



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 10, 2013

CONTACT: Diana Gulotta, assistant superintendent for communications, (314) 953-5005 or cell (314) 575-0503

## Character Education Partnership awards Cold Water Elementary School with Promising Practice Award

Character Education Partnership recently recognized Cold Water Elementary School with two Promising Practice Awards. The awards were given to schools that implemented unique strategies to teach and reinforce character education. The practices should not have extensive costs associated with them and should be able to be easily replicated by other schools.

Principal Dr. Christa Warner said Cold Water Elementary was recognized for the Character Camp the school puts on in the fall and spring and for the Character Chess Club.

The idea for Character Camp is to help teach students positive character traits while also reinforcing the school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, PBIS, principles. Students participate in activities that reinforce six character traits: caring, fairness, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness and citizenship.

The Character Chess Club is designed to teach students the importance of good character skills through the game of chess. The program teaches students how to play chess, and develop skills in cooperation, communication, reading and problem-solving.

Warner said it is important to teach students to have good character.

"We believe that teaching our students to have good character is just as important as academics," said Warner. "When students have a strong foundation of character education, they want to do their best and make the right choices. The character education component of their education will help our students be successful throughout their lives."

Warner said students have responded well to the programs and credits the programs with helping to decrease the need for discipline. The students were surveyed in February for feedback on how they feel the programs have helped the school. Approximately 70 percent said they feel as if they treat each other like family at school. Warner said office referrals have also decreased dramatically in the past year, allowing for more instructional time in the classroom.

“It is exciting for us to know what we are doing is meaningful to our students,” said Warner. “Our goal is for our students to one day be able to attend Cold Water Elementary as a National School of Character, and these awards are indicators we are on the right track.”

###

*The Hazelwood School District serves more than 18,000 students and is the second largest district in St. Louis County. Communities in the district include Hazelwood, Black Jack, Spanish Lake, a large section of Florissant, portions of Bridgeton, Bellefontaine Neighbors and Ferguson, and several square miles of unincorporated St. Louis County. The district’s mission statement follows: “We are a collaborative learning community guided by a relentless focus to ensure each student achieves maximum growth.”*