

Integrating Social-Emotional and Character Development and Positive Purpose as Cornerstones of Effective Middle School Intervention

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.
Dept. of Psychology, Rutgers University

Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab (www.secdlab.org)

Co-Director, The Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools (SELinSchools.org)

848-445-2444

RutgersMJE@AOL.COM

Workshop, Center for Schools and Communities Social and Emotional Learning
Conference: Building Skills for Lifelong Success

March 13, 2017, Harrisburg, PA

Today's Takeaway

Students with a clear sense of positive purpose and skills to enact it perform better academically and socially.

Schools have the responsibility and the technology to foster students' positive purpose.

Turn on the Learner's On-Switch

- Keeping the switch on in the face of inequities and other challenges that will be encountered requires students to have schools – and school leaders-- that actively, systematically, and continuously promote:
- their social-emotional and character **skills**,
- a positive **mindset** connected to a sense of **purpose**
- a **pedagogy that inspires** possibility and connection to attainable future **aspirations**, and
- nurturing and sustaining **relationships that are rainbows in students' clouds** and bathe students in the light of their own potential, not their failings.

The Task is One of Ethical and Moral Responsibility and Educational Equity

It is not optional for children to be in a positive school climate and to systematically learn social-emotional competencies and character virtues essential for life, college, and career success.

True educational equity requires full preparation for the tests of life, both academic and social-emotional, not a life of tests.

