The Importance of Social, Emotional, and Character Development (SECD) in Shaping a Positive Environment for Learning.
Today’s Objectives

1. Introductions, Welcome, and an overview of NJASECD.
2. Understand the importance of Social, Emotional, and Character Development
3. Discuss how SECD impacts a school climate and culture
4. First steps to changing your school’s climate and culture
5. Overview of the “11 Principles” for school improvement and “School of Character” designation
6. Show examples from New Jersey’s Schools of Character which show the benefit of doing this work.
The mission of the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional, and Character Development (NJASECD) is to develop lifelong learners who are responsible citizens prepared to enter the global society. The Alliance assists educators and all other stakeholders in their efforts to foster ethical, responsible, and caring people as they model and teach the social emotional skills and core ethical values that lead to good character.

njasecd@gmail.com  http://njasecd.org/
Start with Core Values

- Determined by each school’s Character Leadership Team with input from all sectors of the school community.
- Includes a mix of Moral/Ethical, Performance, Intellectual, and Civic Values
- Unique to each school based on perceptions and needs
- Support Character Education and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Focus on Common Language: All Stakeholders, including students, know and understand
- Inform Expectations: Values represent expectations for desired behaviors for all in the school.
- Visible throughout school
- Hold activities with both adults and students to review and reinforce the Core Values
Character Strengths/Core Values

Character Strengths/Core Values are at the heart of the Character Education movement which also embraces both SEL skills and aspects of a positive school culture and climate. While there are many lists of core values, Character.org, the national authority in this field, identifies four types of values: Ethical Values, Performance Values, Intellectual Values, and Civic Values. The examples listed are primary values, but this list is far from exhaustive. There are many more that can be considered in each category.

- **Moral/Ethical Values**
  - Honesty and Integrity
  - Caring and Compassion
  - Gratitude and Courage

- **Intellectual Values**
  - Curiosity and Carefulness
  - Intellectual Autonomy
  - Humility
  - Critical Thinking

- **Performance Values**
  - Self-discipline
  - Responsibility
  - Goal Setting
  - Grit (Perseverance)

- **Civic Values**
  - Respect and Fairness
  - Contributing to the Common Good
  - Volunteerism

www.character.org
SEL Competencies

Self Awareness
Identifying emotions
Self-perception/Identity
Recognizing strengths
Sense of self-confidence

Social Awareness
Perspective-taking
Empathy
Appreciating diversity
Respect for others

Relationship Skills
Communication
Social engagement
Building relationships
Working cooperatively
Resolving conflicts
Helping/Seeking help

Self Management
Impulse control
Stress management
Self-discipline
Self-motivation
Perseverance
Goal-setting
Organizational skills

Responsible Decision Making
Identifying problems
• Analyzing situations
• Solving problems
• Evaluating
• Reflecting
• Ethical responsibility

www.casel.org
The diagram on the right shows that SEL and Character converge with an alignment of SEL competencies and core values. This model was developed by Arthur Schwartz, President of Character.org.

https://character.org/national-guidelines/
Self Assessment/Organization

Doing an inventory of programs and practices in your school...

- Ensures that time and resources are used wisely
- Maximizes existing efforts
- Creates consistency and order
- Reduces redundancy and streamlines service
- Identifies gaps in opportunities and underserved students
- Allows efficient communication to school community

_This model was developed by Maurice Elias, Psy.D., Rutgers._
Supporting Inclusive Curriculum

★ The practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability)
★ Creating, fostering, and sustaining best practices that encourage each student to be fully themselves
★ A variety of learning platforms
★ Multiple types, times, and modified assessments
★ Books, passages, texts that include all genders, races, abilities, etc.
★ Tolerance and Celebration of Differences
★ Respect
Climate and Culture

**Staff:**
- In-Service
- Professional Development
- Ed Camp
- PLCs
- Faculty Mtgs
- Timely Topics
- Common Language
- Tap Staff Experience
- Webinars
- Teacher Voice and Engagement

**Students:**
- Morning Meeting
- Character Assembly
- “Think About it” Forms
- From Discipline to Mentoring
- Expectations of Respect
- Embed Character into Daily Lessons
- Leadership Opportunities
- Student Council
- Peer Mediators
- Student Voice and Engagement

**Stakeholders:**
- Character Education Committee
- Climate and Safety Committee
- PTA
- Parent Advisory Committee
- Parent Volunteers
- Parent Workshops
- National PTA School of Excellence
- Shows/Concerts/Dances
- STE(A)M Nights
New Jersey State Schools of Character are recognized each year at the May NJASECD Conference.

NJASECD believes Character Education can and will have a global impact.

NJSOCs are dedicated to supporting social, emotional learning, identifying core values, and use a comprehensive, intentional, proactive approach to developing character, and creating a caring community.

NJSOCs focus on moral action and service learning.

NJSOCs engage families, partner with the community, enrich culture and climate, and embed character values throughout the curriculum.
The 11 Principles Framework: Cultivating a Culture of Character*

The “11 Principles” provide a framework for school improvement with a focus on SECD and School Culture and Climate and how work in this area can benefit everyone in the school community. Engaging everyone in the school community in addressing these principles helps to guide the development of these skills in the school.

Principle 1 - Core Values are defined, implemented, and embedded into school culture.

Principle 2 - The school defines “character” comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and doing.

Principle 3 - The school uses a comprehensive, intentional, proactive approach to develop character.

Principle 4 - The school creates a caring community.

Principle 5 - The school provides students with opportunities for moral action. (particularly, service learning)

*https://character.org/11-principles-overview/
11 Principles, continued...

**Principle 6** - Meaningful, challenging academic curriculum that respects all, develops character, & helps them succeed.

**Principle 7** - Fosters students’ self-motivation.

**Principle 8** - All staff share the responsibility for developing, implementing, and modeling ethical character.

**Principle 9** - The school’s character initiative has shared leadership and long-range support for continuous improvement.

**Principle 10** - The school engages families and communities as partners in the character initiative.

**Principle 11** - Assesses character education implementation, culture and climate, and student growth.

*https://character.org/11-principles-overview/*
Where do we start?

- Discuss what your first steps will be to bring Character Education to your school?
- How do you see your Character Education journey beginning and moving forward?
- Create a plan and share your thoughts.
May 23, 2023  8:15 am - 3:00 pm
Rider University
NJSOC Ceremony will begin the conference.
In-Person
$150
Register:

njpsa.org

For more information: njasecd@gmail.com
Please consider joining NJASECD as a volunteer to support the continued work of Social, Emotional, and Character Development in New Jersey...