

# THE DNA OF A BUHLER GRADUATE

Essential skills and character  
traits for each Crusader





Dear Buhler USD 313 Community,

Prior to the pandemic, our teachers and staff began working on a concept to emphasize and highlight the skills and character qualities that we want to instill in our students during their time with us. The vision of this initiative is for each and every Buhler student to leave our classrooms with timeless character traits and skills that allow them to successfully overcome any challenge that comes their way.

The list of skills and character traits that you see was carefully crafted. Our teachers spent one morning creating a large list of traits that will always be valuable in life. From there we posted that list to district social media and asked parents, former students, and community members to rank the top ones that they saw on that list. Finally, we invited business leaders in the community to come and speak one evening during which they confirmed their need for employees to possess these skills above all others.

After those steps, we were able to narrow our list down to 10 skills we believe will help our students be successful in whatever next steps they take in education, career, and even in their own personal lives. In the coming decades, the job market is predicted to change radically, and we believe our students possessing these skills will allow them to successfully navigate that uncertainty.

Below is our list with a short definition of each. In the following pages, you will see how students practice these in the classroom throughout their time with us here in Buhler Schools.

- **Collaboration** - Seeks out others who can provide feedback or work together; is a good teammate
- **Communication** - Shares ideas clearly and creatively, including spoken, written, and visual communication; chooses the correct form and tone depending on the audience.
- **Critical Thinking** - Takes in information and examines it from multiple viewpoints and sources; develops creative solutions to problems.
- **Interpersonal Skills** - Interacts with others appropriately depending on the setting and situation, including with tone of voice and body language.
- **Responsible** - Meets deadlines; is punctual; takes initiative to care for themselves and their belongings
- **Respectful** - Treats peers and adults with kindness; responds to reasonable requests promptly
- **Empathy** - Cares for others; works to understand where others are coming from and how they feel.
- **Integrity** - Strives to do the right and moral thing at all times; takes ownership for mistakes.
- **Perseverance** - Continues to move forward in the face of all kinds of adversity
- **Teachable** - Willing to learn and grow no matter their current skill level

We are excited to continue to give students the opportunity to practice these skills and to help them see the value in them.

Sincerely,

Cindy Couchman, Superintendent of Schools

# THE DNA OF A BUHLER GRADUATE

**COLLABORATION**

**CRITICAL  
THINKING**

**RESPONSIBLE**

**EMPATHY**

**PERSEVERANCE**

**COMMUNICATION**

**INTERPERSONAL  
SKILLS**

**RESPECTFUL**

**INTEGRITY**

**TEACHABLE**

# Kindergarten

## Collaboration

Successful participation in morning meeting

Demonstrates the ability to work and play in a small group with limited adult intervention

Interacts appropriately with peers in partner work

## Critical Thinking

Uses problem solving skills with peers in a group setting.

Uses problem solving skills when engaged in STEAM activities

Applies problem solving skills during math instruction

## Responsible

Begins and completes work on time

Takes initiative and assumes responsibility

Keeps track of belongings and stays organized with some help from a teacher or other adult

## Empathy

Identifies and understands the feelings of others

Shows compassion towards peers

Accepts and embraces the diversity of others

## Perseverance

Stays focused

Finishes tasks in a timely manner

Positively rebounds from setbacks

## Communication

Speaks audibly and expresses ideas and feelings clearly

Uses drawings, letters and labels to begin to develop their written communication skills

Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings

## Interpersonal and Social Skills

Works and plays cooperatively with peers

Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings

Polite and uses socially appropriate responses towards others

## Respectful

Listens without interrupting

Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument

Demonstrates good citizenship

## Integrity

Identifies characters in books that demonstrate integrity

Makes good choices, even when no one is watching

Choose to be truthful in whatever you say or do

## Teachable

Willingly participates in class activities

Shows interest in academic topics

Actively listens and respects the ideas of others

# First Grade

## Collaboration

Successful participation in a morning meeting

Successful participation in group projects

Actively participates in partner work

## Critical Thinking

Using problem solving skills during STEAM activities

Applies problem solving skills during CGI

Utilizes problem solving skills in communicating with peers

## Responsible

Demonstrates organization skills with personal materials

Exhibits responsibility through the means of classroom jobs

Begins and completes work on time

## Empathy

Identifies and understands the feelings of others

Listens to peers during class meeting times

Works to complete a world changer project

## Perseverance

Is able to complete a variety of tasks without giving up

Has a growth mindset

Finishes tasks in a timely manner

## Communication

Presents ideas and projects to peers

Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings

Utilizes communication skills during writing instruction.