A person is a person through
other
persons.
—Bantu



College, Career, Community, & Life Ready

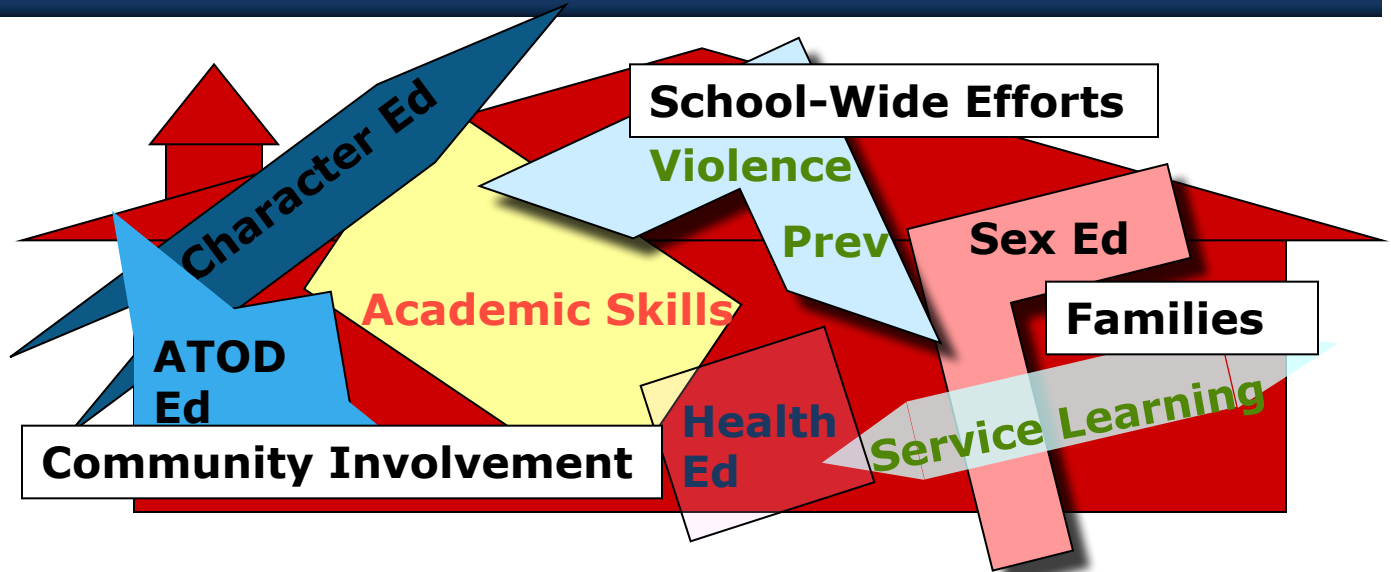


What happens
between
← here and
here? →

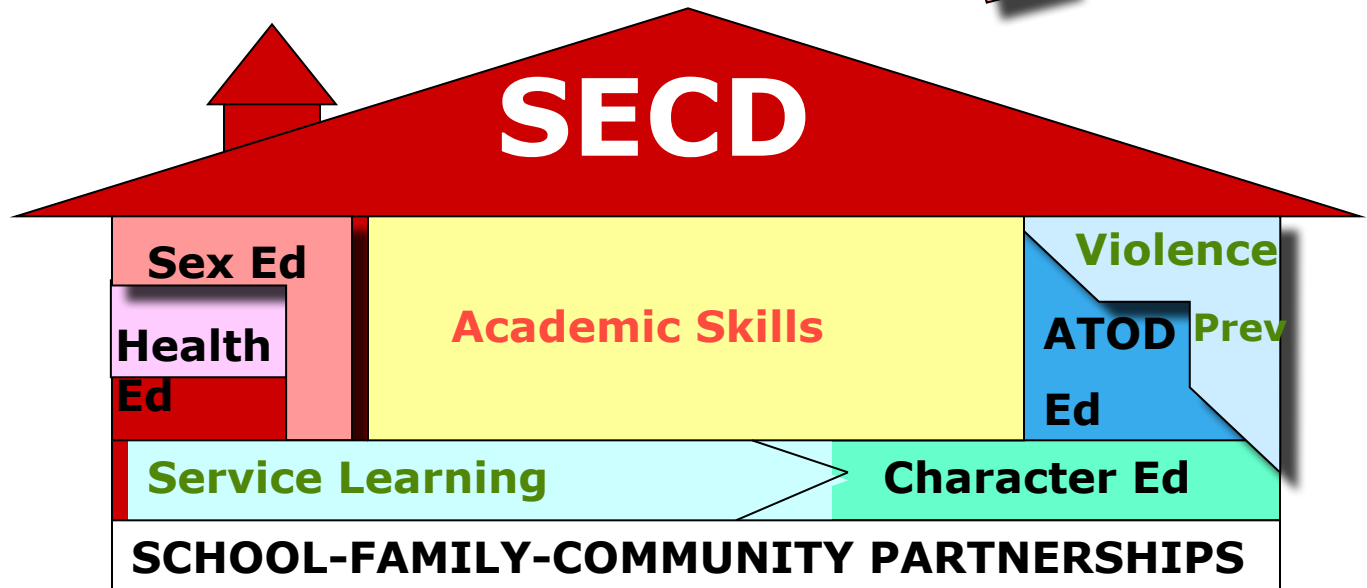


Social-Emotional and Character Development (SECD): *A Coordinated Framework Provides Synergy*

**A Jumbled
and
Fragmented
Schoolhouse**



**A School of
Social-
Emotional &
Character
Competence**



If You Had a Magic Wand, What Values Would You Wish Your Students Would Internalize Forever?

- Friendship
- Peace
- Wisdom
- Beauty
- Long Life
- Riches
- Popularity
- Family

It's Harder Than We Think

- **Preparation for College Completion“+”**

Ready, Willing, and Able— Savitz-Romer & Bouffard

Closing the Revolving Door— Rutgers Collaborative Center

What Allows Schools to Foster Resilience?

True academic and life resilience integrates intellectual, emotional, and social facets of learning. These are inextricably interconnected.

Positive,
Character-
Building
School
Culture and
Climate

+

Explicit
Instruction
in SEL Skills

+

Habits of mind that include:

- ◆ curiosity,
- ◆ explaining one's reasoning,
- ◆ feedback processes,
- ◆ asking questions,
- ◆ defining and solving problems,
- ◆ striving to communicate clearly and proudly.

NJSHACC Guidelines for Successful Schools
The Culture of a Learning Organization

- **INSPIRING**.....*of one another*
- **CHALLENGING**.....*take risks to improve*
- **SUPPORTIVE**.....*collective efficacy*
- **SAFE AND HEALTHY**.....*others' keepers*
- **ENGAGED**.....*collaborative norms*
- **RESPECTFUL**.....*no-fear communication*
- **COMMUNITIES OF LEARNERS**...*set and pursue goals for learning together*

• See: <http://selinschools.org/new-jersey-culture-and-climate-coalition/>

“Small” Things Set the Stage

- *Greet all students by name when they enter the school or classroom.*
- *Begin and/or end the school day with brief periods of time for students to reflect on what they have learned recently and what they might want to learn next.*

- *Create rules in the classroom that recognize positive behavior, such as cooperation, caring, helping, encouragement and support. Be sure that discipline rules and procedures are clear, firm, fair, consistent and collaborative.*
- *Show interest in students' personal lives outside the school.*

The Power of Purpose

Stanford University psychologist William Damon (2003, p. 9) defines noble purpose as a:

“stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at once meaningful to the self and of positive consequence to the world beyond the self”

2 Minute Reflection and Pair-Share:

What is your purpose in being an Educator?

