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# **Character Education: Aren't We Already Doing That?**

***A Needs Assessment Tool  
for Educators***

**Developed by the Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES  
Character Education Study Group**

**Spring, 2002**

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# Character Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Our schools face a renewed challenge to teach our children the principles of civility and human rights. While most students accept that they come to school to learn history and geometry, few are aware of their duty to develop their character. It is up to us to help them recognize this obligation.

According to Education Law 801-a, which requires schools to incorporate civility and citizenship into the K-12 curriculum, schools take on at least part of the responsibility of creating a generation of citizens who are prepared to take their place in a civil, democratic society. Character Education “is intended to instruct students on the principles of honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of the laws and rules, courtesy, dignity, and other traits” (A Member Guide from the New York State Council of School Superintendents, *Project SAVE The Fingerprinting Laws*, Oct. 2000).

Administrators and classroom teachers were already feeling overwhelmed by the number of responsibilities the public schools have absorbed in recent years. This mandate leaves schools wondering what to do and how to do it. Committees began to form; teachers, parents and administrators met; workshops became available and everyone seems to be asking the same question: “Character education: aren’t we already doing that?”

This assessment tool, designed by The Character Education Study Group of Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES, presents Character Education as a lens through which we can view everything that happens in our schools, rather than as a “to-do” list to add to our already burdened syllabi. Looking at ourselves through this lens helps us make the connection between what we do and who our students become. This tool will enable educators to learn the principles, think about strategies, and evaluate their character education efforts.

### **Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Character Education Study Group**

*The Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Character Education Study Group is a committee of professionals representing school districts and local organizations in the Lower Hudson Region who are working together to help schools comply with the Character Education mandate of the SAVE legislation. The goal of this study group is to develop a K-12, comprehensive Character Education program which can be integrated throughout the curriculum.*

### **Assessment Tool Committee**

Patricia Barnes – Dispute Resolution Center of Putnam County

Janine Bartko – Yorktown Central School District

Maureen Cahill – Lower Hudson Regional School Support Center

Ofri Felder – Mahopac Central School District

Jeanne B. Gold, Ph. D. – Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES

Henrietta Lodge – Brewster Central School District

Nancy Petschek-Kohn – Westchester Holocaust Commission

# HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

The New York State Education Department encourages districts to establish a process for analyzing their existing character education efforts. This tool is designed to be used by a Character Education Committee or an existing school-based committee, such as the Shared-Decision Making team and/or Health Advisory Committee, as part of a reflective discussion about policies, programs, and practices. Prior to meeting, committee members should review and share the tool with their colleagues and collect necessary data. The team then utilizes the supporting data to answer each question. Upon completing the assessment, the team can make informed decisions about the next steps in their Character Education process.

## SCHOOL CLIMATE

1. What are the **top 3** “guiding principles” of your school community?

- |  |   |                                      |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty*                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Civility*        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerance*  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion/empathy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Dignity*         | <input type="checkbox"/> Courtesy*   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal responsibility*      | <input type="checkbox"/> Democracy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect for self and others*  | <input type="checkbox"/> Justice/fairness | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observance of laws and rules* | <input type="checkbox"/> Humanity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

\*SAVE Legislation

2. How were these decided? Check the **3** most important elements in the decision.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> State mandate | <input type="checkbox"/> Site-based management         | <input type="checkbox"/> District mission statement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty input | <input type="checkbox"/> Character Education Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent input               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student input | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative decision       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                |

3. How are these guiding principles communicated? Check **2-3** most important ways.

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission statement                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Website             | <input type="checkbox"/> School tee-shirt      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student handbook                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty handbook    | <input type="checkbox"/> School song, motto    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives stated in lesson plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher evaluations | <input type="checkbox"/> Banners, posters, etc |

## A. THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY

1. What school-wide events, programs, and initiatives incorporate the guiding principles of your school and/or put them into meaningful action? Check **3-4** most commonly utilized.)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School play                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Student government              | <input type="checkbox"/> Student support groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community/charity outreach projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Random Acts of Kindness Program | <input type="checkbox"/> PTA                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School socials (dances, etc)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a welcoming building   | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory groups        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Late buses                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Student recognition    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School spirit events or themes      | <input type="checkbox"/> After school activities/clubs   | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer tutoring          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public access to board meetings     | <input type="checkbox"/> Big brother/sister              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-generational programs         | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-cultural events           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School newsletter                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social skills/guidance groups   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |

2. How do you measure the extent to which these programs effectively communicate the principles of your school to students, staff, parents, and community members? Check **2-3** most common ways.