## Interpersonal and Social Skills

Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings

Participates in free play cooperatively with peers

Works on social skills during class meetings

## Respectful

Listens without interruption and takes turns when speaking

Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument

Follows directions quickly and responds to teacher instruction

## Integrity

Does the right thing even when nobody's watching

Chooses to be truthful in what they say and do

Can identify characters who show integrity in a variety of child's literature

## Teachable

Willingly participates in class activities

Accepts the ideas of others

Shows interest in a variety of academic areas

## Second Grade

Collaboration	Communication
Successful participation in morning meeting	Speaks audibly and expresses ideas and feelings clearly
Interacts appropriately with peers in all settings	Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings
Demonstrates active listening and speaks with purpose	Presents ideas and projects to peers
Critical Thinking	Interpersonal and Social Skills
Uses problem solving skills with peers in a group setting	Works and plays cooperatively with peers
Asks critical thinking questions	Uses I Messages and identifies Zone of Regulation color with peers and adults to communicate feelings
Uses problem solving skills when participating in activities	Polite and uses socially appropriate responses toward others
Responsible	Respectful
Begins and completes work on time	Listens without interruption and takes turns when speaking
Demonstrates organizational skills with personal or shared items	Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument
Independently tracks items between home and school	
Empathy	Integrity
Understands the feelings of others	Choose to be honest and truthful in whatever you say and do
Accepts and embraces the diversity of others	Make good choices
Practices positive self talk	Follow through with responsibilities
Perseverance	Teachable
Stays focused	Willingly participates in class activities
Finishes tasks in a timely manner	Accepts critiques from peers and adults
Positively rebounds from setbacks without giving up	Sets and strives toward goals

# Third Grade

Collaboration	Communication
Successful participation in at least one group project	Three pieces of original communication work
Demonstrate the ability to work in a group successfully with limited adult intervention	Complete and present an original oral & visual presentation to peers/community
Participate in a video conference call with an expert as a class or whole grade level	Successful completion of writing and speaking standards per grade level
Critical Thinking	Interpersonal and Social Skills
Completes a STEAM project requiring significant problem solving	Greets adults in an appropriate and professional manner
Successfully completes problem solving questions from math curriculum	Interacts with peers appropriately whether they are close friends or not
Participates in coding and computer science standards	Successful completion of social/emotional learning standards per grade level
Responsible	Respectful
Completes and turns work in on time	Disagreements with peers are conducted without a negative tone
Shows self-discipline by staying focused and on-task	Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument
Keeps track of belongings and stays organized with some help from teacher or other adult	Practices and learns respectful behavior during class meetings and restorative circles
Empathy	Integrity
Completes a community outreach project	Appropriately cites sources in submitted work
Identifies with and understands the needs of characters in literature and media	Recognizes characters and people in literature and media that demonstrate integrity
Participates in class meetings recognizing and discussing the needs and challenges of others	Follows the rules of PE and recess games.
Perseverance	Teachable
Works long term to achieve a personal growth goal	Participates in class meetings discussing humility and growth mindset
Demonstrates the ability to solve problems requiring multiple steps	Defers to and learns from peers in recognized areas
Completes wellness standards per grade level	Identifies weaknesses and sets goals needed for growth in both academic and non-academic areas

# Fourth Grade

## Collaboration

Successful participation in at least two group projects

Demonstrate the ability to work in a group successfully

Participate in a video conference call with an expert

## Critical Thinking

Completes a STEAM project requiring significant problem solving

Successfully completes problem solving questions from math curriculum

Completes grade level coding and computer science curriculum

## Responsible

Completes and returns work on time

Shows self-discipline by staying focused and on-task

Keeps track of belongings and stays organized

## Empathy

Completes a design thinking project that addresses the needs of a real person or group

Identifies with and understands the needs of characters in literature and media

Participates in class meetings recognizing and discussing the needs and challenges of others

## Perseverance

Works long term to achieve a personal growth goal

Consistently demonstrates the ability to solve problems requiring multiple steps

Completes wellness standards per grade level

## Communication

Three pieces of original communication work added to digital portfolio website

Complete and present an original oral & visual presentation to peers/community

Successful completion of writing and speaking standards

## Interpersonal and Social Skills

Greets adults in an appropriate and professional manner

Interacts with peers appropriately whether they are close friends or not

Strives to implement social/emotional learning standards in their personal conduct per grade level

## Respectful

Disagreements with peers are conducted with a positive tone and without name calling

Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument

Practices and learns respectful behavior during class meetings and restorative circles

## Integrity

Appropriately cites sources in submitted work and follows the rules of PE and recess games

Recognizes characters and people in literature and media that demonstrate integrity

Completes at least 2 hours of community service

## Teachable

Participates in class meetings discussing humility and growth mindset

Identifies weaknesses and sets goals needed for growth in both academic and non-academic areas

Defers to and learns from peers in recognized areas



## Fifth Grade

### Collaboration

Successful participation in at least two student-led group projects

Demonstrate the ability to work in a group successfully

Participate in a community service project with another class or community group

### Critical Thinking

Completes a STEAM project requiring significant problem solving with limited teacher support

