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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PARTNERSHIPS IN CHARACTER EDUCATION
STATE PILOT PROJECTS, 1995–2001 LESSONS LEARNED

**Partnerships in Character Education
State Pilot Projects, 1995–2001**

Lessons Learned

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

2008

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Acknowledgments

The Department is pleased to report this information about the Partnerships in Character Education State Pilot Projects and congratulates each of the grantees for its effort toward implementing community-based character education in our nation's public schools.

We express sincere thanks to the grantees for the enthusiasm and spirit they showed in sharing their lessons learned in implementing character education and for the time they spent providing information for this report. These early projects pioneered approaches to character education frameworks, processes, methodology, and evaluation—paving the way for a renewed commitment to character education in our nation's schools.

We are especially grateful to Diane Brooks, first project director for the California Partnership for Character Education State Pilot Project; Kristie Fink, project director for the Utah Community Partnership for Character Development State Pilot Project; and Sally Caldwell and Robert Moody, who were part of Missouri's Character Education Pilot Project team, for their thoughtful and thorough comments. As the language of the legislation envisioned, this has been a partnership across America.

Introduction

CHARACTER includes the emotional, intellectual and moral qualities of a person or group as well as the demonstration of these qualities in prosocial behavior. *Character education* is an inclusive term encompassing all aspects of how schools, related social institutions and parents can support the positive character development of children and adults. Character education teaches the habits of thought and deed that help people live and work together as families, friends, neighbors, communities and nations.

Throughout the history of public education in America, our schools have reflected the values and beliefs of the communities they serve. Instruction and lessons in the classroom frequently reinforced these ideas while delivering the basic skills and knowledge of the curriculum. Today, this heritage is reflected with a new emphasis on character education.

The *Improving America's Schools Act of 1994* created the Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project (Pilot Project; see Sec. 10103) and authorized up to a total of 10 grants annually to state education agencies (SEAs) for the design and implementation of character education projects. The Pilot Project program is supported by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at the U.S. Department of Education.

The legislation included a specification that the states must involve parents, students and members of the community in the design and implementation of grant projects. It also called for comprehensive evaluations of programs developed by grantees. The law specified certain elements of character to be the focus of grant projects and deemed it important that local communities define those elements. These elements as listed in the law are: caring, civic virtue and citizenship, justice, fairness, respect, responsibility and trustworthiness. These traits could be supplemented by other elements identified at the local level. The legislation required that character education be integrated into the curriculum and called for the training of teachers. The state agencies were required to provide technical assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing character education. Additionally, the legislation called for grantees to establish state clearinghouses to provide information on model programs, materials and other resources that SEAs and LEAs could use in implementing character education.

The Pilot Project also provided funding for SEAs to join with local schools, parents, students and communities to design and implement character education projects. Under the Pilot Project, program grants were awarded to 45 states and the District of Columbia. The pilot projects were initiated across the country from 1995 to 2001, with the most recent of the five-year grants ending in 2006. Many of the programs funded by these grants continue today.

The results presented in this report are the lessons learned as educators, parents and communities implemented character education in schools across the states. Knowing what the states did during the Pilot Project to support implementation efforts provides important background as additional SEAs and LEAs go forward with the Department's current support for character education.

Methodology

Partnerships in Character Education, State Pilot Projects, 1995–2001: Lessons Learned summarizes the results of the projects as reported to the U.S. Department of Education by the grantees through a variety of sources. Information for this report was assembled from reviews of project performance and evaluation reports, from discussions with grantees, and from an analysis of grantee responses to a survey from the Department. The Pilot Project grantees reported accomplishments that contributed to the continuation of developing and sustaining character education in schools, communities and the states after the grants ended. The states also tested activities that enabled them to assess character education program success and to document the challenges to effective implementation.

As part of the process of preparing this Pilot Project report, the Department asked each grantee to respond to a survey that listed a number of descriptors regarding the components of their separate projects. Respondents were allowed to check as many items in each category as applied to their grant projects. Appendix A (beginning on p. 39) contains a basic analysis of the reporting of those factors that were mentioned most frequently by the grantees as important to their projects, with a summary of results provided below.