- |   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program evaluations          | <input type="checkbox"/> Student attendance/involvement | <input type="checkbox"/> Surveys     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participant feedback         | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff attendance/involvement   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent attendance/involvement  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership and participation | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilization of services        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. Based on these measurements, to what extent do staff, parents, and students recognize your school as a civil, social community that supports character education? **Circle 1.**

Not at all

Minimally

Moderately

Exceptionally

## B. THE STAFF AS CHARACTER EDUCATORS

**1. What classroom strategies that support the guiding principles of your school are currently in place in your school? Check 3-5 most commonly utilized.**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Centered Instruction    | <input type="checkbox"/> Simulations/Role Plays              | <input type="checkbox"/> Jigsaw             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiated Instruction      | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Controversy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiable/Individual Contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> Carousel Brainstorming              | <input type="checkbox"/> Socratic Seminar   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Intelligences          | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Perspectives               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible/Fluid Grouping         | <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking/Critical Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____         |

**2. How do you measure the effectiveness of these strategies to address the guiding principles of your school? Check 3 most commonly utilized measurements.**

- |  |  |                                     |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio reflections | <input type="checkbox"/> Student journals          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency of strategy use | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defined Objectives    | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer evaluation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ |

**3. Based on these measurements, to what extent are staff, parents and students aware of the ways your school's principles are embodied in your instructional practice? Circle 1.**

Not at all                      Minimally                      Moderately                      Exceptionally

**4. What curriculum objectives that support Character Education are included in your syllabus either as part of larger academic units or as stand-alone units or lessons? Check 4-6 that apply.**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful/creative problem solving  | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil responsibility      | <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-bullying  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision making                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Current events            | <input type="checkbox"/> Social justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerance/diversity                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Media messages            | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mediation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intrapersonal/self-esteem development | <input type="checkbox"/> Refusal/resistance skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal setting   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal communication skills    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural sensitivity      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil/human rights        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger management                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Heroes and role models    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____     |

**5. How do you track Character Education objectives in your curriculum?**

- Curriculum maps
- Teacher evaluations
- Curriculum review
  
- Other\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Based on these measures, to what extent do your curriculum objectives address the guiding principles of your school? Circle 1.**

Not at all                      Minimally                      Moderately                      Exceptionally

## C. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

**1. What school policies support character development in your students? Check top 3.**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/drug             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual harassment                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Weapons               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-bullying            | <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance/truancy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental notification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gang activity            | <input type="checkbox"/> Code of Conduct                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/police involvement | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside intervention and referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____            |

**2. How do you measure your policies' effects on character education? Check 3 most commonly used.**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Number of suspensions, referrals                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of repeat offenses  | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff satisfaction  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent involvement in consequences                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Police satisfaction        | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent satisfaction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ratio of discipline referrals to mediation referrals | <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency of enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____         |

**3. Based on these measurements, to what extent do your policies address student behavior in terms of the guiding principles of the school? Circle 1.**

Not at all                      Minimally                      Moderately                      Exceptionally

**D. THE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

**1. How does your community support the guiding principles of your school? Check 2-3 most common ways.**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Role models      | <input type="checkbox"/> Community-sponsored after-school programs  | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Officer     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community events | <input type="checkbox"/> Home/School/Community Partnerships         | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Center                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring        | <input type="checkbox"/> Interagency collaborations or partnerships | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internships      | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Center                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____       |

**2. How do you measure the effectiveness of these community programs in supporting the guiding principles of your school? Check 2-3 most common ways.**

- |  |  |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at community events          | <input type="checkbox"/> Program evaluations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community sponsorships of school events | <input type="checkbox"/> Student perceptions | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community representation in school      | <input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

**3. Based on these measurements, to what extent does your community support the guiding principles of your school? Circle 1.**

Not at all                      Minimally                      Moderately                      Exceptionally

