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## Covington School cited for its caring character

by Susan Steinmueller

STAFF WRITER

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Caring is a character trait that stands out at Birmingham Covington School.

"In this public science and technology magnet school where students regularly excel academically, students also learn to care for one another just as their teachers care for them," according to a summary of the school published by judges who chose it as one of 10 National Schools of Character winners. "All readily attest to the overriding sense of caring and cooperation present from day to day."

The prestigious award is given by The Character Education Partnership, which conducted an on-site visit of the school, located in Bloomfield Township, as part of the rigorous awards process. It was the only winner from Michigan.

CEP's Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education guide the evaluation and selection of winners. So does the program goal of providing a variety of models to schools and districts across the nation.

Covington Principal Dale Truding and a team of staff members traveled to Arlington, Va., Nov. 1-3 to receive the award at CEP's 14th National Forum on Character Education.

"Character education is embedded in all we do at BCS," said Truding, who was congratulated Tuesday evening by Birmingham interim Supt. Richard Perry and the Birmingham school board. She believes the integration of the principles into the curriculum is what set the school apart for the award.

Each winner also received a \$20,000 grant. Half will go into outreach for other schools seeking to improve their character education efforts.

There were 133 applicants this year. "The winning schools are truly the best of the best in character education," said Janice Stoodley, National Schools of Character director.

CEP is a nonprofit advocacy group for character education based in Washington, D.C. It encourages schools to create educational environments that foster ethical, responsible and caring young people.



Birmingham Covington Principal Dale Truding (from left) and staff members accept award of Character award at a forum in Ar

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