The Nature of Purpose

When goals go, meaning goes. When meaning goes, purpose goes. When purpose goes, life goes dead in our hands.

Carl Jung

If you believe you are here for a purpose, your energies will be focused. A sense of mission will give you strength. You will do remarkable things.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

Helen Keller

What is a MOSAIC Approach?

MOSAIC

*Mastering Our Skills And Inspiring
Character*



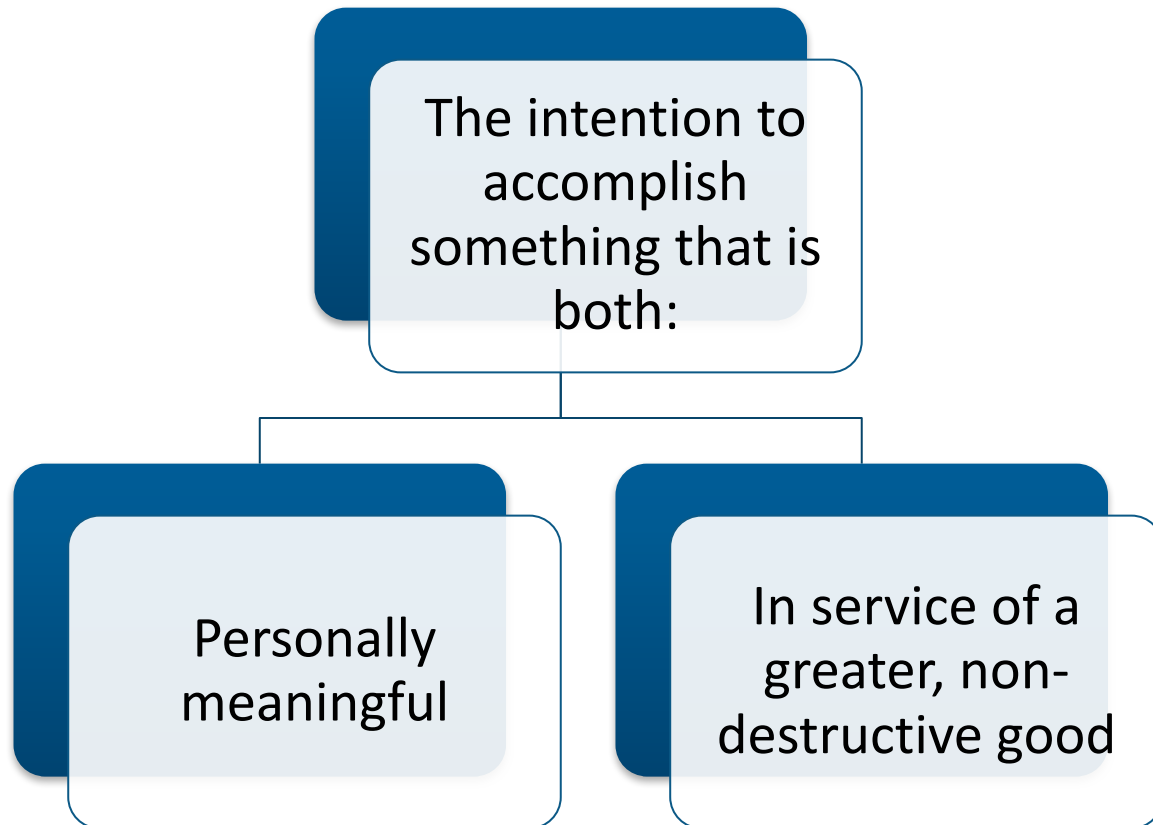
*If Skills are the propellers,
Virtues are the rudder.
The Journey of Life
requires both.*

Character Virtues Supporting Positive Purpose

- 1) Compassionate Forgiveness and Gratitude
- 2) Constructive Creativity
- 3) Helpful Generosity
- 4) Optimistic Future-Mindedness
- 5) Responsible Diligence