**The Character Education Study Team of Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES appreciates your efforts and values your input. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments about this assessment tool or about supporting Character Education in your district. For more information about programs in your region, please contact:**

**Jeanne B. Gold, Ph. D., Coordinator  
Guidance and Child Study Center  
Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES  
200 BOCES Drive  
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598  
Phone: 914.248.2382  
FAX: 914.248.2387  
E-Mail: [jgold@pnwboces.org](mailto:jgold@pnwboces.org)**

**Links to this document can be found on the following websites:**

**<http://www.pnwboces.org/guidance/welcome.html>  
<http://www.swboces.org/cist/rssc/index.html>**

*Thank you!*

# SCHOOL CLIMATE

***"We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."***  
**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Four vehicles for Character Education are addressed by this assessment tool. The effectiveness of each domain's contributions toward Character Education depends on the success of the others. Despite what the format of this assessment tool might suggest, no clear borders exist between these domains; and they all exist under the heading, "School Climate."

Many discussions about Character Education and safer schools begin with the phrase "school climate." This vague concept serves as the umbrella under which all the vehicles for Character Education live. A school climate that supports the social/emotional development of its students is created when an entire school community agrees to and adopts a set of guiding principles that are intentionally and consistently present in the pedagogy, curriculum, and code of conduct as well as in the day to day interactions between and among every staff member, student, parent, and visitor in the building. By clearly defining and universally promoting these principles, staff and parents recognize opportunities to provide responsive leadership by modeling and acting upon these principles. School climate that has reached a level of heightened awareness helps students incorporate these principles into their lives.

Not every school or district has taken the important first step of declaring the guiding principles for the school community and incorporating them into their mission statement. Administrators may find faculty meetings, site-based management team meetings, PTA meetings, and/or student government meetings to be appropriate forums to identify and agree upon these principles.

## A. THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY

***"Did you know that every us is a them? And all of them, they seem a lot like us. And all of us together, they make up everyone. And there'll always be a place just for you."***

***Just For You, Graham and Delores, Graham Clarke (children's musician)***

A supportive school community provides its members with feelings of safety and belonging by establishing a caring atmosphere under fair, ethical leadership. Many schools recognize the importance of creating community by choosing school-wide events and programs that embody the principles of the school. By involving parents and community members in these events, we teach students to broaden their concept of "team work" and show them how a society is defined by the acts of its individual members.

## B. THE STAFF AS CHARACTER EDUCATORS

***"According to your own ability and personality, do not be afraid to experiment with new and creative techniques for achieving reconciliation and social change."***  
**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Staff development may be necessary to help every adult in a school building view themselves in terms of the influence they have over a child's social development. Every relationship students have with the adults in their lives contributes to the standards that children develop for how human beings treat one another. When staff members recognize themselves as Character Educators, they also recognize the valuable teachable moments to intentionally model the school's guiding principles. In addition to the everyday opportunities that arise during ordinary adult-child interactions, Character Education can be deliberately supported through both pedagogy and curriculum.

Certain pedagogical approaches lend themselves to Character Education by creating a humanitarian learning environment that values the unique contributions of every child, providing meaningful challenges to all students, and recognizing the role the group plays in supporting the individual in his/her efforts to learn. While many teachers use these strategies regularly in their classrooms, they do not recognize them as tools for Character Education. Thus, the underlying lessons these strategies teach go unlearned by students. However, when we examine our practice through the lens of Character Educators, we can point out to students the ways our values are embedded into our behavior. (For a description of these strategies, please see "Directory of Instructional Strategies" located in the Appendix.)

The academic curriculum provides many opportunities to teach children the skills they need to transfer the values of the civil community into their own moral code. Learning to behave in accordance with one's values requires deliberate instruction and should not be left to chance. Still, adding lessons for character education into the program is not always necessary. The guiding principles can be incorporated into the current academic curriculum in every subject.

## C. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

*“Our worst fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.”*  
**Nelson Mandela**

Behavior policies that are designed to consider the principles of Character Education are both proactive as well as reactive. When we look at student behavior through the lens of Character Education, we see more than discipline. A sense of responsibility for oneself and the community are prerequisites for ethical and social development. This understanding serves as the foundation for a safe and orderly school.

## D. THE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

*“It takes a village to raise a child.”*  
**An African Proverb**

Schools exist within communities. A Character Education process becomes comprehensive when it includes the community.

