Five years ago we decided to adopt Guided Language Acquisition Design (OCDE Project GLAD®) schoolwide as our framework for content-based language arts (LA) instruction. Project GLAD® is a model of professional development that is licensed by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE). Project GLAD® is based on a collection of research-based, effective classroom strategies that focus on integrating language development and content learning. In addition, two of the Project GLAD® strategies focus on SEL—the Three Personal Standards and the T-Graph for Social Skills.

Given our SEL focus, Project GLAD® units were developed and implemented in the fall of 2017. For the primary grades (K-2) the units were based on the Project GLAD® K/1 Good Citizen unit. The heart of any Project GLAD® unit is the Process Grid, which is where the content that you want students to learn is organized. The Process Grid for these units was built around Project GLAD®’s Three Personal Standards (Make Good Decisions, Solve Problems, and Show Respect) and was also our behavior matrix for our recently developed schoolwide PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) System (www.pbis.org). The Process Grid for these units is shown in Table 1.

Each of the units was backward planned, based on grade-level specific CCSS LA standards, using the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) planning framework (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). In addition to integrating the language arts standards and PBIS behaviors, we also wanted students to have a basic understanding of the relationship between the human brain and behaviors. To accomplish this we developed a developmentally

	<i>Make Good Decisions</i>	<i>Solve Problems</i>	<i>Show Respect</i>
<i>Everywhere</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your hands and feet to yourself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take turns. Seek help from an adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise your hand to ask a questions. Listen while others are speaking.
<i>Cafeteria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain seated. Only touch and eat your own food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise your hand if you need help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank the cafeteria staff.
<i>Bathroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the bathroom correctly. Use only what you need of water, soap, paper towels, and toilet paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report maintenance issues to a teacher. Report inappropriate use of the bathroom to a teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow other students their privacy.
<i>Playground</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the playground equipment correctly. Play fair and take turns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If someone is bothering you, ask them to stop, walk away, and tell a duty teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep our playground clean. Invite others to play.
<i>Walkways</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be quiet. Walk with your eyes forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give others their personal space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admire student work with your eyes.

Table 1. Good Citizen Process Grid

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appropriate brain graphic organizer that combined a diagram of the brain (www.blissfulkids.com) with self-regulation strategies (Kuypers, 2011)—see Figure 1.

This graphic organizer also became an anchor for our school counselor’s SEL curriculum, in which she used it to review and introduce additional self-regulation strategies with lessons in each classroom.

We also wanted our K-2 students to be exposed to the idea of a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007) as part of our schoolwide SEL LA units. For our dual language (DL) classrooms, the narrative strand of Project GLAD® strategies was implemented in Spanish with a fictional story that demonstrated the key growth mindset concept of “effort equals mastery” (kindergarten—*La pequeña locomotora que sí pudo*, first grade—*Sí bale a Willie*, second grade—*Irene, la valiente*). Additionally, in English, the video *Austin’s Butterfly* (<http://modelsofexcellence.education.org/resources/austins-butterfly>) was shown and analyzed by students as another resource that demonstrated the growth mindset idea of effort equals mastery.

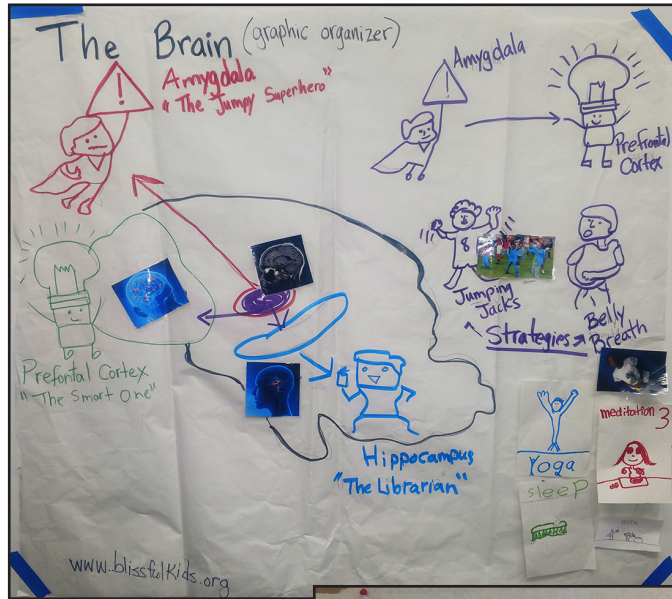


Figure 1. “The Brain” graphic organizer for primary grades (www.blissfulkids.com)

Ubd planning framework. The brain graphic organizer included more information, depending on the grade level, and a graphic organizer of growth mindset versus fixed mindset was also used in the fourth and fifth grades (see Figure 2).