Positive (Noble) Purpose

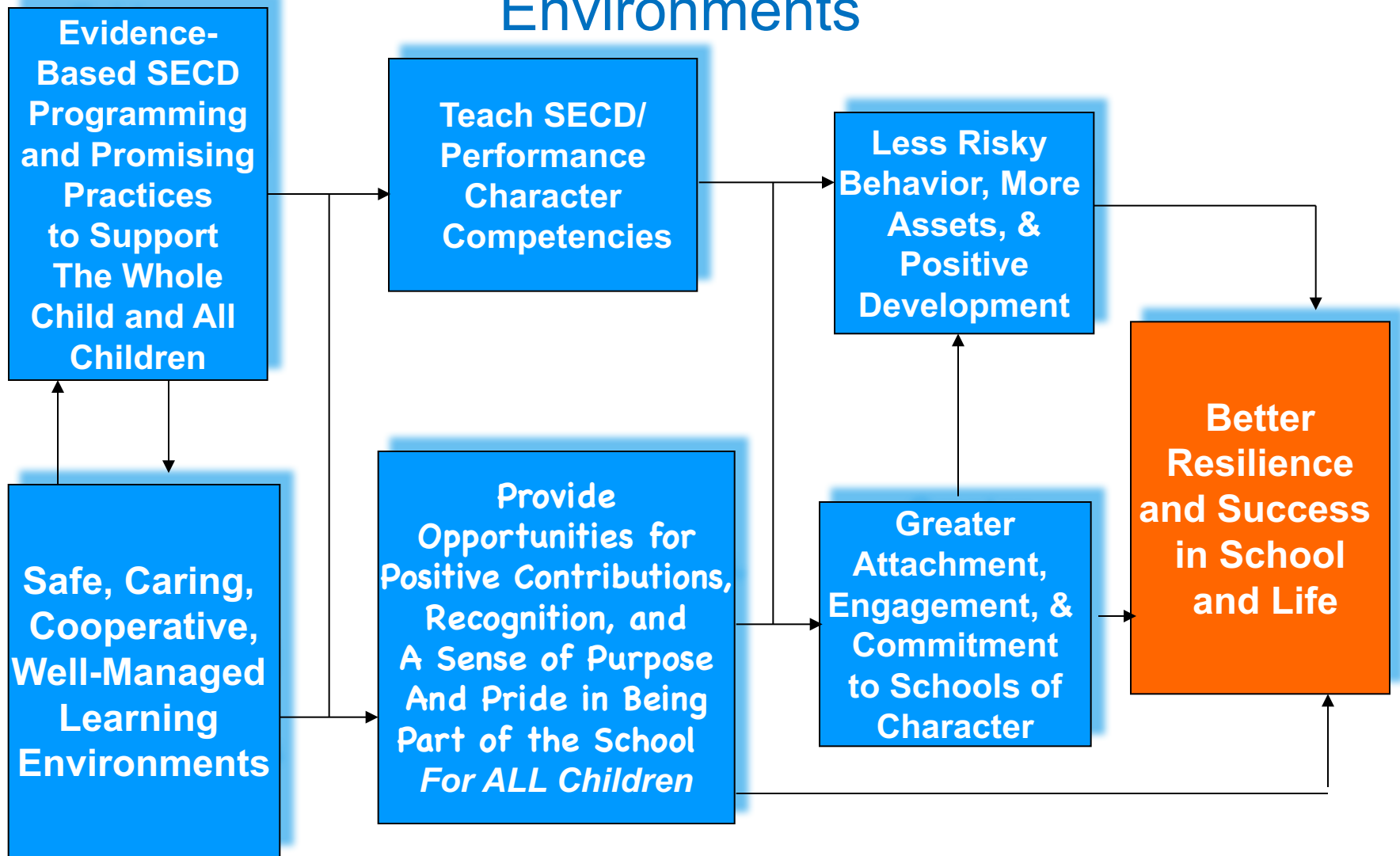


Integration of Social-Emotional Skills

1. Emotion Regulation
2. Communication
3. Empathy
4. Social Problem Solving



Resilience Comes from a Confluence of SECD and Supportive School and Community Environments



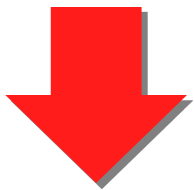
Benefits of SECD

Good Science Links SECD to the Following Student Gains:



- Social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes about self, others, and school
- Positive classroom behavior
- 10-11 percentile-point gains on standardized achievement tests

And Reduced Risks for Failure:



- Conduct problems
- Aggressive behavior
- Emotional distress

Source: Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development*. (available at www.casel.org) and M. Berkowitz & M. Bier, *What works in character education*. (Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership, 2006) (available at www.characterandcitizenship.org.)