# APPENDIX

## **DIRECTORY OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

This Directory defines each of the pedagogical strategies listed in section B, “The Staff as Character Educators,” and it explains its ties to Character Education. Professional development workshops may be necessary to provide working models for these strategies and the support needed to help teachers add them to their repertoire.

### **Student Centered Instruction**

Classroom activities that necessitate active participation and make students responsible for the quality of their experiences keep children feeling challenged, engaged, and invested in their school. Methods such as Discovery and Constructivist Learning help students make connections and recognize the value of their contributions to the classroom community.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated Instruction is a very broad term used to describe a variety of techniques (classroom adaptations, negotiable and individualized contracts and criteria, compacting, tiering, Multiple Intelligences, etc) for modifying strategies, content, assessments, objectives, or materials to accommodate the particular needs, abilities, learning styles, and interests of individual students. Such an approach recognizes and values diversity within a community, reinforces concepts of equality and justice, and fosters self-confidence and self-esteem.

### **Cooperative Groups**

Cooperative Learning groups students together to accomplish a single common goal. The work is divided into tasks and each student is assigned a task according to his/her ability or interest. This emphasizes the importance of the role of the individual in the community.

- **Flexible and Fluid Groups**

Cooperative Learning groups will change often according to the criteria used to establish the group. This reinforces the concept of the classroom as a diverse but unified community.

- **Jigsaw**

Each cooperative learning group becomes an expert on a particular issue. Groups are then re-mixed so that each new group includes a member who is an expert on a different issue and, therefore, makes a different contribution toward solving a task. The relationship between the individual and the community is emphasized when students recognize their role and the role their classmates play in formulating a solution.

### **Simulations and Role Plays**

Empathy and compassion are enhanced when students have opportunities to take a realistic “walk in someone else’s shoes.” Simulations can also be used to teach multiple perspectives, decision making, and cultural sensitivity.

### **Academic Controversy**

This approach engages students in a process of working through an intellectual conflict. Unlike the traditional debate where groups represent opposing sides on an issue and attempt to prove their own side, Academic Controversy focuses on empathetically understanding all sides of an issue and working together with the “opposition” to find solutions that are mutually beneficial. Thus, students learn that everyone’s needs are important and effective conflict resolution does not necessitate a winner and a loser. Reconciliation can only be achieved if everyone gets what she/he needs from the solution.

### Socratic Seminar

Students participate in a structured, intellectual discussion to explore issues raised by textual materials. The seminar is a forum that uses the Socratic method to expose students to a variety of viewpoints during a respectful exchange of ideas. The facilitator helps participants make sense of their own reasoning, realize connections and test their opinions using cooperative and critical thinking. Since every contribution is valued, Socratic Seminars build cooperative classroom communities where every student respects and benefits from the ideas of others.

### Carousel Brainstorming

This strategy is most effective when the instructional goals include generating as many varied ideas as possible. The topics or prompts to be considered are posted as stations around the room. Students work alone or in small groups to brainstorm one of these topics. After a given period of time, students “switch” papers or rotate to another station, read all the ideas of the students who worked on that problem before them, and then continue the brainstorming process by adding new ideas or “piggybacking” on ideas of their predecessors. Thus, students become aware of the cooperative process by which ideas are born and evolve. The relationship between the individual and the community is emphasized when students recognize their role and the role their classmates play in formulating a solution.

### Critical Thinking and Teaching

The opposite of prejudice, critical thinking strategies help students formulate and use personal criteria to make independent evaluations of information. Students are taught to judge facts in order to draw conclusions about the accuracy, value, applicability, and ethics of those facts. The ability to formulate critical assessments is necessary for students to make decisions about right and wrong and to judge their world and their behavior according to their own moral code.

### Multiple Perspectives

The ability to examine an issue compassionately from multiple perspectives is essential in our efforts to create a just society. The development of empathy is stunted when presentation of information is limited to a single viewpoint.



