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**To:** <CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK@EMAIL.RUTGERS.EDU>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2009 4:29 PM  
**Subject:** [Character\_education\_network] CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK Online-Newsletter  
March 2009 Issue

## CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK Online e- Newsletter March 2009

Welcome to the **CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK** online e-newsletter. The purpose of **The Network** is to encourage the adoption of social, emotional and character education programs and strategies by providing a forum for sharing information, research and promising practices. The Network will offer educators access to national and state character education and social and emotional learning experts and programs through conferences, workshops, and e-mails.

**The Network** will be bringing you news from the national, state and local levels; best practices; announcements of events, conferences, workshops; and professional development opportunities throughout the state and at the national level; grant and funding opportunities; program and assessment resources and links to other useful websites.

Three Rutgers University projects operating in a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Education provide the content for **The Network**. The Center for Social and Character Development ([www.rucharakter.org](http://www.rucharakter.org)) edits and publishes the Network in collaboration with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Project (<http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu>) and the Developing Safe and Civil Schools Project (<http://www.teachsecd.com>). All three projects operate under the Center for Applied Psychology at Rutgers University.

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The Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University is funded under Title V, Part D, Subpart 3, Sec. 5431 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Funds for both the Developing Safe and Civil Schools: A Coordinated Approach for Social-Emotional and Character Development project and the Title IV-A and Unsafe School Choice Option Training and Technical Assistance Project were provided in full by a grant to the New Jersey Department of Education from the United States Department of Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the New Jersey Department of Education. No official endorsement by the New Jersey Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned herein is intended or should be inferred.

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## FROM THE CSCD DIRECTOR

On March 24, 2009 the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD) held its second annual conference at the Busch Campus Center at Rutgers, followed by a celebration of the 2009 New Jersey Schools of Character. Those of you who were among the close to 200 participants were treated to an impressive display of advanced practice evident in the workshop presentations, and to genuine enthusiasm demonstrated for the impact these programs have on school climate and student growth.

For those readers who were unable to attend the NJASECD conference, please consider joining this organization which represents a new opportunity to network with others who share your interest in education's commitment to the whole child. You can download the membership form at [www.njasecd.org](http://www.njasecd.org). There are opportunities for leadership within NJASECD, and the executive committee of the board has extended an invitation to Network readers to join with them to help this new organization become a meaningful resource for continual professional growth. Contact Georgiann Gongora, the co-chair of the NJASECD board at [gongorag@optonline.net](mailto:gongorag@optonline.net) if you are interested.

I also want to point you to this month's partner contribution by Dr. Maurice Elias, the director of the DSACS project, following just below this message.

Philip M. Brown, Ph.D.  
 Director  
 Center for Social and Character Development

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## Partner article from the Developing Safe and Civil School Project

### **How to Bring People on Board with your SECD Efforts**

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.  
 Director, DSACS ([www.teachSECD.com](http://www.teachSECD.com))

You go to conferences and other professional development experiences, check web sites, read blogs, and participate in teleseminars and webinars. You gain great insight and knowledge and notice that many, if not most, of your colleagues have not shared this experience with you. How do you communicate this back in your home setting?

Even if you believe that social-emotional and character development is the key to educational success in the 21st century, how do you get your colleagues to join you? What can you do so that you are not an isolated voice? How can you influence the practice, and even the policy in your school and district, to become more SECD-focused?

The answer: you must articulate, exemplify, inspire, and support. To the extent you are able to do these things, you will find yourself joined by an ever-increasing number of co-travelers on a path of educational change.

#### **Articulate:**

In 30 seconds, you should be able to provide someone with a clear, cogent answer to these questions: "Why is SECD important?" and "How will it help us with academic

improvement?” Your answer should be an “elevator speech,” something that you can deliver in 30 seconds if you were literally stuck with a colleague, school administrator, board member, or parent leader in an elevator, with only a limited time to make your case. If you are not able to provide an engaging and compelling rationale, it is not likely anyone will want to hear much more or come to see what you are doing in your classroom or school. Being able to briefly articulate a compelling rationale for SECD opens the door to future conversation and even the willingness of someone to read brief material on the topic.