Help Youth Understand Their Purpose*

*with thanks to Keeth Metheny, Austin TX Public Schools

AT&T 4G 6:32 PM

< in

That which you love

That which you are good at

That which the world needs

That which you can be paid for

Passion Mission

Profession Vocation

★ Purpose

👍 Add a comment ➦

Purpose and Self-Awareness: Part of a Moral Compass

- Self-awareness- finding your special task, what it is that allows you to excel.
- Self-awareness- recognizing our own feelings and using them as a guide to our actions
- Self-awareness- recognizing the achievements of yourself and also of others, positive recognition and encouragement for small steps in yourself and others as well, because you know the importance of doing so.

Purpose and Self-Awareness

- YES-No-Maybe on purpose quotes:
- *I believe that we should have a more lenient policy toward refugees than toward immigrants.*

Purpose and Self-Awareness

- YES-No-Maybe on purpose quotes:
- *I believe we should have metal detectors in schools when students enter to be sure everyone is safe.*

The Paths to Purpose: Service and Finding a Calling

Everyone can be great because everyone can serve.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

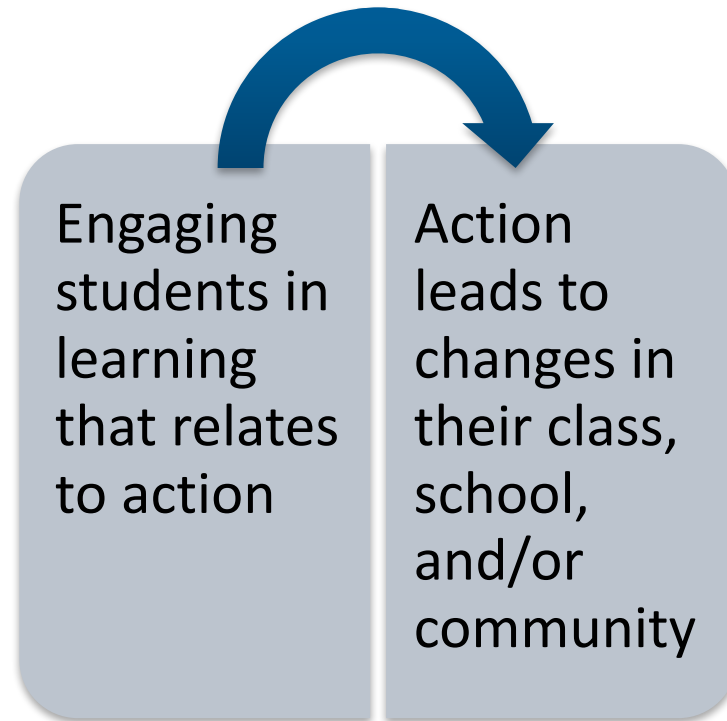
One thing I know: The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.

Albert Schweitzer

It did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected of us.

Viktor Frankl

Action-Focused Pedagogy



Action-Focused Pedagogy Throughout MOSAIC

- Experiential exercises
 - Engaging Media (Videos, Games, Audio recordings)
 - Take a Position (Friendly Debates, Yes-No-Maybe)
 - Connect to Lived Experiences (Think-Pair-Share, MOSAIC Circles)
- Structures for generalization
 - School-Community Action Series (i-Messages, BEST, PLAN)
 - “Throughline”

Best Practices to Promote Student Voice and Opportunities to Activate Positive Purpose

- Students need to be contributors to their schools and schools should teach students how to represent each other and how to be represented within a democratic structure.
- Students need systematic opportunities to play a role in service opportunities and school decision making, especially around problems that affect them— HIB, substance abuse, academic cheating, cyberbullying, gangs.
- Buddying and mentoring are for everyone.
- Essential preparation for having a voice includes SEL skill development and practice.