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

September 2001

**To:** District Superintendents of Schools  
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools  
Principals of Public and Nonpublic Schools  
Education Associations

**From:** James A. Kadamus

**Subject:** Project SAVE, Safe Schools Against Violence in Education Act: Instruction in Civility, Citizenship and Character Education

The State Legislature and the Governor have enacted a new law which requires instruction in civility, citizenship and character education. The new law amends existing Education Law as follows:

"§801-a. Instruction in civility, citizenship and character education. The regents shall ensure that the course of instruction in grades kindergarten through twelve includes a component on civility, citizenship and character education. Such component shall instruct students on the principles of honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy, dignity and other traits which will enhance the quality of their experiences in, and contributions to, the community. The regents shall determine how to incorporate such component in existing curricula and the commissioner shall promulgate any regulations needed to carry out such determination of the regents."

New York State Learning Standards for social studies and for health, physical education, and family and consumer sciences include many of the elements listed in the Project SAVE curricular requirements. State Social Studies Standard 5, Civics, Citizenship, and Government, focuses on basic civic values such as justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, majority rule with respect for minority rights, and respect for self, others, and property. This standard also emphasizes the important rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizenship, including ways that citizens can participate in our constitutional democracy. The one-half unit social studies requirement, participation in government, reinforces these concepts and provides a culminating learning experience for students as they prepare to assume the roles of citizens in our society. Learning Standard 2 for health, physical education and family and consumer sciences, A Safe and Healthy Environment, calls for students to demonstrate personally and socially responsible behavior, to care for and respect themselves and others, to recognize threats to the environment and to demonstrate responsible personal and social behavior while engaged in physical activity.

School districts are encouraged to establish a process for analyzing their existing efforts, kindergarten through twelfth grade, in providing instruction in civility, citizenship and character education. Through this process, districts can build upon established practices to strengthen curriculum and staff development in these areas. Attached are lists of materials to assist school districts in complying with the requirements for instruction in civility, citizenship and character education. These lists are offered as a resource to school districts in meeting the requirements of the SAVE legislation. Updated information can be found at [www.emsc.nysed.gov](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov) as it becomes available.

## STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS

This list includes a number of publications that have been distributed to school districts and are currently available, at little or no cost, through the Publications Sales Desk, Third Floor Education Building, Albany, NY, 12234 or (518) 474-3806.

**Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum.** Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1999, 198 pgs. (core curriculum, supplementary material, K-12) **Price: \$5.00**

This core curriculum contains the content outlines, concepts and themes for social studies grades K-12. Each outline for grades 7-11 also describes examples of connections that link content over time and place, and includes suggested historical documents. These documents can be used to develop student learning activities linked to the social studies standards.

**The Preschool Planning Guide: Building a Foundation for Development of Language and Literacy in the Early Years.** Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1998, 65 pgs. (supplementary material) **Price: \$4.00**

The guide is designed to be used by teachers in universal pre-kindergarten classrooms in the public schools and in community based sites as well as by other childhood educators. The guide delineates the characteristics of a quality preschool program: it suggests that children's success in meeting the State's more rigorous standards begins at the preschool level.

**Social Studies Program, K** (Updated 1988) ED 299 205, 69 pgs.(syllabus, grade K) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for Kindergarten that focuses on helping students develop awareness of themselves as growing individuals. It stresses a child's unique qualities and similarities to others.

**Social Studies Grade 12: Participation in Government,** 1988, ED 302 467, 51 pgs.(tentative syllabus, grade 12) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus that outlines a one-semester course of study in participation in government. It presents "Characteristics of Effective Citizens in a Democratic Society," discusses the "Rationale and Guidelines for Participation in Government," and provides a number of alternative models for structuring course content.

**Social Studies Program, 3** (Updated 1988), ED 304 378, 89 pgs. (syllabus, grade 3) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 3 that focuses on communities around the world. It uses five perspectives: social/cultural, political, economic, geographic, and historic.

**Social Studies Program, 1** (Updated 1987), ED 287 788, 73 pgs. (syllabus, grade 1) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 1 that focuses on helping students realize their roles as members of a family and school community. It stresses development of identity and social interaction skills.

**Social Studies Program, 2** (Updated 1987), ED 292 742, 91 pgs. (syllabus, grade 2) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 2 that focuses on rural, urban, and suburban communities in the United States. It uses five perspectives: social/cultural, political, economic, geographic, and historic.

**Social Studies Program, 4** (Updated 1987), ED 295 882, 81 pgs. (syllabus, grade 4) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 4 that focuses on political institutions and historic development. It stresses study of the local community with comparisons to State and national experiences.

