

Delta Kappa Gamma International 2014 Convention

Society for Key Women Educators

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Global Peace Roundtable: Worldwide Educational Initiatives

President Helms, Connecticut members of the *Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World Committee* and Delta Kappa Gamma colleagues. Thank you for this opportunity to share and participate on this panel.

In the Northeast Region, the state of Connecticut has an established, successful educational initiative in effecting global peace and we are very proud of their efforts. In my state, New Jersey, the Hamilton Township School District in Mercer County has a program entitled *Teaching & Living Character or TLC*.

Hamilton Township is the 8th largest school district in New Jersey with approximately 14,000 students in Pre-K through grade 12. There are 17 elementary schools, 3 middle and 3 high schools.

The *Teaching & Living Character* program is dedicated to teaching and promoting pro-social student behaviors and creating a caring, disciplined school environment conducive to learning. The goal of the *TLC* initiative is to share the district's vision of the theme *Cultivating Citizens for a Changing World*. The school district determined there was a need for *Character Education* as there was evidence of bullying, fighting, a lack of respect, harassment etc... in the school setting.

In each school, there are two Building Facilitators who serve as a liaison between the staff and the administration. Their purpose is to encourage, recommend and conduct activities related to character education. All staff members are included and participate in these

activities. Additionally, building facilitators serve as a resource providing staff members with new ideas, materials and funding sources. They encourage parent involvement as well.

Character Education Component examples are: Respect for Self, Others and the Environment as well as Civic Responsibility and Service Learning. The TLC program also includes: Core Curriculum Content Integration, Peer Leadership, Diversity, Multicultural and Environmental Studies. In the elementary schools, the Peace Pledge, Win/Win Guidelines for Resolving Conflicts Peacefully and Community Service Activities are some of the components at this level. Additional components such as: Bully Proofing Classrooms, Peer Mediation, Diversity, Multicultural Environmental Studies and Peer Leadership are found in Hamilton Township's middle and high schools.

It is hoped that by implementing the *Teaching and Living Character* initiative, students will become more caring, compassionate, respectful, responsible and peaceful citizens of their school, community, state, country and the world.

One additional thought ----- Even though I did not have a peace curriculum, per se, in my classroom, certain components of a character education program were evident. In the classroom, the atmosphere was one of mutual respect between student and student as well as between students and teacher. Students were encouraged to be, caring, compassionate, kind and supportive of one another. In so doing, not only was the classroom atmosphere peaceful and calm but students and teacher were as well. Thank you.

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