Distinctions may be helpful in understanding two aspects related to information in this report. First, the report refers to two different federal grant programs related to character education. The Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project relates to the legislative time period of 1995–2001. Because these grants were funded for up to five years, the last group of grantees has just completed their projects within the last two years. For the purpose of this report, this entire group will be referred to as Pilot Project grants. Beginning in 2001, new legislation created the current initiative, Partnerships in Character Education Program (PCEP), which was authorized as part of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)* and amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; see Sec. 5431)*. In this report, this program will be referred to by its acronym, PCEP.

Second, *program* and *project* are not used interchangeably in this report. *Program* is defined as a course of academic study, a curriculum or a system of academic and related activities (e.g., a service-learning program). Some states report on a “menu” of programs, which is usually a list of approved curricula from which local districts could select to implement during the funding period. Others mention a “framework for a comprehensive process” or “a comprehensive approach,” indicating a set of strategies and curriculum that involve students and key people who influence them—parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. *Project* refers to a planned set of activities within a given time frame that includes defined goals, objectives and deadlines; in this case, as set out in a written proposal to a department of education at the federal or state level.

Results

What emerged from this process was evidence of a high degree of agreement among the projects—not only on what they tried to do, but how they tried to accomplish it, and what impact it had. For example, *every* project used professional development of staff as an essential means to achieving the goals of the project (see exhibit 2, p. 42).

This report provides: 1) background information regarding the importance of character education in schools; 2) key findings and trends as reported by the state pilot projects, including goals, successful practices and challenges; and 3) recommendations based on the reports from the states. The State Roll Call section provides a state-by-state summary of each pilot project, which often provides details about specific challenges or effective program components. Finally, the appendix displays an analysis of the data reported in a series of illustrations that include **project goals, type of project strategy, program approaches, type of project focus, successful implementation factors, type of data collection, materials or resources developed, and sustainability factors**. [Click on any type of illustration to view its contents.]

Key Findings—The Lessons Learned

THE SIGNIFICANT results reported by a majority of the states that had state Pilot Project grants included (1) the development of character education models and (2) the exploration of strategies for implementing character education. The pioneering efforts of grantees during the Pilot Project revealed common themes in the state projects, which encompassed many similar goals, found certain practices widely successful, and identified common needs for future efforts.

While state initiatives supported by the grants used existing national resources (such as measurement tools, curricula and training techniques), they also created their own. These initiatives provided some preliminary and anecdotal data on the impact of character education programs. In some cases, the projects allowed grantees to leverage additional funding from other public and private sources, as noted in the State Roll Call section. The grants led to new character education resources, such as journal publications, professional networks, professional workshops and conferences. Finally, many grant efforts have resulted in state clearinghouses to support character education at the local level.

The impact of this federal funding is apparent, as almost all states reported that their efforts in character education have continued since the grants ended. Summarized here are the goals, successful practices and challenges reported by the states. More detailed descriptions of each state's pilot project are available at: <http://www.cetac.org/resources/pilotgrantees.cfm>.

Project Goals

In the process of seeking a grant, SEAs developed specific goals for their character education efforts. The nine most commonly identified goals set out in grant applications were:

1. Changing students' knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and actions regarding elements of character education;
2. Reducing the number of disciplinary incidents in schools;
3. Improving academic achievement;
4. Improving the climate of individual schools;
5. Increasing community involvement in character education;
6. Increasing family involvement by gaining parental input and support, and by linking the character education effort to the home;
7. Increasing school attendance by making the school environment safer, friendlier and more positive;
8. Increasing opportunities for service-learning programs, which allow students to employ character education concepts in real-life situations; and
9. Changing teacher knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and actions related to character education.

See **exhibit 1** (p. 40) and **table 1** (p. 41) for more information on project goals [to go to these illustrations, click on the exhibit 1 and table 1 in bold].

Successful Strategies

Perhaps the most important lesson to emerge from the Pilot Project reports was that successful character education requires the participation of the entire community. Collectively, the states reported that implementation must include the entire school community and be integrated throughout the entire school curriculum and culture. This was achieved by:

- Bringing school staff, parents, students and community representatives together to identify and define the elements of character to be emphasized;
- Providing training for staff on integrating character education into the culture of the school;
- Forming partnerships with parents and communities so consistent messages would be sent to students; and
- Modeling character traits by all adults in the school, home and community.

There were many strategies common among the state projects. Here, in the order of frequency, are the strategies that were most often reported by the states:

Professional Development. Every report emphasized the importance of professional development for all staff. The projects reported substantial efforts to train school staff in what constitutes quality character education as well as how the efforts could be assessed. Training topics focused on connecting character education to curriculum and state standards. Schools used professional development time allocated in district calendars as well as seminar events, conferences and online courses for training teachers.