**Social Studies Program, 5** (Updated 1987), 90 pgs. (syllabus, grade 5) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 5 that focuses on the United States, Canada, and Latin America. It stresses geographic, economic, and social/ cultural understandings.

**Social Studies Program, 6** (Updated 1987), ED 292 743, 108 pgs. (syllabus, grade 6) **Price: \$3.00**

A syllabus for grade 6 that focuses on Western and Eastern Europe and the Middle East. It stresses the interdependence of all people and the child's relationship to other members of different world communities.

**Safety Education Syllabus: Grades K-12.** Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1986, ED 272 462, 42 pgs. (syllabus, grades K-12) **Price: \$3.00**

The State syllabus for a program of study in safety education at all grade levels. It provides a comprehensive plan to help local school districts review State laws and current safety programs, develop local programs, recognize interrelatedness of program offerings from level to level, and evaluate programs and students. The syllabus supports a preventive approach by which students can learn to identify unsafe conditions, decide on appropriate actions to take, and reduce risks or hazards to their well being.

**Social Studies Program. K-6** (Seven publications). Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1982. (syllabus, grades K-6) **Price: see individual publications below**

The State syllabus for a program of study in elementary-level social studies. It focuses on social studies concepts (social, political, economic, geographic, historic), content understandings, skills, and activities. Each grade-level book contains two sections: a teacher notebook and a grade-level syllabus. The teacher notebook discusses concept and skill goals, student evaluation, use of literature, development of citizenship competency, participation projects, and classroom climate.

**Toward Civic Responsibility.** Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1978, ED 161 808, 153 pgs. (supplementary material, grades 7-8) **Price: \$3.00**

Stresses governing processes and a citizen's responsibilities. Each chapter includes knowledge and skill objectives, activities, references, and visual aids. After participating in a number of different activities, students should be able to identify the main functions of government, understand governmental power structures, illustrate rights and responsibilities in a democracy, define American values, recognize the need for an informed citizenry, and explain decision-making responsibilities.

**The Humanities Series. Critical Thinking and Reasoning: A Handbook for Teachers,** Albany, NY: The State Education Department, 1976, (Reprinted 1996) 148 pgs. (supplementary material) **Price : \$1.75**

This handbook outlines approaches and procedures useful in answering the pivotal question: How can we humanize all education?

## **PUBLICATIONS OF THE LAW, YOUTH AND CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM**

The following resource materials are available, at little or no cost, to school districts through the Law, Youth and Citizenship Program, a joint initiative of the State Education Department and the New York State Bar Association since 1974.

### **Elementary**

Living Together Under the Law: An Elementary Education Law Guide  
The Rights of Children All Over the World (Text and Student Workbook)

### **Global History 9-10**

Stories Old and New: International Human Rights Law: Teaching its Historical Development, Current Content, and Future Significance  
International Law and the Society of Nations  
(Text, Teacher's Guide, Case Materials)

### **Grades 11/12**

U.S. Supreme Court Decisions: A Case Study Review for U.S. History and Government  
(A Teacher and Student Guide)  
Teaching Strategies for U.S. Supreme Court Decisions: Teaching Strategies, Thematic Essays, and Document Based Questions  
The Bill of Rights: More Than Mere Parchment  
The Noblest Institution: Teaching About the Right to Trial by Jury in New York  
The Courts of New York

### **Law Studies**

"Implementing Project SAVE: Building Connections Between Discipline and Civility, Citizenship and Character Education" (Summer 2001)  
"Concerning Crime and Punishment"  
"Working for Justice"  
"Confronting Violence"

### **Student Rights**

Rights & Responsibilities of Young People in New York: A Guide for Educators and Human Service Providers  
Public Education and the Law

### **Student Learning Experience**

Statewide High School Mock Trial Materials  
(See LYC Website: [www.nysba.org/lyc/LYC.html](http://www.nysba.org/lyc/LYC.html))  
Civil Mini Trials (Freedom Law Day materials)

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM OTHER STATES

Listed below are general Character Education resources that are available from other States.

### California

**The Character Education Clearinghouse** (California Department of Education)

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/character/>

The Clearinghouse provides Character Education curriculum, library resources, classroom lessons, and literature sources that can be used with history and social science curricula in grades Kindergarten through twelve.

