

Empty Bowls Project

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Our annual Empty Bowls Project lets students learn about and discuss the issue of poverty in our community. Students explore this complex issue and then work to alleviate the problem by raising money through a culminating fund and awareness event. They donate any funds raised to local charities.

- Our project addresses the problems of hunger and poverty in our community.
- The project is aligned with our school's Character Counts! Program. The project meets the caring, responsibility, and citizenship pillars of character education. The project also connects to several content areas. For example, students research the issues of hunger and poverty to help prepare and they make the bowls used at the culminating event. We invite each guest to take one of the bowls when they leave as a visual reminder of what they learned at our hunger banquet, the reality that someone somewhere is always looking into an empty bowl because they have nothing to eat.
- Students engage in many discussions throughout the project, such as what social concerns they should address with the funds raised at our event as well as a careful analysis of the success of the event itself. Students are concerned about being equitable and fair to our community non-profits.
- Students take on responsibility for the many tasks they must complete in a timely manner to ensure the event is successful. For example, students make the bowls for the event over a 9 to 10 week period.
- We work with a variety of vendors and merchants on this project.
- This event takes much planning and coordination each year. We invite feeder school choirs to participate, along with their parents. This necessitates good communication and planning with those schools well in advance of the event, etc.
- Students are required to use their research skills to prepare for the event. They must become familiar with community agencies that work to address the issues of poverty. Students also use critical thinking skills as they evaluate the event and decide what they need to improve for future Empty Bowls Banquets.

