

Setting the north star for
our children to live and learn

CETAC

U.S. Department of Education
Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center

E-Newsletter - Spring 2005 - Volume 1, Issue 1

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Our First Electronic Newsletter!

Greetings from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. I would like to introduce you to the first of four electronic newsletters that will be published by the U.S. Department of Education's Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center (CETAC). This newsletter is intended to keep the field informed about developments in character education and civic engagement.

All of the program work supported by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools helps to make schools safe and healthy, providing the right atmosphere for education to happen. Character education and civic engagement are positive strategies that provide the groundwork for children to understand who we are as a people, and who we are as citizens of the United States.

In this issue, you will find highlights of grantees' news, announcements about upcoming publications and products, announcements about upcoming conferences that will feature experts in research and practice, and online links to helpful resources. Future newsletters will each focus on one of the following topics: student involvement, parental involvement, and commu-



nity involvement in character education.

The important work of CETAC helps to further the goals of the Department as authorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)*. We hope you will find the information provided in each newsletter to be helpful to your character education and civic engagement programs.

Deborah A. Price
Assistant Deputy Secretary
Office of Safe and Drug-Free
Schools



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Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

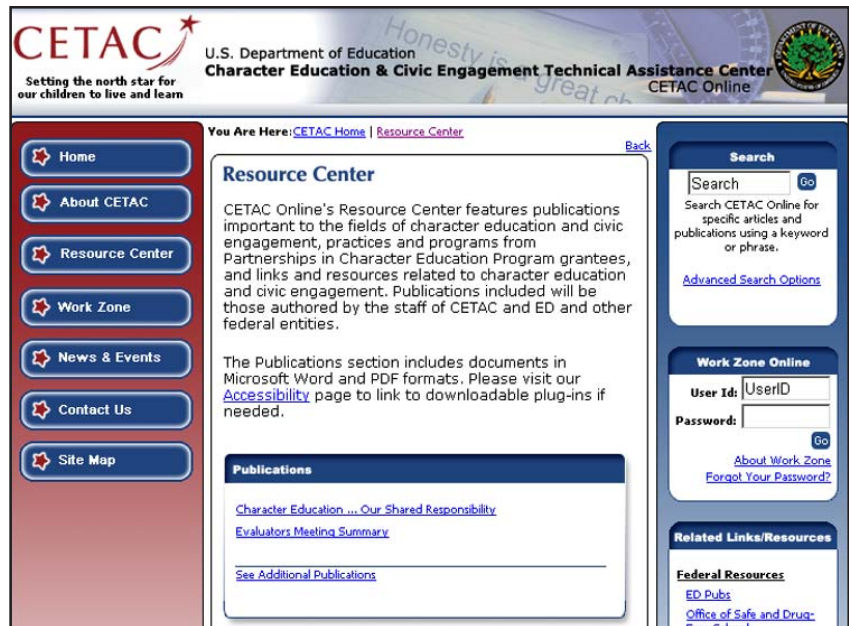
CETAC Online Highlights

★ Recent additions to CETAC Online, www.cetac.org, include summaries of the Department's Speaker Sessions and Listening Sessions, which provide information to Department staff and the public about key issues related to understanding and advancing character education and civic engagement. Other resources, including publications, also are available on this Web site. Visit the online Resource Center for **Related Links/Resources**, which includes links to the following organizations:

- Character Education Partnership (CEP)—The CEP Web site houses information on CEP publications, links to other organizations, and annual conference registration; and
- The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)—The ASCD Web site offers publications on character education and professional development.

Both CEP and ASCD offer helpful resources for educators, parents, and the community.

★ The U.S. Department of Education sponsored Speaker Sessions for Department staff and the public regarding character education and civic engagement at its Washington, D.C. office in 2004. In the first session, **Rushworth Kidder** of



the Institute for Global Ethics in Camden, Maine, spoke about the challenges facing educators and students as they meet ethical dilemmas. He also stressed the importance of schools joining with students and parents in making character education an integral part of their school. In the second session, a panel including **Margaret Branson** of the Center for Civic Education, in Calabasas, Calif., discussed the relationship between character education and civic engagement. Speaker notes from both sessions can be downloaded by visiting the CETAC Online News & Events page, or by clicking on **Rushworth Kidder** and **Margaret Branson**.