### **Exemplify:**

Folks don't want to hear you talk about something you have not done. They certainly are unlikely to follow you down a path that you have not traveled, or at least are not already traveling. So, to attract attention and interest, you must walk the talk. Find a willing colleague or two or three and start piloting the SECD activities you would like others to try, or just start on your own. Don't feel you have to deal with the most challenging situations first. You are more like a driver with a learner's permit than you are a NASCAR racing star. It can be helpful to read or hear about a program or technique in action or to see a video on the subject, but it is more meaningful to see a colleague putting the program or technique into action. School staff members are more likely to begin implementing SECD if they can observe a tangible and familiar example.

### **Inspire:**

By showing what you are doing, sharing it boldly, opening yourself to scrutiny, and declaring that you are willing to learn in order to succeed, you can inspire your colleagues to leave their comfort zones. Your actions can inspire others, in the most powerful way, to start their own SECD efforts.

### **Support:**

Starting, of course, is not the point. Continuing to implement SECD efforts to achieve success is the point; this requires your active support. In fact, as YOU start down this road, you should be sure to have an “SECD buddy” from a neighboring school or district or someone with whom you can network through SECD organizations, such as DSACS, the Center for Social and Character Development, or New Jersey Schools of Character Award winners, honorable mentions, or emerging schools. Support from colleagues who have been a little farther down the road in their SECD efforts is vital when challenges arise, since they can provide tangible advice and encouragement. Eventually, it will be your turn to provide support, and it will mean more than you can imagine in leading others to success.

**Articulate, exemplify, inspire, and support.** These are ways to bring along our colleagues and gradually build support for SECD efforts. How about starting by preparing your 30-second elevator speeches, putting them to use in your settings, and inspiring other members of your SECD team to do the same? Every worthwhile change effort begins with small steps!

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## **NEWS FROM THE FIELD**

- **New Jersey Schools Selected as National Finalists in Prestigious Character Education Competition**

The Character Education Partnership (CEP) has named twenty-five schools and two districts as national finalists in its National Schools of Character (NSOC) awards program. CEP, the nation's leading advocate for quality character education, chose the 27 National Finalists from a record 185 applicants across the United States. Four schools from New Jersey have advanced to the **NATIONAL FINALIST** stage. They are:

*Brigantine Elementary School*, Brigantine, NJ  
*Hamilton Township School District*, Hamilton, NJ  
*Lake Riviera Middle School*, Brick, NJ  
*Lore Elementary School*, Ewing, NJ

CEP will be conducting site visits to all National Finalists throughout the end of April. CEP's Blue Ribbon Panel will then meet to select approximately 10 winners in May.

Schools or districts selected as the 2009 National Schools of Character will receive the award, national recognition, and a financial grant at [CEP's 16th National Forum on Character Education, Citizens of Character – the Foundation of Democracy](#), to be held **October 29–31, 2009**, at the Hilton AlexandriaMark Center outside of Washington, DC. Having demonstrated the success of their initiatives through the rigorous NSOC application and screening process, winners use their grants to serve as national leaders and models for other schools and districts seeking to improve their character education efforts.

CEP selects the National Finalists on the strength of their written applications, which demonstrate their outstanding work in encouraging the ethical, social, and academic growth of their students through effective character education.

In addition to the 27 National Finalists, 28 schools will receive **NATIONAL HONORABLE MENTION** as a result of the strength of their work. Four New Jersey schools have achieved this honor. They are:

*Lawrence Intermediate School*, Lawrenceville, NJ  
*Lawrenceville Elementary School*, Lawrenceville, NJ  
*Liberty Corner School*, Liberty Corner, NJ  
*Northfield Middle School*, Northfield, NJ

CEP's Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education, which defines excellence in character education, guides the evaluation and selection of finalists and winners. Each year since 1998, the NSOC awards program has recognized K–12 schools and districts that provide exemplary comprehensive character education programs that consistently yield positive results in student behavior, citizenship, school climate, and academic performance. For more information about CEP or the NSOC awards program, visit [www.character.org](http://www.character.org).

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

New

- **New Jersey's High School Graduation Campaign to Convene 5 Regional Forums "Dropout Prevention" initiative in concert with America's Promise Alliance**  
 These Regional Forums have been designed to provide important information about the

Campaign, but the majority of the time will be focused on facilitated discussion and sharing of ideas, experiences and perspectives. There will be a relatively uniform set of themes and questions posed throughout all Regional Forums in order to ensure a consistent process for discussing ideas and collecting information.

Five Broad Themes are:

- Providing Comprehensive Support for Students & Families...
- Promoting & Supporting Teachers ...
- Promoting & Cultivating School Leadership ...
- Promoting Business & Community Engagement and Partnership ...
- Ensuring Rigorous Curriculum and High Expectations ...

