

Subject: [Character_education_network] CHARACTER_EDUCATION_NETWORK Online e-Newsletter October 2009 Issue
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Date: Wed, 28 Oct 2009 13:19:59 -0400
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CHARACTER_EDUCATION_NETWORK Online e-Newsletter October 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) 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.

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

The new director of the U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Kevin Jennings, hosted a meeting recently of state officials and university researchers to discuss the USDE's changing agenda in the wake of the proposed elimination of Title IV funding (the block grant money to states that funds school district drug and alcohol abuse and related prevention efforts). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the standards and measures that could be used to encourage, or perhaps require, that schools work to improve school climate as part of USDE accountability and funding structures. While the main thrust of school climate from this policy perspective is to create an environment that is conducive to learning, climate is fundamentally an interpersonal landscape which requires navigation skills in social, emotional and character development to make good the promise of school as community. For more on school climate see below, under [NEWS FROM THE FIELD](#).

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

CORRECTION:

In September's **NETWORK** listserv, a non-functioning URL was listed in error. The SECD on-line course information can now be accessed at: <http://teachsecd.secd-sdfspartners.com/>. You will be able to download a PDF file with full course information.

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NEWS FROM THE FIELD

- **The National School Climate Council** has recommended that school climate be defined as 'the quality and character of school life.' The Council further describes school climate as based on patterns of people's experiences of school life that reflect a school's norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships,

teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures. It is easy to see how the social-emotional and character development (SECD) conceptual and programmatic framework that the CSCD and our partner centers have been using fits well within this definition. As the federal leadership landscape evolves over the next couple of years with the change in focus of the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and the coming reauthorization of NCLB, Network readers would be well-advised to take stock of the progress we have made in New Jersey in advancing the quality of practice related to school climate, and to begin to look at how measurement strategies, such as the DSACS Climate Guide, can be used to document the status and effectiveness of SECD efforts. This will better prepare you to be in a position to respond as new opportunities arise to strengthen your SECD school improvement plans. For additional information about school climate and evaluation options, go to: <http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/index.php>, or go to <http://www.rucharacter.org/> and look under the Evaluation and Assessment tab. **The Network** will keep you posted as further federal and state direction emerges regarding changes in policy direction that will impact our SECD work.

- ***Responsive Classroom launches a blog for elementary educators***

Responsive® is a place for Responsive Classroom consultants, authors, and program developers to share news, ideas, and advice with elementary educators. It's also a place where educators can share thoughts and experiences with RC and with other readers.

Some of the new blog categories are:

- Core RC Practices
- Greetings, Activities & Energizers
- Have You Read This?
- Here's an Idea!
- New Teacher's Tool Kit
- News
- Rules and Logical Consequences
- Teaching Tales

[Click here](#) to see what's blogging at *Responsive*®, or visit the Responsive Classroom website at responsiveclassroom.org.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ***Developing Professional Learning Communities to Drive Student Achievement***

A Professional Learning Series for Leadership Teams, including Teachers, School and District Leaders

Nov. 17, Nov. 18, Dec. 8, 2009, and Jan. 14, Jan. 28, 2010

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

at the FEA Conference Center

Workshop 1: Nov. 17, 2009

The CAR and Introduction to PLC: An Overview

Workshop 2: Nov. 18, 2009

Creating Connections through a Professional Learning Community

Workshop 3: Dec. 8, 2009

The Curriculum Connection

Workshop 4: Jan. 14, 2010

Connecting Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Workshop 5: Jan. 28, 2010

The Culture Connection: School Climate, Shared Leadership, and Meaningful Communication

This series of workshops focuses on the use of the Connected Action Roadmap (CAR), a decision-making process that helps leadership teams focus their efforts and drive continuous school improvement. The five workshops will focus on creating and communicating connections among the key foundational pieces of any school: professional learning, curriculum, assessment, school culture, and shared leadership.

To register, visit <http://www.featraining.org/>

For more information, contact:

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NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

2009

November

- ***The 10th Annual Northeast U.S. Conference on Character Education***
 "Achieving Excellence in Behavior and Academic Performance: The Result of a Comprehensive Character Education Program"
 November 5, 2009
 Albany, NY Campus of the Sage Colleges.
 Contact The Academy for Character Education at 518-244-2336 or walkoj@sage.edu. www.sage.edu/centers/charactered or www.bocesinstructionalresources.org/IRS/events.htm

December

- ***5th International Conference on Civic Education***
 December 6-8, 2009
 Gaylord Opryland Resort
 Nashville, TN
 This interdisciplinary conference draws together researchers and practitioners, including: K-12 educators and counselors, university faculty and researchers, program coordinators, school and university administrators. Sponsored by the Centre for Policy and Practice.
www.civicedconf.info for more information.

2010

March

- ***New Jersey Alliance for Social-Emotional and Character Development***
 3rd Annual Conference
 March 22, 2010 – Save the Date!
 Rutgers University, Busch Campus Center, Piscataway, NJ
 More details and registration information will be coming soon on the [NJASECD website](#).