For the dual language classrooms, the Character Counts! unit was done in English. However, in fourth and fifth grades, the next language arts unit was done in Spanish and was an extension of the Character Counts! unit, in which students researched an influential person (living or deceased) and had to prove that the person had a growth mindset (opinion/persuasive writing). In fourth grade, the students

presented their findings by recording themselves as the person they researched, using ChatterPix (©Duck Duck Moose, LLC)—an application that lets you take a picture and record your voice, then the picture appears to be doing the talking. In fifth grade, the students presented their findings in a living museum.

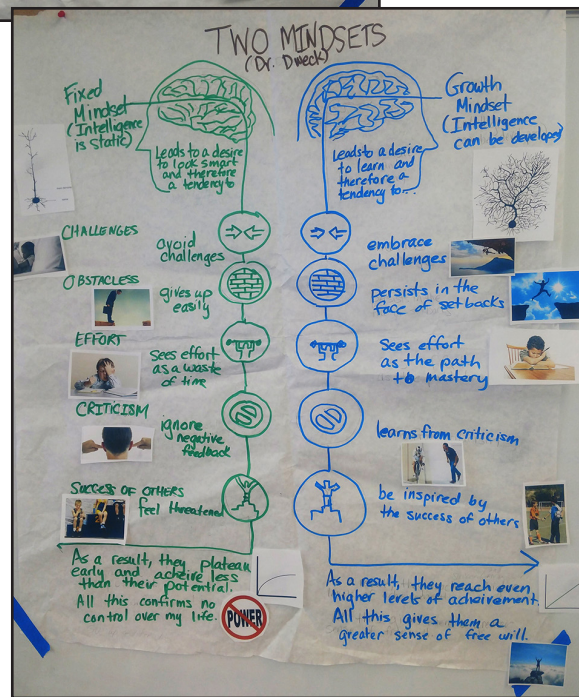


Figure 2. “Two Mindsets” graphic organizer for fourth and fifth grades

In Grades 3–5, the units that were developed were based on Character Counts! (charactercounts.org). The Process Grid for the fifth grade unit is shown in Table 2 on page 18. The Process Grids for third and fourth grades were scaled down to be more developmentally appropriate.

Similar to the K-2 Good Citizen units, each of the third through fifth grade units was backward planned, based on grade-level specific standards, using the

Implementation of these units was deemed a success on many different levels. There was an overall cultural shift from both staff and students regarding student behaviors. For example, staff could be confident that they could tell any student to “use belly breathing to calm down your amygdala” and they would be understood. One teacher commented that the unit provided the current “science” behind

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Table 2. Character Counts! Process Grid

Trait ↓	Meaning	Key Concepts	Components	At School		Influential Individuals who Demonstrated the Trait
				Examples	Non-examples	
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take care of what needs to be done. Think solid like a tree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Life is full of choices.” “We are in charge of our choices.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Persevere Practice self-control Strive for excellence Be accountable Make good decisions Be proactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your desk clean Finish work Put materials away Pick up trash Stay on task Ignore distractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a messy desk Fail to complete work Copy from other people Tell people the answer 	Steve Jobs Benjamin Franklin
Trustworthiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do what you say you’ll do. Have the courage to do the right thing. Think true blue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Trust is earned but can be lost very quickly.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be honest Keep promises Show integrity Be loyal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start assignment when teacher is busy Stick up for your friend with a bully Keep a promise to help with a project Tell the truth about not finishing your homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play around as soon as the teacher isn’t looking Lie about homework Break a promise to help with a project Share gossip 	Abraham Lincoln
Caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show a concern for others. Think of a heart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Your personal fulfillment makes any personal sacrifices worthwhile.” 	Practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindness Compassion Gratitude Forgiveness Charity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage fellow classmates Take someone to the nurse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laugh at a fellow classmate Hold a grudge 	Mother Teresa
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to make the world a better place. Think regal purple as representing the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “You have an obligation to make the world a better place.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect authority Participate in the democratic process Improve school climate Protect the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a peer mediator Pick up trash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throw wet paper towels on the bathroom ceiling Bully others 	George Washington
Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat people in a way that is right. Think of sharing your snack equally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Fair is not always equal.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take turns Play by the rules Give credit to others Ask for and take only your fair share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let others have turns on playground equipment Encourage fellow student to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take credit for your group’s work when you didn’t do work Blame others for you not getting your work done 	Mahatma Gandhi
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Believe the well-being and dignity of all people are important. Treat others the way you want to be treated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Treat everyone with respect, even if you feel they don’t deserve it.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be tolerant Use good manners Show consideration Engage in peacekeeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say please and thank you Respect personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gossip Argue with your teacher 	Martin Luther King Jr.



the normal SEL that they would be teaching at the beginning of the school year. The schoolwide behavior data showed a significant decrease in both the number of crisis calls (69 for August–October 2016, 18 for August–October 2017) and the number of students needing crisis calls (17 for 2016 and 7 for 2017). Next steps include updating the units based on teacher reflection and feedback, identifying more explicit connections between the school PBIS system and the resources in the unit, developing ways to help students internalize SEL, and keeping the ideas from these units in focus for both students and teachers throughout the entire school year.

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