Identify Student's Broad Priority/Value

- What is one rule that you believe is important to live your life by, that gives your life meaning and purpose?
- If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- Is there some situation or place that you think is unfair/makes you upset/you can't stand?
- If we lived in a perfect world, how would people behave differently than they do now?

A video is worth 10,000 words:

*Some Inspiration from
Principal Kafele*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch
?v=U98d6CQbz4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U98d6CQbz4s)

*Help Students Create
Contracts/Agreements That
Enhance Sense of
Positive Purpose*

Translate Into Small, Time-Limited Goal(s): Essence of Growth Mindset

- Make clear connections between goal and larger value
- Phrase in positive terms
 - (What you will do, not what you won't)
- Make *performance-based*, rather than *outcome-based*
- SMART: Specific, Measurable, Active, Realistic, Time-Framed

Plan Specific Steps

- ***What*** are you going to do?
- ***Where*** are you going to do it?
- ***When*** are you going to do it?
- ***Who*** is involved?
- ***How*** are you going to do it?

Plan Specific Steps (cont' d)

- Some useful questions in creating steps:
 - What skills does the student need to achieve this?
 - What information and knowledge does the student need?
 - What help, assistance, or collaboration from other people does the student need?
 - What resources does the student need?
 - In what setting will they accomplish their goal?

Anticipate Potential Obstacles

- If the goal hasn't already been achieved, there's a reason...
- Some helpful questions:
 - What makes it tough for you to do this now?
 - What kinds of problems might happen when you try to do this step?
- Tip for adolescents: Depersonalize
 - What do you think gets in the way of people doing [this goal] all the time?

Engage in Problem-Solving

- Let the student generate as many solutions as possible
 - Offer ridiculous solutions
- Discuss the solutions' effectiveness/feasibility
- Let the student choose the best option or combination of options
- Write down solutions and amend the steps to the goal, if necessary

Positive Purpose Essay Prompt

- *In your classes and in your life you may have learned about and encountered people with a strong sense of purpose. Similarly, you might feel your own sense of purpose. In a five-paragraph essay, that includes an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion, please respond to the following:*
 - *What is your definition of purpose?*
 - *What might be your purpose? Why?*
 - *How would someone know that is your purpose in life?*

Trajectory of Purpose-Related Activities

- *Level One: The Positive Purpose of a Well-Known Individual— via picture books, fiction, biographies, documentaries, social studies, current events*
- *Level Two: The Positive Purpose of a Personally-Known Individual— local hero, community leader, clergy, first responder, family members, educators*
- *Level Three: My Positive Purpose*

Prompts to Think and Write About Purpose

- (1) “Write about a personal experience where you feel that something you did made a difference” (e.g. family, friends, school, community, or natural environment).
- (2) “Describe how these experiences helped give you a sense of purpose.”
- (3) “How will you continue working toward this purpose?”

More Prompts to Think and Write About Purpose

- (1) “Write about how you have observed someone (you may or may not know personally) exhibit noble characteristics.”
- (2) “Describe how these actions relate to this person’s larger mission (or purpose) in life.”

Positive Purpose Assignment/ Essay Scoring

- 1. No clear sense of purpose
- 2. Self-oriented purpose (e.g., desire to become rich and famous)
- 3. Other-oriented purpose (e.g., desire to cure cancer)
- 4. Self- and Other-oriented purpose (e.g., desire to cure cancer to help reduce suffering and to become wealthy in the process)
- Additional: Elaboration of purpose— what is the evidence? How did you know? What did you read?