Dates and locations for each of the Regional Forums are listed below. More information and details on how to register can be found by visiting [www.njgraduation.org](http://www.njgraduation.org). REGISTRATION IS NECESSARY (and space may be limited, so register soon!). The Regional Forums are free and lunch will be provided.

Region: Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Somerset  
 Date: March 31, 2009, 9 am- 2:30 pm  
 Location: Mercer Community College Conference Center, West Windsor

Region: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic, and Union  
 Date: April 17, 2009, 9 am - 2:30 pm  
 Location: Montclair State University Conference Center, Montclair

Region: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem  
 Date: April 23, 2009, 9 am - 2:30 pm  
 Location: Cumberland County College Conference Center, Vineland

Region: Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex, and Warren  
 Date: May, 20, 2009, 9 am - 2:30 pm  
 Location: County College of Morris, Randolph

Region: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Ocean  
 Date: May 29, 2009, 9 am - 2:30 pm  
 Location: Rutgers University, Camden Campus

The objectives for the Campaign are to:

- *Increase public awareness of the dropout and college-readiness crisis;*
- *Secure commitment for integrated collaboration between the corporate, nonprofit, public, and education sectors;*
- *Engage schools and provide exposure to strengthen and support their efforts to help disadvantaged youth;*
- *Identify and inspire local leaders to get involved in community-school initiatives;*
- *Convene a major statewide summit and conference in October of 2009, during which the following outcomes will be presented:*
  1. Key consensus-driven policy and practice recommendations;
  2. Identification of Best Practices which will be highlighted

- through summit conference workshops; and
3. A detailed Strategic Action Plan for continuing the work and ensuring that multi-sector collaboration continues on the statewide, regional, and community levels.

This Strategic Action Plan will include specific goals and timetables with regard to reducing dropout rates across the state.

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- **An Elementary Experience: Teaching and Learning in Kindergarten through Grade 5 Student Engagement**

**Presented by Dr. Debra Pickering**

Apr. 23, 2009, 9:00 AM to 3:00PM

The Foundation for Educational Administration Conference Center

12 Centre Drive

Monroe Township, NJ

This session will provide a variety of approaches — some tried and true but some innovative — to engage students in a way that will enhance their learning of even the most rigorous content. More specifically, participants will increase their understanding of how to:

- Use instructional strategies that energize classrooms and stimulate students' interest.
- Develop students' ownership of their own learning.
- Use technology to go beyond the “wow” factor and engage students to increase both content retention and depth of understanding.
- Integrate critical thinking skills in a way that can result in cognitive engagement.

For more information and workshop registration , visit [www.featraining.org](http://www.featraining.org).

- **Supervisors as Agents of Change in Transforming Secondary Schools**

A three-day series for supervisors

April 27, May 4 & May 11, 2009

Foundation for Educational Administration (FEA) Conference Center

12 Centre Drive

Monroe Township, NJ

**Day 1: The Case for Reform**

Learning and teaching in the 21st Century is changing? The 2009 Standards Revision Project addresses the content, strategies, and necessary change that should occur in schools.

**Day 2: Supervision in the Context of 21st Century Learning**

Learning and teaching in the 21st Century requires new technologies and literacies in connection with project or problem-based learning structures.

**Day 3: Using the Standards**

Technology and the integration of the new technologies hold an important place in the implementation of the revised standards. Designing curriculum that incorporates skill in the use of appropriate technologies and links or matches the technology with the task is the purpose of this day.

This event is sponsored by NJPSA, FEA NJASCD and NJDOE. For more information and registration details, visit [www.featraining.org](http://www.featraining.org).

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- **Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom**

April 30, 2009

8:30am – 3:00pm (Lunch provided)

Rutgers University, Newark Campus

Paul Robeson Campus Center

Newark, NJ

Speaker Michael Epstein from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln led the research panel that investigated which approaches have the most rigorous evidence related to Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom. He will describe how he conducted the review and decided which recommendations to include in Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom, a Practice Guide recently published by the Institute of Education Sciences, which is part of the US Department of Education.

Participants are advised to download the Practice Guide Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom at:

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/behavior\\_pg\\_092308.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/behavior_pg_092308.pdf).

Register early as enrollment is limited to 150. Contact Mary Eleen Morris via e-mail ([maryelmo@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:maryelmo@rci.rutgers.edu)) or call 732.564.9100 x10 for questions concerning registration.