### Illinois - Character Education - Chicago Style

[http://www.cps.k12.us/AboutCPS/departments/Character Education/index.html](http://www.cps.k12.us/AboutCPS/departments/Character%20Education/index.html)

This is a program that is designed to reduce truancy, suspensions, student misbehavior, and other classroom problems, and at the same, increase academic performance, improve staff/student relationships, and bolster parent involvement.

Children learn how to act by how they are treated, they learn right from wrong by what is rewarded or punished, and which values are held in high regard from history and experience. Once these lessons are learned, they last a lifetime.

### Maine - Taking Responsibility: Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and Communities

[www.gloalethics.org](http://www.gloalethics.org)

This report, recently released by the Maine Department of Education, represents the work of Maine's Commission on Ethical and Responsible Student Behavior, co-chaired by Institute founder and president Rushworth Kidder. **Taking Responsibility** helps communities develop standards by suggesting processes and programs for long-term changes in attitudes, structures, and climate in our schools.

### Missouri - CHARACTERplus

<http://info.csd.org/staffdev/chared/characterplus.html>

Within the cultural diversity of schools there is a core set of values that all share. CHARACTERplus models, teaches and communicates these shared beliefs and values, e.g., responsibility, respect, humanity, honesty, self-esteem and cooperation. As a result, students will adopt these beliefs and values as a part of their personal ethics and become positive contributors to society. CHARACTERplus, of Cooperative School Districts, annually hosts a national character education conference in July in St. Louis, MO.

### New Jersey - New Jersey Character Education Network

<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/ashes/chared/chared.htm#summary>

The New Jersey Department of Education has a seven-year history of program activity promoting the development of character and values education in the state's schools. More than half of the state's 596 school districts have implemented program and policy activities. These activities are

supported by professional development and networking opportunities and four department publications.

### **North Carolina - North Carolina Character Education Partnerships**

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/nccep/>

The North Carolina Partnership in Character Education is comprised of three county school systems (Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Cumberland, and Wake) working collaboratively with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence. The Partnership will develop, pilot, and disseminate a model character education program that can be replicated and adapted throughout the state and across the country.

### **South Carolina - South Carolina Department of Education**

<http://www.state.sc.us/sde/South>

South Carolina is one of the states to receive grants from the US Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Education. The site contains reports outlining the Character Education programs and resources for teachers and administrators.

### **Texas - CHARACTER COUNTS!**

[www.charactercounts.org](http://www.charactercounts.org)

A nonpartisan, nonsectarian coalition of schools, communities and nonprofit organizations working to advance character education by teaching the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. This initiative is designed to help reduce youth violence, crime, unwanted pregnancies, sexually-transmitted diseases and other anti-social conduct.

Under the terms of a two-year \$900,000 state grant to the nonprofit, nonpartisan Josephson Institute, CHARACTER COUNTS! will team up with the Texas Education Agency to develop materials and programs designed to help young people learn core ethical values.

### **Utah - Utah State Office of Education**

[http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char\\_ed/](http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char_ed/)

The Utah State Office of Education provides Character Education curriculum resources that emphasize the necessity for schools to work in partnership with families and other community members to develop and implement character and citizenship education programs.

### **Utah - Character is Destiny: Light the Fire Within**

[http://www.lightwithin.org/curriculum/content\\_areas/charactered/charactered.html](http://www.lightwithin.org/curriculum/content_areas/charactered/charactered.html)

The Governor's Music & Education Program curriculum celebrates the 2002 Olympic Winter Games and its theme "Light the Fire Within." Identifying the virtues such as respect, sportsmanship, fairness, self-discipline, and courage, common to Olympians, helps inspire students in school and personal life.

In Utah, Character Education is included as part of the core curriculum. The State's strategic plan for education states, "Character/Citizenship Development will be the underlying thread taught by all educators to all ages and in all areas."

Curriculum that embraces character education provides students with a foundation for future success. Character and values make individuals and communities strong. Character is the heart of achievement whether it is in academics, athletics or life.

### **Washington - The Washington State Partnership on Character Education**

<http://www.etc.wednet.edu/character>

The Washington State Partnership on Character Education began in 1996 and was funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction coordinates this four-year project whose purpose is to develop a rich resource of community-based models for infusing a local definition of character into Washington schools.