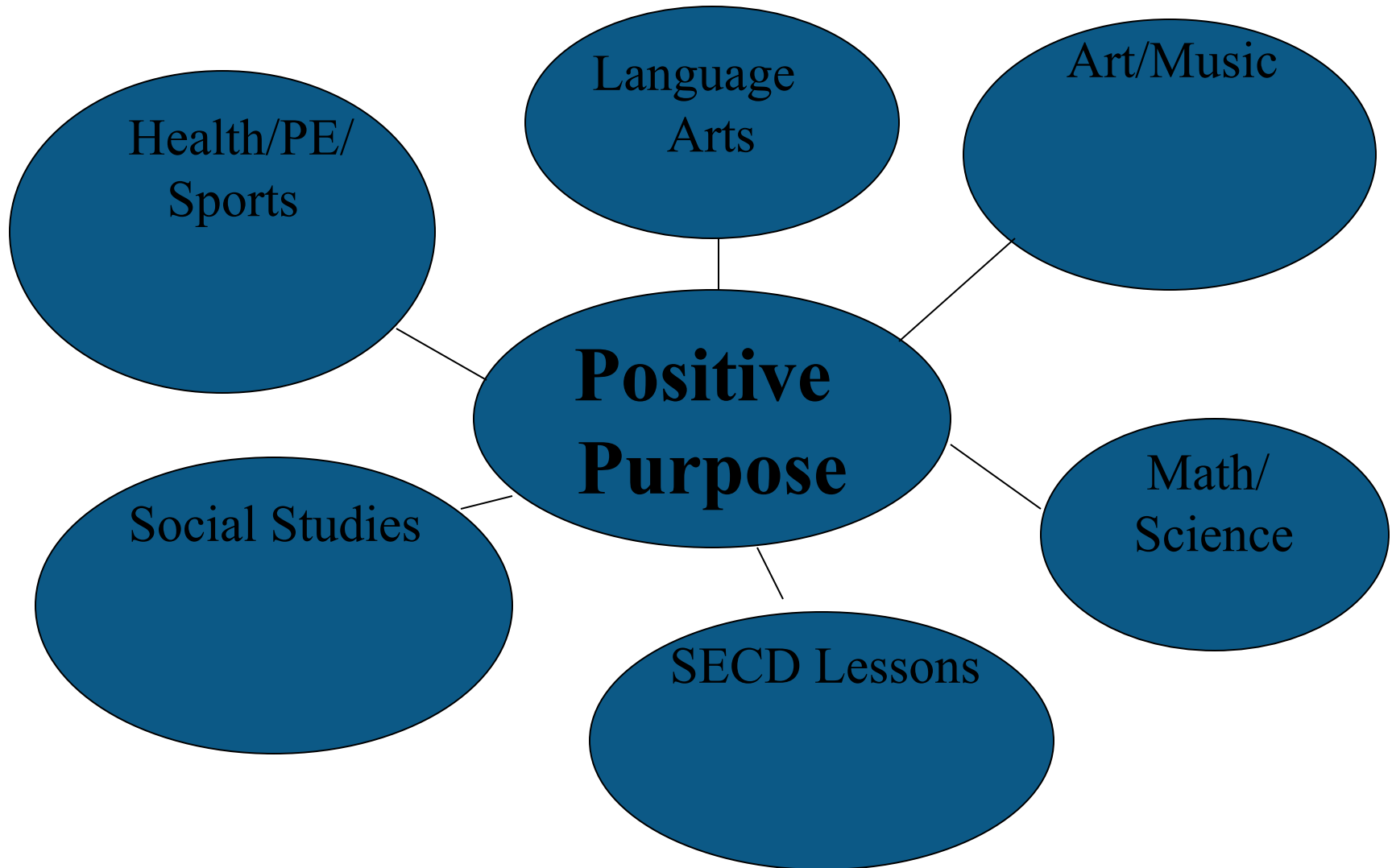
MOSAIC Approach: Best Practices

- Focus on a few key skills
- Focus on a few, salient values, ideally consistent with school motto, mission, values
- Children are amnesiacs--- focus on generalization
- Continuity and salience are crucial
- You can't succeed without others' support—and neither can your students

Recommendations to Guide Policy

- Every teacher, student support services provider, after-school program staff member, and administrator should have **demonstrated competence** in implementing evidence-based SECD programming and positive climate promotion at the classroom and/or school level (as appropriate).

Integration of Purpose into Academics: Fill in the Blanks



Questions/Reflections



Research Confirms Long-Held Good Sense

- *To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.* -- Theodore Roosevelt
- *We are going to ask our children not just to talk but to act, serve, and live in accordance with a set of higher values and with a buoyant optimism.* -- R. Sargent Shriver
- *Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.* -- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

From Vision to Actuality: Troubleshooting

Ask yourself these questions:



- What are the opportunities and obstacles to my school becoming a School of Character?
- What strengths can I mobilize to address this opposition? What are the compelling rationales?
- How can I compensate for opposition? Offset it?
- How will I exercise Courageous Leadership?