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### Previously listed:

- **Rutgers University Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Project Planning and Implementing a Comprehensive Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Abuse Prevention Program**

Three Sessions Offered. Register online at <http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu>.

Thursday, April 2, 2009 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Gloucester County Office of Education, Sewell, NJ

Tuesday, April 21, 2009 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Rutgers University, Center for Applied Psychology, Piscataway, NJ

Thursday, April 23, 2009 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Livingston Public Library, Livingston, NJ

District staff and community members will learn effective strategies for planning and implementing ATOD prevention efforts.

Topics Include:

- Key elements of a pre-implementation assessment

- Approaches for assessing and implementing programs based on a logic model for program planning
- Strategies for implementing an evidence-based prevention program
- Strategies for addressing common challenges to effective prevention program implementation

There is no registration fee for this event however, participants must pre-register to attend. Register online at <http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu>. Click on calendar, select the session you would like to attend, and complete the registration process.

For registration assistance or additional information, please contact us at 732-445-6173 or [sdfsc@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:sdfsc@rci.rutgers.edu).

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## NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- **2009 Annual Community of Caring National Conference**  
*Leadership and Service: Empowering Our Schools through Character Education*  
July 8-10, 2009  
Hyatt Regency Sarasota  
1000 Boulevard of the Arts  
Sarasota, Florida

Featured Speaker July 9, 2009 - Cathryn Berger Kaye, M.A.  
"Making the Service-Learning Connection"

Featured Speaker July 10, 2009 - Dr. Kris Bosworth  
"Culture, Climate, Connectedness, and Resiliency"

Key Topics:

- Community of Caring 101
- Inclusion of All Students
- Student Leadership
- Using Technology to Foster Character Education
- Parent and Community Involvement
- Service Learning, and more...

Sponsored by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring, College of Education, The University of Utah; the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University; Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice.

Register online at [www.communityofcaring.org](http://www.communityofcaring.org), or call 1-801-587-3432, or e-mail [contact@communityofcaring.org](mailto:contact@communityofcaring.org).

- **Center for Social and Emotional Education (CSEE) 12th Annual Summer Institute**  
July 7-9, 2009  
Fordham University  
155 West 60th Street  
New York City, NJ

The institute will have a dual focus: promoting effective school climate reform efforts in general and effective bully prevention/pro-upstander behavior in particular.

School teams and individuals will:

- Learn how to support a continuous process of measuring and improving school climate in ways that promote academic achievement, student and parent engagement and effective risk prevention/health promotion efforts.
- Learn about specific efforts that reduce bullying and promote upstander behavior.
- Learn about strategies and activities that develop students' core social, emotional, ethical and intellectual competencies.
- Connect with local and national leaders on the latest research, policy and practices.
- Begin developing action plans that build on your school's strengths, needs and goals.

For more information and online registration, visit CSEE's website at:

<http://www.schoolclimate.org/index.php/programs/si/>.

- **School-Connect Summer Institutes**  
August 6-7 in Chicago, IL  
August 13-14, 2009 in Los Angeles, CA

School-Connect: Optimizing the High School Experience is a 40-lesson curriculum designed to boost social, emotional, and academic skills in students (grades 9-12). It is especially designed to help incoming freshmen develop supportive relationships and prepare for the academic rigor of high school. School-Connect will be hosting regional trainings for character educators interested in implementing School-Connect and in-servicing school staff in social-emotional learning strategies. Please see [www.school-connect.net](http://www.school-connect.net) for more information.

### Previously listed:

- **National AfterSchool Association's 21st Annual Convention**  
April 2-4, 2009  
New Orleans, LA;  
<http://www.naaconvention.org/index.html>
- **CAEC's Spring Institute, Educating for Citizenship**  
April 16 – 17, 2009

Boston University, Boston, MA.

The Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character (CAEC)'s Spring Institute is a stimulating retreat that cultivates the intellectual lives of educators, inspires them to embrace a renewed sense of responsibility and dedication to the art of teaching, and instills in them a deeper understanding of how to educate for character. Contact Eileen Gessner at [caec@bu.edu](mailto:caec@bu.edu) or visit the CAEC website at: <http://www.bu.edu/sed/caec/files/springinstitute09.htm>.