July

- ***Annual Community of Caring National Conference***
 July 15-17, 2010
 Hyatt Regency Sarasota
 Sarasota, FL.
 For more information, www.communityofcaring.org/events/national_conference/overview.html.

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CHARACTER IN ACTION

- ***Mix It Up at Lunch Day***
 Nov. 10, 2009
 According to the Teaching Tolerance website, students thrive—socially and academically—in schools that are inclusive. Yet, for far too many students, schools are hotbeds of exclusion. Social scientists have long maintained that contact between diverse groups helps alleviate tensions and reduce prejudice. *Mix It Up* seeks to break down the barriers between students and improve intergroup relations so there are fewer misunderstandings that can lead to conflicts, bullying, and harassment.

Teaching Tolerance provides [Mix It Up activities](#) for teachers to use to organize a successful Mix It Up at Lunch Day and promote social border crossing all year long. Go to <http://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up> to:

- Search the website's resources for Mix It Up activities
- Look at what other schools in NJ and across the nation are doing
- Download free posters, fliers and stickers along with teacher guides to promote Mix It Up at the K-6 or 6-12 grade levels

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GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- ***The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards - Honoring Young People in Middle & High School for Outstanding Volunteer Service to Their Communities***
 Deadline: November 2, 2009
 Applications must be submitted to school principals or the head of an officially designated local organization no later than November 2.

General Information for Schools and Organizations

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards is a nationwide program for young people in grades 5-12 who are volunteering in their communities. The program is conducted on the local level through public and private middle and high schools across the United States and through these officially designated local organizations:

- Girl Scout councils
- County 4-H organizations
- American Red Cross chapters

- YMCAs
- Affiliates of HandsOn Network

Interested applicants must apply online or fill out a paper application, and then submit their applications to a school or one of the above-mentioned organizations for certification in order to be considered for the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards at the state and national level. If you represent a middle level or high school or one of the officially designated local organizations listed above, find out more about [implementing the program](#), [selecting honorees](#), and [recognizing honorees](#). If you represent another organization, please encourage your young volunteers to fill out an online application form and submit their applications to their schools or to an officially designated local organization.

For more information, visit the awards website at: <http://spirit.prudential.com/view/page>

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- [Being An American Essay Contest 2009-2010 Essay Contest NOW OPEN!](#)
Contest entries must be received online and no later than 11:59pm EST on December 1, 2009.

Developed by the Bill of Rights Institute, the largest high school essay contest in the country is back, asking students to answer the question, "What civic value do you believe is most essential to being an American?"

The Bill of Rights Institute provides a free lesson plan to help you incorporate the essay into your class activities, and the Contest is an approved program of the NASSP. Visit <http://www.beinganamerican.org/index.php> for ideas on how to get started, and to follow the Contest on Twitter.

- [2010 State Farm Service-Learning Champion Award](#)
Deadline: Nominations must be postmarked no later than December 1, 2009
Purpose: The State Farm Service-Learning Champion Award recognizes a business leader, community member or public official who has a passion for engaging youth in service-learning.

State Farm supports service-learning as a teaching method that enhances the academic achievement of students while engaging in service to the community. Teachers and parents are usually the primary individuals guiding a young person's education. Other adults often play a key role in broadening a youth's formal education through community service-learning activities. State Farm created the Service-Learning Champion Award to acknowledge this non-traditional advocate of service-learning.

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WEBSITE NEWS, RESOURCES AND RESEARCH

- [Bullying Prevention Strategies for this Fall](#)
The Center for Social and Emotional Education (CSEE) is currently offering free resources to help you STAND UP to bullying. Learn more about their [bullying awareness campaign here](#).
- [Teaching Social Skills in the Classroom](#)
A Minnesota Public Radio interview with Mary Utne O'Brien and Marc Brackett
School curricula has traditionally been reserved for the teaching of cognitive skills, while social skills develop in the hallways and the schoolyard. Now some educators say social and emotional knowledge can be taught in a classroom setting, and that the benefits can be seen in better attendance and improved test scores. [Visit the MPR news website](#) to listen to the complete interview.
- [In progress: The Responsive Classroom Efficacy Study \(RCES\)](#)
Dr. Sara Rimm-Kaufman and colleagues at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education, Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, have begun the "Responsive Classroom Efficacy Study" (RCES). This multi-year, \$2.9 million randomized controlled trial involving 24 elementary schools will look at Responsive Classroom practices, with a special emphasis on math teaching and learning. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, the new study builds on the "Social and Academic Learning Study" (SALS), which Dr. Rimm-Kaufman's team completed in 2004. For more about RCES, read the [University of Virginia's press release](#) or visit [Dr. Rimm-Kaufman's website](#).

For more on social and academic learning studies, including key findings about the Responsive Classroom approach, visit: <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research.html>

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Character_education_network mailing list

Character_education_network@email.rutgers.edu

https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/character_education_network

To unsubscribe, send mail to character_education_network-request@email.rutgers.edu with the word "Unsubscribe" in the subject.