- What are the actions I most need to take...
- ... in the next week?
- ... in the next two weeks?
- ... in the next month?
- ... in the next 2-3 months?
- ... in preparation for the end of the school year?
- ... in preparation for the start of the next school year?
- ... who else must be involved?

Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools: SELinSchools.org

- Join with others who are learning the MOSAIC approach– VISIT OUR BOOTH IN THE EXHIBITS!!!
- The Academy offers a virtual Professional Learning Community and for its newest certificate program:
- Certificate for Instruction of Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development. (sel.rutgers.edu)
- Become an SECD/MOSAIC expert and resource for your school and students!!!
Check your flyers!!



Academy for
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
Learning in Schools





If You Encounter Resistance....Send in the Enforcer!!

The Time For Courageous Leadership and Action is Now!!

*“Don’t let what you
cannot do interfere
with what you can do.”*

John Wooden

*“The children are
watching.”*

Ted Sizer



Contact Information

- Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D. , Rutgers University
- Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab and The MOSAIC Project
(www.secdlab.org, sel.rutgers.edu)
- Co-Director, Academy for Social-Emotional Learning (SELinSchools.org)
- School Support Network of the United Way NNJ:
http://unitedwaynnj.org/ourwork/ed_youthempower_schoolsupportnetwork.php
- Maurice.Elias@rutgers.edu and www.Edutopia.org/user/67

**Integrating Social-Emotional and Character Development and
Positive Purpose as Cornerstones of Effective
Middle School Intervention**

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.
Dept. of Psychology, Rutgers University
Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character
Development Lab
(www.secdlab.org)

**Co-Director, The Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in
Schools (SELinSchools.org)**

848-445-2444 RutgersMJE@AOL.COM
www.edutopia.org/user/67

**Workshop, Center for Schools and Communities Social and
Emotional Learning Conference:
Building Skills for Lifelong Success
March 13, 2017, Harrisburg, PA**

MOSAIC Virtues & Skills

Positive Purpose

Supporting Virtues

- 1) Constructive Creativity
- 2) Helpful Generosity
- 3) Optimistic Future-Mindedness
- 4) Responsible Diligence
- 5) Compassionate Forgiveness and Gratitude

Supporting Skills

- 1) Emotional Regulation
- 2) Communication
- 3) Empathy
- 4) Social Problem Solving

MOSAIC VIRTUES & SKILLS BY MONTH

MONTH	THEME	VIRTUE	SKILLS
September	<i>Why are we here: Finding Our Positive Purpose</i>	Introduction to Positive Purpose	Communication & Social Problem Solving
October	<i>What Kind of Person Do I Want to Be?</i>	Virtue Identification	Skill Identification
November	<i>Making Ourselves, School, and World Better</i>	Constructive Creativity	Communication & Social Problem Solving
December	<i>Giving Back to Ourselves, School, and World</i>	Helpful Generosity	Communication & Social Problem Solving
January	<i>Planning for the Future</i>	Optimistic Future-Mindedness	Empathy & Social Problem Solving
February	<i>Showing Resilience and Overcoming Obstacles</i>	Responsible Diligence	Emotion Regulation & Social Problem Solving
March	<i>Appreciating Ourselves, Our School, and the World</i>	Compassionate Gratitude	Communication & Empathy
April	<i>Connecting with Others and Being a Leader</i>	Compassionate Forgiveness	Emotion Regulation & Empathy
May	<i>Looking Forward: Next Steps on the Journey</i>	Positive Purpose	Communication & Social Problem Solving
June	<i>Looking Back: What Have I Accomplished? What Have I Learned?</i>	All Virtues Summary	All Skills Integrated

MOSAIC FEBRUARY THROUGHLINE



SHOWING RESILIENCE AND OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

**How can we incorporate MOSAIC
into our class today?**

- Make an action plan for something you want to accomplish.
- Notice successes in yourself and in others.
- Reward yourself for your effort and for keeping a positive motivation.

MOSAIC FEBRUARY THROUGHLINE



SHOWING RESILIENCE AND OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

How can MOSAIC help us fulfill our goals as Owls?

- Be **RESPECTFUL** by noticing the efforts made by others toward accomplishing goals
- Be **RESPONSIBLE** by taking control of your goals and staying committed to them
- Be **PREPARED** by making action plans for something you want to accomplish
- Be **SUCCESSFUL** by keeping positive motivation and rewarding yourself.