## CHARACTER IN ACTION

- **From PBS IN EDUCATION: An Electronic Journalism Student Competition**  
*Made in Washington -- How do decisions made in Washington affect your community?*

the.News is a noncommercial multi-platform online news broadcast targeted to middle and high school students and developed by MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, producers of The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer. Its mission is to use journalism and technology to provide educators with an effective learning asset that helps students gain 21st Century skills. Informed by an educational instructional design, the.News provides video news stories, companion curricula, professional development and multimedia tools to support social studies, language arts and science learning objectives as well as critical thinking and media literacy. the.News can be found at [www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews).

YOU.report is a the.News nationwide competition that seeks to use technology – the production of video - to engage students in social studies, language arts and civic affairs. It encourages students to use multimedia skills to demonstrate knowledge from formal and informal education.

The Competition: The YOU.report competition is designed to encourage high school and middle school students to produce video reports up to five minutes long on the general topic: *Made in Washington - How do decisions made in Washington affect your community?* Entries will be screened by the.News with final awards made by a team of judges. Prizes will be awarded, winning videos will be presented on the.News website, and winners will be announced to the media in the spring of 2009. While students may enter the competition without school or organization involvement, citations will be awarded to those participating teachers and schools that encourage winning entries.

To download application and guidelines, click on the links below:

[YOU.report Submission Application and Guidelines](#) (pdf format)

[YOU.report Submission Application and Guidelines](#) (word document format)

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## GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- **ING Unsung Heroes**

Deadline: April 30, 2009  
 Maximum Award: \$2000-\$25,000  
 Number of Awards: 103

Do you or does someone you know have a creative, unique educational program that is helping students reach new heights? Or is there a program you'd like to implement, if only you had the proper funding?

Questions regarding the program should be addressed to Scholarship America:  
 Phone: (507) 931-1682 or (800) 537-4180  
 E-mail: [ing@scholarshipamerica.org](mailto:ing@scholarshipamerica.org)

For more information, visit <http://www.ing-usa.com/us/stellent2/groups/dc/documents/companylobinformation/001143.pdf>

- **Do Something Disaster Grants**

Deadline: December 31, 2009  
 Maximum Award: \$500

Do Something Disaster Grants fund project ideas and existing projects that assist people in emergency situations – everything from disaster preparedness to first responders to those who are still working hard to rebuild months or years later. Great projects include those that do something about food insecurity, help soldiers returning from active duty, rebuild communities after natural disasters, or provide resources for those afflicted by a crisis.

For more information: [jwells@DoSomething.org](mailto:jwells@DoSomething.org) or visit:  
<http://www.dosomething.org/grants/disaster>

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## WEBSITE NEWS, RESOURCES AND RESEARCH

- **Ten Steps to Better Student Engagement**

*Project-learning teaching strategies can also improve your everyday classroom experience.*

By Tristan de Frondeville

Edutopia, the website of the George Lucas Education Foundation

<http://www.edutopia.org/project-learning-teaching-strategies/>

This former classroom teacher talks about ten strategies for creating and managing high-quality project-learning environments that are productive in any classroom, whether project learning is a central part of the curriculum or not.

Visit the Edutopia website to read more about these strategies, and add your comments or questions.

1. Create an Emotionally Safe Classroom
2. Create an Intellectually Safe Classroom
3. Cultivate Your Engagement Meter
4. Create Appropriate Intermediate Steps

5. Practice Journal or Blog Writing to Communicate with Students
6. Create a Culture of Explanation Instead of a Culture of the Right Answer
7. Teach Self-Awareness About Knowledge
8. Use Questioning Strategies That Make All Students Think and Answer
9. Practice Using the Design Process to Increase the Quality of Work
10. Market Your Projects

You can also check out these related resources.

#### Articles:

- Emotional Engagement in Education, Part One: Should Teachers Care About Student Apathy?
- Engaging 'Tweens and Teens: Dealing with Teenage Learning Fatigue
- Why Teach With Project Learning?: Providing Students With a Well-Rounded Classroom Experience

#### Videos:

- Students Learn to Make a Difference
- Cooperative Arithmetic: How to Teach Math as a Social Activity
- Student Body: Classroom Exercise Makes Learning Lively

This Inside Story originally published on 3/11/2009 in the What Works in Public Education section on Edutopia, the website of the George Lucas Education Foundation. <http://www.edutopia.org/project-learning-teaching-strategies/>

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Character\_education\_network mailing list

Character\_education\_network@email.rutgers.edu

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To unsubscribe, send mail to [character\\_education\\_network-request@email.rutgers.edu](mailto:character_education_network-request@email.rutgers.edu) with the word &quot;Unsubscribe&quot; in the subject.