

**I. Needs Statement** *(no more than one page)*

Character Education is an integral part of Cumberland County Schools' Core Values. We feel it is important to teach and model for students of all grade levels acts of good character such as respect, responsibility, integrity, caring, self-discipline, trustworthiness, fairness and citizenship. That's why we have created the Shining Stars Student Recognition Program."

Cumberland County Schools is located in south-central North Carolina serving the cities of Fayetteville, Spring Lake, Hope Mills, and several other small communities. With 83 schools and over 51,000 students, we are the fourth largest school district in the state and the 72<sup>nd</sup> largest in the nation. The county is considered low-wealth and relies predominantly on the restaurant and retail industry. The economy is heavily dependent upon the huge military complex of Ft. Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. Because there is little industry, our tax base is low, despite having one of the highest property tax rates in the state.

The school system is a racially diverse system consisting of 46% black, 43% white, 1.76% Native American, 1.62% Asian, 5.34% Hispanic, and 2.28% other. In our school system, to be eligible for Federal Title I money a school must have a minimum of 40% of its students qualifying for free and/or reduced meals. In Cumberland County Schools 49% of all students qualify for free and/or reduced meals.

Over the past few years the number of suspensions has decreased in Cumberland County Schools. Despite this fact there have still been a total of 178 long-term suspensions so far this school year. Through this part of the character education program, we hope to influence students by thinking and reacting honorably and morally in their everyday lives, thus reducing the number of suspensions in our schools.

**II. Project Description/Narrative** *(no more than 1-1/2 pages) (Be sure to include your goals and objectives!)*

Cumberland County Schools would like to honor students for “Acts of Good Character.” Each month, teachers will focus on a different character concept. Students will be given definitions and examples of the concept. A “Shining Star” committee has been established and has determined the eight character concepts we will address in our schools. They are: respect, responsibility, integrity, caring, self-discipline, trustworthiness, fairness and citizenship.

Schools may nominate one child from each of the following grade levels: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. All students who are nominated will receive a certificate and Shining Stars lapel pin. At the monthly Board of Education meeting, the system-wide winners will be recognized. They will receive a trophy and lapel pin, and will be featured in various media outlets.

**Program Goal:** To promote character education throughout the 83 schools of Cumberland County Schools through the Shining Stars program which will recognize students for “Acts of Good Character.”

**Objective 1:** Provide information to schools and teachers in order to teach a different character concept to students each month.

**Strategy 1.1:** Send out a Shining Stars packet to all schools. The packet consists of information about the program, deadline dates for submitting nominations, a nomination form and guidelines and tips for submitting the nomination forms.

**Objective 2:** Increase the number of schools participating in the program, by increasing the number of nominations received each month.

**Strategy 2.1:** Increase marketing efforts throughout the system, via e-mails, newsletters, media outlets, etc.

**Objective 3:** Celebrate student participation and achievement by recognizing Shining Star winners at monthly Board of Education meetings.

**Strategy 3.1:** Present certificates and character pins to all Shining Star school winners.

**Strategy 3.2:** Present overall winner in each category with a trophy and pin at the monthly Board of Education meeting.

## II. Project Description/Narrative (continued)

Each school will select a winner from their school in the respective categories. These nominees will be sent to the Shining Star committee at the Board of Education. The committee, consisting of 14 members, will meet monthly to review applications and vote on an overall winner in each grade level. All nominees will be sent a certificate and lapel pin to be presented at their school. The overall winners and their family and friends will be invited to the monthly board meeting. An Associate Superintendent will present each winner with a trophy and lapel pin. He will also give a brief biography on the child and present the winners to the Board of Education.

A photograph of all four Shining Stars winners will be taken for publication in the Up & Coming Magazine and the Fayetteville Observer's Saturday Extra. Each child's parent will be given a video/print permission form to complete and return before leaving the meeting.

## III. Project Timeline *(no more than 1/2 page)*

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date</u>
Paper for certificates, pins and trophies will be ordered.	January 2002
Send each school a Shining Star packet.	January 2002
Students study at least one or more different character concepts each month.	Monthly
Nominees sent to the Shining Star committee.	Monthly
Certificates and pins sent to school winners.	Monthly
Recognition of overall winners at Board Meeting.	Monthly
Publicize winners in local media outlets.	Monthly

The budget may be for up to \$1,000. Use whole numbers. Check your math! Limit to one page.

**IV. Project Budget Summary**

<b>Personnel Costs</b>	\$ _____
<b>Contracted Services</b>	\$ _____
<b>Supplies and Materials</b>	\$ <u>1,000</u>
<b>Other Operating Expenses</b>	\$ _____
<b>Capital Equipment</b>	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL Requested</b>	\$ <u>1,000</u>

**Budget Justification:**

24 Silver Star-Shaped Trophies @ \$32.30 each (one for each winner in each category for six months)	=	\$ 775.20
5 Boxes of Certificate Paper (100 sheets per box) @ \$21.99	=	\$ 109.95
500 Star-Shaped Lapel Pins @ \$2.58 per pin	=	\$1,290.00
		_____
<b>Total Cost of Project</b>		<b>\$2,175.15</b>
<b>Amount Requested from Grant</b>		<b>\$1,000.00</b>

The remaining \$1,175.15 will be paid from Cumberland County Schools budget.

**V. Project Evaluation** *(limit to one page)*

The evaluations will be both formative and summative. Each month of the program we will follow up with teachers on character concept lessons. We will obtain teacher testimonials on the behaviors and improvements of students. We will also check discipline referrals and suspension reports for each participating school.

In addition, we will also be tracking the number of schools who send in nomination forms on a regular basis. We will identify those schools that are not sending in nominees regularly and adjust our marketing and communication procedures accordingly. Improvements in student's behavior will be tracked by teachers at the school level.

Data on student discipline referrals and suspension reports will be collected and compared with previous years. We will also track the number of publications promoting our efforts. By promoting and modeling acts of good character it will lead to more positive results in school discipline, grades and attendance. A final report will be completed and distributed to all interested parties in June 2002.

*List your evaluation activities and the projected dates when each activity will take place.*

<b><u>Evaluation Activities:</u></b>	<b><u>Date(s):</u></b>
Base line data will be collected for comparison to those at the end of the project.	January 2002
Teachers will be contacted to give testimonials on their students behavior.	Monthly
Schools not sending in nominees on a regular basis will be contacted.	Monthly
A log will be kept of all publicized articles.	Monthly
Final information will be collected on students that have participated in the program.	May/June 2002
A final report will be created and distributed.	June 2002

*A one-page report describing the project and its impact will be required at the end of the grant period.*