Successfully completes problem solving questions from math curriculum

Completes coding and computer science standards

### Responsible

Completes and returns work on time with limited prompting

Shows self-discipline by staying focused and on-task

Keeps track of belongings and stays organized

### Empathy

Completes a design thinking project that addresses the needs of a real person or group

Identifies with and understands the needs of characters in literature, history, and media

Participates in class meetings recognizing and discussing the needs and challenges of others

### Perseverance

Works daily and long term to achieve personal growth goals using a growth mindset

Consistently demonstrates the ability to solve problems requiring multiple steps

Completes wellness standards per grade level

### Communication

Four pieces of original communication work added to digital portfolio website

Successful completion of speaking and writing standards

Complete and present an original, digital, oral and visual presentation to peers/community

### Interpersonal and Social Skills

Communicates with adults in an appropriate and professional manner

Strives to implement social/emotional learning standards in their personal conduct per grade level

Interacts with peers appropriately whether they are close friends or not

### Respectful

Disagreements with peers are conducted with a positive tone, body language, and without name calling

Responds to reasonable adult requests quickly and without argument or negative body language

Practices and learns respectful behavior outside of the classroom during class meetings

### Integrity

Appropriately cites sources in submitted work

Recognizes characters and people in literature and media that demonstrate integrity

Follows the rules of PE and recess games without direct adult supervision

### Teachable

Participates in class meetings discussing humility and growth mindset

Defers to and learns from peers in recognized areas and accepts correction

Identifies weaknesses and sets goals needed for growth in both academic and non-academic areas

## Middle School

Collaboration	Communication
Demonstrates the ability to work in a group successfully	Compose email with a proper subject line and detailed body
Participates in student-led group projects across the content areas	Complete and present an original, digital, oral, and visual presentation to peers/community
Participates in service projects to benefit local community and/or school	Successful completion of writing and speaking standards per grade level
Critical Thinking	Interpersonal and Social Skills
Demonstrates the use of higher-level thinking skills to complete projects/assignments	Communicates with peers and adults in an appropriate manner
Uses various problem-solving techniques to answer questions in math and science	Develops and begins to maintain healthy relationships
Starts an IPS geared toward post-secondary goals	Begins to implement SEL standards in their personal conduct and interactions with others
Responsible	Respectful
Grows time management skills balancing school, activities, and the arts	Responds to reasonable adult requests without argument or negative body language
Develops a plan and meets deadlines for turning in daily work and other assignments	Uses techniques from SEL lessons to calmly and appropriately de-escalate social situations
Comes to class prepared and on time	Disagreements with peers are conducted with positive tone, body language, and without name calling
Empathy	Integrity
Shows concern for others and recognizes the needs and challenges of others	Holds self and others to high standards
Works as a Champion Time or school group to find ways to include others regardless of ability	Follows the rules and is accountable for their actions
Contributes to school activities/fundraisers to benefit others	Appropriately cites sources in submitted work
Perseverance	Teachable
Consistently demonstrates the ability to solve problems requiring multiple steps	Demonstrates ability to adapt and learn with different instructional styles and modes of instruction
Faces challenges and adversity with a positive and problem-solving attitude	Defers to and learns from others in class discussion and in everyday situations

# High School

## Collaboration

Works well in a group and contributes to success; views success as a team effort

Interacts with younger students, team leaders, and teachers on projects

Works with community members to build relationships

## Critical Thinking

Uses higher level thinking skills to plan a passion pursuit

Creates a plan of study geared toward post secondary goals

Uses the scientific method appropriately

## Responsible

Meets deadlines; takes ownership for actions

Strives to maintain balance between school, activities, work, family, and friends

Attends all classes and activities punctually

## Empathy

Works well with students of all backgrounds

Participates in activities and fundraisers that benefit nonprofit and community organizations

Considers the needs of others through a Passion Pursuits project

## Perseverance

Revises plans (IPS, for example) after original plans fall through or an obstacle is faced

Moves forward despite academic setbacks or injuries

Reflects on steps taken to get where they are in order to foster further growth

## Communication

Communicates via email with an appropriate subject line, detailed body, and appropriate closing

Discerns the best method of communication with different individuals (social media, face-to-face, text message, etc)

Communicates with teachers when absent and advocates for help when needed

## Interpersonal and Social Skills

Behavior and response are age-appropriate

Solves conflict with peers appropriately, seeking mediation if needed

Maintains healthy relationships

## Respectful

Remains calm and works to de-escalate social situations should the need arise

Maintains appropriate body language and behavior when staff, students, or guest speakers are presenting

Chooses to be kind in all situations

## Integrity

Chooses to be truthful in words and actions

Holds themselves and their friends accountable for their actions

Does the right thing even when no one is looking; Demonstrates academic integrity

## Teachable

Flexible with different teaching styles and learning environments

Actively listens to content being presented

Always willing to learn and avoids becoming too proud to be taught or coached