

## **Claudia Hunter, Program Coordinator - State Schools of Character**

Claudia Hunter has been in the education profession for over 40 years. She started her teaching career in Missouri with a BS degree from the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri in 1968. She taught high school physical education and health while coaching girls' softball and volleyball at Lee's Summit High School. She earned a Master of Science from Central Missouri State University in 1972. During her 22 year tenure for the Lee's Summit R-7 School District Claudia taught all grades, K-12 and touched many lives.

Moving to Pinellas County the summer of 1990 Claudia was hired by Pinellas County Schools as an elementary physical education teacher. Two years later she became a teacher of Emotional Handicapped students. The desire to reach more students and inspire educators to promote character she became a Behavior Specialist at a high needs elementary school.

In 1999 Pinellas County Schools was awarded a three year \$3 million Safe School/Healthy Student Initiative grant. Claudia was hired as one of four Pinellas educators to fulfill the social skills requirements of the grant. When the grant ended she was hired as a Prevention Specialist for Safe & Drug Free Schools within the Pinellas County Schools system. One of her responsibilities was character education as she had been involved with the program since its conception in 1995. Claudia assumed complete responsibility for the character education program in 2003 leading Pinellas County Schools to receive the distinction of Florida State District of Character from The Golden Rule Foundation and National District of Character from Character Education Partnership, Washington, D.C. in the same year, 2007.

Claudia retired in July 2007 from Pinellas County Schools. Immediately after retirement The Golden Rule Foundation hired her as the Florida State Schools of Character Coordinator. She continues to impact parents and educators with many presentations she is qualified to deliver. She has presented locally, nationally and internationally.