In the coming months, the Department plans to continue the Speaker Sessions with a briefing on the What Works Clearinghouse study on character education; an overview of new Department publications on character education; and

presentations from schools currently involved in character education and authentic student engagement. The results of these programs will also be found on the CETAC Web site in the upcoming months.

★ **Susan Sclafani**, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, spoke at the CETAC Listening Session regarding *No Child Left Behind*, character education, and civic engagement. Visit CETAC Online News & Events page to download **Susan Sclafani's** remarks.

★ **Deborah A. Price**, Assistant Deputy Secretary for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), U.S. Department of Education, and **Linda McKay**, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Deputy Secretary of OSDFS, were interviewed for an article in the *New York Times*, Education Life section, published on Aug. 1, 2004. The article,

entitled "Adolescents, Sunny Side Up," discussed how character education can be integrated into academic disciplines and engage the community.

Resources

The **What Works Clearinghouse** (WWC) has initiated work to conduct a review of research on character education interventions. The review will be a high-profile effort to judge the effectiveness of the interventions and to inform the field about "what works" in character education. At present, the WWC is inviting submissions of studies to be considered for review. For those who received grants from the Department's Partnerships in Character Education Program (PCEP) in fiscal year 2002–03, and met the requirement for scientific evidence-based evaluation, the WWC would like to receive a copy of those grantees' evaluation reports, even if preliminary (see more on this grant program on Page 4). The evaluation reports that may qualify for a review would be described as experimental or quasi-experimental outcome evaluations. Specifically, the WWC is seeking studies of the outcomes of students, classrooms, or schools participating in a character education program compared with the outcomes of similar units **not** participating in the program. The WWC is funded by the Department. It was instituted in order to build a national clearinghouse on the effectiveness of a wide range of programs and strategies to improve education outcomes. More information about the WWC is available online at www.whatworks.ed.gov.

Publications

The Challenge Newsletter
OSDFs published an issue of *The Challenge* newsletter on character education, civic engagement, and service learning. The newsletter provides critical information and resources to assist schools in creating safe and healthy environments for young people. *The Challenge* 12(4) is available for downloading at the **CETAC Online Resource Center**. Each of the

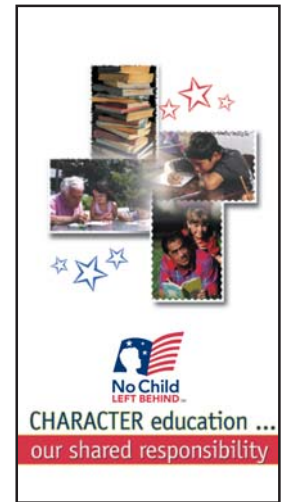


upcoming issues of *The Challenge* will feature a character education activity that is supported by the Department. The featured section is entitled "Exercising Character." To download past issues of the newsletter, visit www.thechallenge.org.

Character Education: Our Shared Responsibility

In 2004, the OSDFs created the first Department brochure on character education. This brochure, printed in English and Spanish, emphasizes the importance of character education and informs parents, educators, and the community about the Department's support, resources, and involvement in character education. The first print run in the fall of 2004 was for over 270,000 copies. The disbursement

strategies were to notify OSDFs grantees about the brochure via conferences and e-mail; to inform the general public through the Department's Web site; and to directly mail 135,000 brochures to local superintendents and state school superintendents. A letter was included to inform the education community of the Department's support and resources in character education. All of the above strategies were accomplished by January 2005. As of March 2005, due to heavy demand and backorders for over 249,000 copies, the OSDFs is in the process of reprinting this brochure. In the meantime, the brochure is available online at **CETAC Resource Center**.



Upcoming CETAC Products

CETAC currently has two products in development for publication. These publications are scheduled to be posted in summer 2005.

1. **Mobilizing for Evidence-Based Character Education: Scientific Evaluation**—This report will provide information necessary to help grantees meet the evidenced-based evaluation requirements for the Partnerships in Character Education grants. This publication will provide a general grounding in evaluation terminology and strategies for all those who need to collaborate on evaluating Partnerships in Character

Education projects. It includes a description of the collaborative evaluation process, from assembling the evaluation team through the development of the evaluation plan, data collection and analysis, and finally to the dissemination of findings. It also illustrates procedures for integrating the Department's recommended design options into character education program evaluation. The contents are based on a dialogue that took place at a Listening Session held by OSDFS and CETAC in the spring of 2004. The meeting brought together project directors, evaluators, and other national education experts and stakeholders.