Curriculum Development. The states reported that successfully implemented projects involved the creation or adoption of curriculum to teach character education and strategies to integrate it into the curriculum. Whether created wholly in the state or adapted from existing national or local resources, the materials and methodology springing from state efforts allowed character education programs to move from vision to reality.

Consensus Building and Community Engagement. Although most schools and communities found common themes in terms of the characteristics they identified as essential character traits, the grantees often noted the importance of the process of building consensus about these traits as well as the process to instill them. The effort to bring together relevant members of the community, especially parents and educators, increased the feeling of ownership in the character education effort. The reports indicated that community leaders provided vital support and vision for character education by clearly articulating the importance of character development to the youths of a community. These leaders reported that youths' community participation was an important positive influence on student acceptance of character education. Projects that reported successful implementation of character education often included community participants in program design and implementation. In all of the above examples, community

members who were involved in the grants were asked to make a commitment to be part of the character education process.

Steering Committees. Since successful character education requires community involvement, steering committees were used by most state projects to provide a vehicle for involving a broad base of community members, which include representatives from law enforcement, chambers of commerce, businesses, social service and health agencies, faith-based organizations, parents and students. Every state participating in the grant program used some type of steering committee, task force, advisory council or advisory committee to ensure that key community decision-makers and leaders were engaged in the effort. Although the composition of such committees varied among states, each structure allowed individuals in the community to have an investment in the success of the project.

Family Involvement. Based on the reports from the states, when families had opportunities to participate in their children's character education programs and received support in doing so, the programs were more likely to be perceived successful. Effective projects allowed families to participate by offering them training or by including them in the design and delivery of the initiatives. Families were included in state efforts by: acting as resources for schools, being informed of developments through newsletters or reports, and serving on steering committees.

Student Engagement. Examples of student involvement in character education reported by the states included service-learning programs and leadership roles in character education efforts. A number of states created opportunities for students to learn while performing community-assistance projects. Some states provided leadership roles for students through creating student-edited newsletters about character, developing student advisory councils related to character education, and providing opportunities to serve as mentors and role models.

A final, overarching strategy emerged during discussions with the states about their reports—a concept that most states agreed was an appropriate summary for successful practices:

Comprehensive Approach. Most grantees emphasized the importance of changing a school's entire culture in order to make a difference in building character in students. In fact, integrating character education into the *entire* curriculum was actually a requirement for receiving a Pilot Project grant; the state reports validated the requirement. The consensus conclusion was that to be successful, character education must be comprehensive and has to become a part of every aspect of a school's environment. Further, the states reported that their character education projects could not work if they were not consistent with state academic content standards. Most reports indicated that the goal was to ensure that character education is not just a single subject, but rather something that is an integral part of school life.

See Appendix A, exhibit 2 (p. 42), for more on successful strategies.

Challenges

The information provided by the Pilot Project grantees also identified challenges to successful implementation of character education. A compilation of the challenges revealed that many of the states faced similar problems. Because many states found successful ways of meeting these challenges, a primary objective of this report is to summarize the information so other schools and communities can benefit from the lessons learned. Feedback from the grantees and their reports describe common challenges and potential strategies for overcoming them:

Time Constraints. Developing a new effort required significant time of all staff and particularly of teachers, who already had numerous responsibilities demanding their attention. Curriculum development and publicizing the effort also took time. In response to this challenge, project coordinators emphasized the importance of training to effectively integrate character education into the curriculum. High-level training focused on how a teacher operates a class or how a principal leads a school. Teachers also were encouraged to look for “teachable moments” during lessons to discuss or engage students in talking about character traits and values. In some areas, training events were held throughout the year to allow staff to attend without significant school interruptions. Schools also made an effort to narrow their focus initially so that the effort did not require new commitment that would be overwhelming.

Assessment. The challenges of evaluating the projects and assessing the effectiveness of specific programs were commonly expressed in the state reports. At the beginning of the Pilot Project, very few valid evaluation instruments for character education were available. The assessment process was different from state to state because no uniform assessment model was available. In some cases, schools lacked baseline data to make comparisons and, thus, measure improvement. To accomplish the goals of their projects, the states had to strike a balance between achieving implementation and evaluation goals at the local level. However, the states’ efforts did develop some assessment tools and measures. The reports of the Pilot Project indicated that more sophisticated measures would be used in future implementations of character education, which has been substantiated by the projects that are ongoing in current PCEP grants.

