

NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 017 - Folder 015

Education - Character Education

MEMORANDUM

Mike -
Can we do some kind
of a report on this? If
you have a better idea
let me know.
Elena

TO: TOM FREEDMAN
FROM: JULIE MIKUTA
RE: CHARACTER EDUCATION
DATE: JUNE 4, 1997

SUMMARY

This administration has repeatedly called for emphasis on character education (CE) in schools. It has distributed nearly \$1.9 million to 8 states through a grant facility to encourage state/community partnerships to implement CE programs in schools. A White House Conference on Character Education was held on June, 8 1996, and another is planned featuring Vice President Gore as the keynote speaker.

I. PROPOSAL

During this administration both the school and private sectors have strongly promoted CE. The number of school running CE programs has increased to approximately 20%. Three national organizations have emerged. Their advisory boards include Jesse Jackson, Barbara Bush, William Bennett and Marian Wright Edelman. One organization, Character Counts, originated the idea of designating Oct 16-22 as Character Counts Week; this resolution has been passed since 1994. I suggest a Presidential event highlighting this surge of activity.

II. PROMINENT PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS

Four private organizations are motivating the introduction of CE into schools, and publicizing the issue to local communities. Their advisory boards reflect the bipartisan support for this issue.

1. Character Education Partnership:
 - runs a National Resource Center on CE
 - works with school boards and school personnel, teacher education programs, and interested community members
 - advisory board includes: Barbara Bush, Jesse Jackson, Peter Lynch, John Pepper; supporters include C. Weinberger
 - founded by Sanford McDonnell, chairman emeritus of McDonnell Douglas Corp.
2. Character Counts Coalition: Josephson Institute of Ethics in Marina del Rey, CA
 - advisory board includes: William Bennett, Marian Wright Edelman
 - spokespersons include: Tom Selleck and Barbara Jordan
 - 'six pillars of character' are: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship
 - program based on these six pillars in over 20 school districts across nation

- responsible for Resolution to designate Oct 16-22 as 'National Character Counts Week'
3. Communitarian Network:
- founded by William Galston, deputy assistant to the president (1994) and Amitai Etzioni, a George Washington University professor
 - organized three White House conferences on character building (1994-96)
4. Partnering Initiative on Education and Civil Society:
- group of over 40 educational and social service groups
 - planning 10-year program to increase link among schools, community and social service
 - represent more than 106,000 schools and universities with 64 million students
 - began in April, 1997

III. FEDERAL LEVEL ACTIVITY

CE is a reoccurring theme in the President's speeches. It was one of his ten principles for education for his second term. A grant facility for implementing CE programs has been established under the Improving Schools Act, and 8 six states currently receive funds. The largest state, California, has a project which will involve 30 schools within 4 years.

What We've Said

- Second Inauguration Speech: 'CE must be taught in our schools,' is sixth of 10 education principles.
- Feb 10/ 97: praise for Maryland's community service requirement for high school graduates in speech to General Assembly
- State of the Union, 1/96: challenge to schools to teach CE
- Sept 5, 95: announcement of first grants under Partnership project
- encouragement of CE in various speeches and radio addresses

What We've Done

'Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project' (under Title X of Improving Schools Act)

- Secretary of Education can make up to 10 grants annually to partnerships of State educational agencies and local educational agencies towards implementating CE
- grantees so far: IA, UT, NM, CA (9/95); MD, CT, WA, NC (6/96)
- largest grants: \$250,000 (CA, NM, CT, NC, WA: MD, UT at over \$246,000)

Character Counts Week, Oct 16-22

- designated by law or unanimous consent of Congress since 1994
- introduced for this year by Sen Domenici (NM)
- Character Counts Coalition (see below) originated idea

April, 97: Secretary Riley met with founder of CEP (see below) and told him, "All standards issues are tied into character."

White House Conference on Character Education: June 8, 1996

A second White House Conference is planned on how to Implement Character Educatoin; Vice President Gore will deliver keynote

IV. LOCAL PROGRAMS

Attached table describes successful local CE programs..

Successful Local Character Education Programs

School/ Program	Description of Program	Results
Stop, Think, Act and Review program of Thomas Jefferson Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creates a vocabulary of words relating to respecting others monthly themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used across country students' behavior has improved in schools where it is used
Thomas Jefferson Center's Values Education Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lessons that can be integrated into various subjects emphasizes improved student-teacher communication and parental involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in Los Angeles Unified, drop in disciplinary problems after one year, teacher support for teaching values improved
Second Step violence prevention curriculum for PreK - Grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> weekly or twice-weekly sessions to teach empathy, problem-solving and anger management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used in over 10,000 schools in US and Can study found reduction in acts of aggressive behavior in third graders
Child Development Program for elementary schools; used in California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses language arts curriculum to teach values through children's literature cooperative learning class meetings for discipline problems family activities 	longitudinal study of 3 schools found that their students are more considerate and better able to solve interpersonal problems; follow-up study of students as 8th graders found lower drug use and better conflict resolution skills
Jefferson Junior High School, Washington, D.C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 year plan high expectations for parent involvement focus on attitude, conflict resolution, community service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> drop in teenage pregnancies, thefts, fights now has greatest academic achievement, and highest attendance rate in city

Allen Elementary School, Dayton, OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • each week, homeroom teachers introduce a character trait and subject teachers work it into the lessons • send letter home to parents recommending bedtime stories and discussion topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • went from ranking of 28 out of 33 (on test scores) in 1989 to No. 1 in five years • drop in discipline problems • rise in teacher attendance
Dry Creek Elementary School	each month, focus on a different value	
Winkelman Elementary School, Chicago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasizes caring and courtesy • all students involved in community service now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decrease in fights • improved academic achievement • recognized in Chicago competition
Alexander Dumas School, Chicago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE curriculum in K - 8 grade • defined 7 values for school; now recite daily a pledge affirming these • increased parent involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognized by US Dept of Ed for educational excellence • featured on NBC for CE program
Sweet Home district, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created district Values Education Council • daily messages on respect and responsibility in announcements and on cafeteria electronic message board • promotion of R & R on busses 	featured at NY Annual Values Education Conference
San Marcos, California school district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-minute lessons on "how to be successful" • 6 week course for 7th graders on self-esteem and positive moral values • 6 wk pro-abstinence course for 8th graders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teenage pregnancies dropped • grade point averages, attendance rates and test scores increased • drug referrals decreased

Teach For America Survey

Survey by Kane, Parsons & Associates in 1995 of 302 principals and superintendents with experience with TFA members found:

- 76.7% of principals rated TFA teachers as above average **compared to other beginning teachers**
- 88.7% of principals rated the **intellectual ability** of TFA teachers as above average
- 84.4% of principals rated TFA teachers as above average in their **ability to motivate students**
- 60.5% of principals rated TFA teachers as above average in their **ability to discipline students**
- 65.2% of principals rated TFA teachers as above average in their **ability to create and manage a classroom environment conducive to student learning and growth**