2. **Our Shared Responsibility: A State Pilot Report to Congress on Ten Years of Progress in Character Education**

This report will provide practitioners with information about the implementation of character education programs, based on lessons learned from the Partnerships in Character Education pilot grants awarded from 1995–2001. The report will be based on the findings from annual and evaluation reports submitted by 45 states and the District of Columbia, and on individual interviews with the grantees. Topics will include:

- Common components and themes of character education;
- Lessons learned about effective strategies, curriculum integration, community and parent

engagement, student roles, professional development, and evaluation; and

- Challenges and successes.

These products will be posted on the CETAC Web site and a notice will be sent to everyone on the CETAC distribution list. Join the distribution list [here](#).

Grantee News

Four New PCEP Grants Awarded

The Partnerships in Character Education Program (PCEP) awards grants to eligible organizations to design and implement character education programs in grades K–12. Grant recipients must show how they have integrated character education into classroom instruction and teacher training, and that they have involved parents, students, and the community in the process. Since 2002, the Department has awarded a total of 97 grants to states and local school districts.

In August 2004, under the PCEP, the Department of Education awarded grants to three local education agencies (LEA) and one state education agency (SEA). The grant awards were made to the following recipients.

- ★ **Fresno Unified School District (Fresno, Calif.)** plans to partner with the Bonner Center for Character Education at California State University, Fresno and WestEd (an education research entity in San Francisco) to train and work with adults and teachers to

incorporate ethical decision-making and improve the physical and psychological factors at school sites for students to increase academic achievement and decrease negative behavior through the use of the Second Step character education curriculum. The grant also will incorporate the curriculum through language arts lessons at the elementary level. Contact: **Caran Resciniti**, Project Director, PCEP Grant, Fresno Unified School District, Phone: (559) 457-3711 or e-mail: caresci@fresno.k12.ca.us.

- ★ **The Quitman County Board of Education (Quitman, Ga.)** will implement a character education program that can be integrated into the teaching curriculum in grades K–8 and that will prove to be culturally appropriate for a small, poor, rural predominantly African-American school system and community. This project, Character Education for Partners in Education (CE PIE), will use the Too Good for Violence program that teaches students caring, cooperation, fairness, and respect. Contact: **Charles Culver**, Project Director, PCEP Grant, Quitman County Board of Education, Phone: (229) 334-4298 or e-mail: culverc@mail.quitman.k12.ga.us.

- ★ **Baldwin County Public Schools (Bay Minette, Ala.)**, in partnership with its parent support organizations—the Circuit Court of Baldwin County and the Alabama Gulf Coast Young Life (Foley, Ala.),

an ecumenical faith-based agency—will conduct a four-year, districtwide implementation study for the ShowMe CHARACTER program and evaluate its impact on school improvement and student achievement. Contact: **Robert Zeanah**, Project Director, PCEP Grant, Baldwin County Public Schools, Phone: (251) 972-6864 or e-mail at rzeanah@bcbe.org.

★ **The New Mexico Public Education Department (Santa Fe, N.M.)** will bring together Albuquerque Public Schools and the Character Counts Cooperative in a project to build statewide leadership for sustainable character education in New Mexico schools and communities. The New Mexico Character Education Partnership project will fund and support 60 three-year projects to establish character education in schools and communities in the following core values: trust, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Contact: **Pat Concannon**, Project Director, PCEP Grant, New Mexico Public Education Department, Phone: (505) 827-6525, e-mail: pconcannon@ped.state.nm.us.