## RESOURCES FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

- ◆ **Athletes Helping Athletes** [www.athleteshelpingathletes.com](http://www.athleteshelpingathletes.com) Contact: Gene Silverman, Nassau BOCES (gsilver@mail.nasbores.org)
- ◆ **Center for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> R's** <http://cortland.edu/www/c4nrs>
- ◆ **Character Education Partnership** [www.character.org](http://www.character.org)
- ◆ **Connecting Character to Conduct** Contact Dr. Rita Prager Stein [circhond@aol.com](mailto:circhond@aol.com)
- ◆ **EPIC: Every Person Influences Children** [www.epicforchildren.org](http://www.epicforchildren.org) 100 Executive Blvd., Ossining, NY 10562 (914) 941-1302
- ◆ **Habits of Thought Part of the Peaceful Solutions Program** [www.thirteen.org/peaceful](http://www.thirteen.org/peaceful)
- ◆ **Lesson Plans for Character Education** Published by the Master Teacher, Leadership Lane, PO Box 1207Manhattan, KS 66505
- ◆ **Social Decision Making and Problem Solving** Developed by the University of Medicine and Dentistry at Rutgers University and implemented successfully in a number of New York State School districts. Contact Lisa Morgan at (914) 345-8500.
- ◆ **Second Steps and Steps to Respect** The Committee for Children Fax: (206)-343-1445
- ◆ **Teaching Tolerance and Character Development** Staff development package consisting of workshops based on the World of Difference. Contact Mary Stokkers (631)673-2060.
- ◆ **Student Advocacy** 3 West Main Street, Elmsford, NY 10523 Phone: (914) 347-7039 Fax: (914) 347-6382
- ◆ **The Heart of America Foundation** One Massachusetts Ave., NW Suite 330, Washington DC 20001 (202) 898-9398 [HOA2@aol.com](mailto:HOA2@aol.com)
- ◆ **The Peace Center** [www.comcat.com/~peace](http://www.comcat.com/~peace) 102 W. Maple Ave., Langhorne, PA 19047 (215) 750-7220

### Materials Recommended by the New York State Athletic Administrators Association

- ◆ **Character Education Partnership: Guidelines for Effective Character Education Through Sports.** Washington, DC: Beedy, J.P. & Gough, R. H.
- ◆ Clifford, C. and Feezell, R.M. (1997) **Coaching for Character: Reclaiming the Principles of Sportsmanship.** Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- ◆ Gough, R. **Character is Everything: Promoting Ethical Excellence in Sports.** Fort Worth, TX. Harcourt Brace.
- ◆ Lickona, T. (1994) **Educating for Character.** New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- ◆ Malmberg, E. (2000) **The Sport Report: A Character Assessment and Teaching Tool. Strategies, 13 (4)** NASPE Publications/AAHPERD.
- ◆ New York State Association of Independent Schools. (2001, February) **From Civility to Respect.** (Bulletin #255) Schenectady, NY: Calder, F.C., Executive, Director.
- ◆ Smoll, F.L. & Smith, R.E. **Coaches Who Never Lose: Making Sure Athletes Win No Matter What the Score.** Portola Valley, CA: Warde Publishers.
- ◆ Wolfe, R. **The Concerned Parent's Guide to Competitive Youth Sports.** Champaign, IL: Sports Publishing, Inc.
- ◆ Yeager, J.M. and Buxton, J.N., Baltzell, A.L. and Bzdell, W.B. (2001) **Character and Coaching: Building Virtue in Athletic Programs.** Port Chester, NY: Dude Publishing.

### Other Resources

- ◆ **Educators for Social Responsibility:** [www.esrnational.org](http://www.esrnational.org)
- ◆ **Conflict Resolution in Education Network (CRENet)** [www.crenet.org](http://www.crenet.org)
- ◆ **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports** [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)
- ◆ **Teaching Tolerance** [www.TeachingTolerance.org](http://www.TeachingTolerance.org)
- ◆ **The Character Education Clearinghouse** (California Department of Education) [www.cde.ca.gov/character/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/character/)
- ◆ **Facing History and Ourselves** [www.facing.org](http://www.facing.org)
- ◆ **New York Center for School Safety** [scss@mhrinc.org](mailto:scss@mhrinc.org)