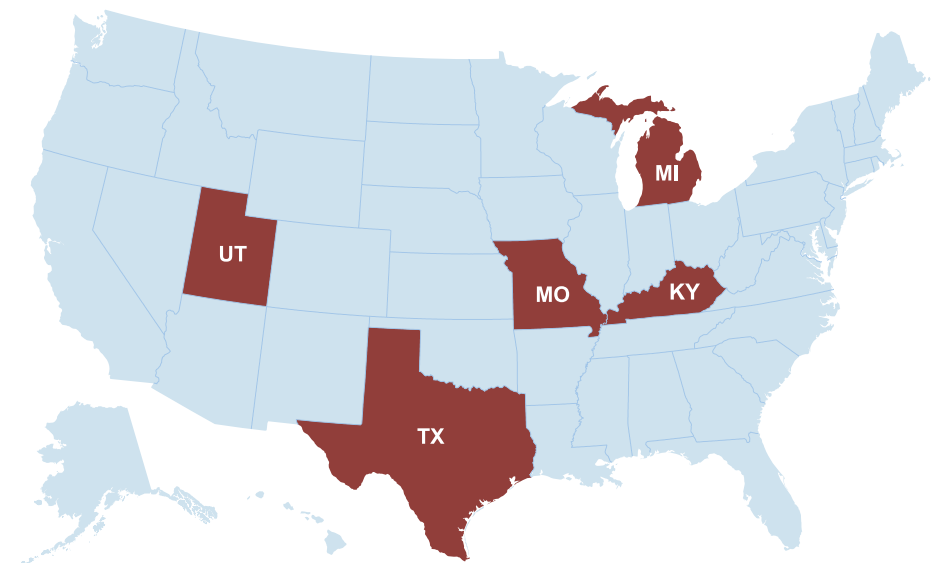
Please visit the CETAC Web site at www.cetac.org to get additional information about these grants.

Five States Pass Expanded Support for Character and Civic Education

New state support for character and civic education has passed in Michigan, Missouri, Texas, Utah, and Kentucky:

- ★ The Michigan State Board of Education passed a policy on quality character education. The policy states that certain principles should be "used to adopt, implement, and evaluate research-based programs" for character education in all public schools.
- ★ The Missouri Senate passed Resolution No. 32, which "challenge(s) each school district in our state to develop a character education process that involves school, home, and community."
- ★ The Texas House of Representatives passed Bill (HB) 946 supporting character education
- ★ Utah's HB22 was signed by the governor on March 19, 2004. The statute provides legislative recognition that civic and character education are fundamental elements of the public education system's core mission and constitutional responsibility and shall be taught in connection with regular school work.
- ★ Kentucky passed the first piece of legislation that was inspired by the Congressional Conference on Civic Education. The legislation was introduced by State Senator Jack Westwood and State Representative Tanya Pullin, and was signed into law on April 7, 2004. This statute established a formal Civic Education Review Commission under the secretary of state.

in all schools in Texas. The program must stress positive traits that the district chooses, must use integrated teaching strategies, and must be age appropriate.



Upcoming Conferences

For more information about any of the following events, just click on the name of the conference.

- ★ **Summer Institute in Character Education (K–8): Creating Smart & Good Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics**, sponsored by the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs: Respect and Responsibility, will be held at the State University of New York at Cortland, **June 27–30, 2005**.
- ★ **Cooperating School District's National Character Education Conference** will be held in St. Louis, **July 14–16, 2005**.
- ★ **Community of Caring 2005 National Conference** will be held in San Francisco, **July 29–Aug. 1, 2005**.
- ★ **National OSDFS Conference**, sponsored by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), will be held in Washington, D.C., **Aug. 15–17, 2005**.
- ★ **Partnerships in Character Education Program (PCEP) Grantee Meeting** will be held in Atlanta, **Oct. 19, 2005**.
- ★ **The Character Education Partnerships 12th National Forum: Building Cultures of Character**, sponsored by the Character Education Partnership, will be held in Atlanta, **Oct. 20–22, 2005**.

Contact Us

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

If you would like more information about the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) you may visit the Web site at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html and for more information about character education and civic engagement from the OSDFS staff, please contact the following persons:

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CETAC

CETAC would like to hear from you! Please tell our team about resources, events, lessons learned, and hot news items that are important to you. Our team will review submissions for possible inclusion in future newsletters and on CETAC Online. You may submit items via e-mail (cetac@cetac.org) or to:

CETAC Attention: Betty Straub, PIRE
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A special word for Partnership in Character Education grantees:

Don't forget that the Grantee Work Zone on CETAC Online has an online discussion board where you can chat with other grantees and exchange ideas. If you need information on how to log on, please contact cetac@cetac.org and we'll be happy to help!

About CETAC

The Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center (CETAC) is operated for the U.S. Department of Education under a contract with the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) (Contract No. ED-04-CO-0072/0001). Rita Foy Moss serves as the contracting officer's representative.

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