Academic Priorities. States reported discovering that development of good student character and positive school climate are at the core of learning and help to create an environment in which academic achievement is maximized. They had to respond to criticism that a character education program detracts from academic priorities and state learning requirements. They pointed out that the authorizing legislation for the grants required character education activities be integrated into the existing curriculum rather than added on as a separate, competing demand on time and attention. The states also reported that schools commonly made excellent progress toward fully integrating character education into all aspects of a school, including policies, teaching practices, curriculum, assessment, literature and informal settings (e.g., lunchroom, after-school activities, sporting events and school buses).

Staff Support. The states learned that it takes truly significant commitment from school faculty and staff, as well as from those in the general community, for character education to be successful. They learned that it cannot succeed if there is a lack of cooperation between administrators and teachers or between school officials and community leaders. They said

administrative support, particularly of the school principals, was a key factor. Project coordinators strove to include community, faculty and staff participation in planning activities and frequently elicited input from each of these sources frequently. Disruption in implementation caused by high staff turnover was another challenge reported by the states. The challenge was addressed by offering staff development on a continuous basis so the project could continue even when there were staff changes. Participation among all or most staff members was another technique to alleviate the challenge of having a key person leave the team.

Budget Constraints. Although the Pilot Project grants funded activities for up to five years, sustaining any significant education program thereafter required new or reallocated funding. In many cases, the character education project had to compete with other state budget priorities. States faced with this challenge learned to use the community as an alternative source of funds. States also attempted to hold down costs by producing reusable materials, by expanding the use of the Internet for resources, and by increasing the use of technology for training and communication. Some grantees suggested that having a project with a more narrow focus or requiring more stringent accountability to the funding agency would have helped address budget constraints.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A NEW EMPHASIS on character education at elementary and secondary levels in our education system was the most important result of the Pilot Project. Federal support brought character education to the forefront as an important topic of discussion in schools, communities, teacher training efforts, college education departments, and in the national arena. The grant funding encouraged states to commit staff time and resources to character education. Some states reported that this contributed indirectly to the implementation of state legislation requiring that schools pay attention to character development as part of their work toward educating young people. Today, the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) reports that 27 states have statutes that mandate or encourage character education be taught in school (NCSL, 2007).

The reports by the states in the Pilot Project expressed two common occurrences. First, the grants funded the development and initial testing of site-based character education models for local schools. Second, the grants contributed to increased awareness of the local school's mission to provide character education in the community, which resulted in closer collaboration of schools, home and community, as well as the development of shared visions and ways of speaking about good character.

The Pilot Project grants enabled the states to cast a wide net in designing and implementing character education. They could experiment and innovate. During the multiyear projects, the states moved from the early stages of development and gaining experience to the stage of evaluation of programs and ideas so that best practices could be identified.

The Pilot Project grants evolved into an effort that is now ongoing in nearly all the states. In many states, models for character education have been developed and undergone initial testing. In addition, because of the grant efforts, publications and other informational resources are available for teachers. Curricula have been developed that allow character education to be integrated with other academic standards. Thus, many programs developed during the Pilot Project grants are in their "second generation."

NCLB provided additional funding for the Department's successor, the PCEP, for both state and local education authorities. Ninety-seven projects, in addition to the pilots focused upon in this report, are now in various stages of implementation, including a number with scientific research-based evaluation plans to measure more rigorously the impact of the programs.

Conclusions

The Pilot Project legislation authorized by Congress in 1994 was an important first step in defining and promoting the shared responsibility of character education. This initial effort was fruitful—and helped other states and localities recognize their responsibility. "Character education" emerged as an inclusive concept for dealing with numerous ways in which schools and communities could support the development of character in children and youths. While character development remains primarily a family responsibility, results of the Pilot Project indicate that schools and individual classrooms have direct and significant influence; that the entire community must be involved; and that it is truly a shared responsibility among students, parents, teachers and the community at large.

Recommendations

Seven important needs were identified and discussed during the Department's analysis of information provided by the states that participated in the Pilot Project:

1. **Sharing Success**—The stories of both the successes and the challenges of the state efforts should be compiled and made available to educators—hence, the creation of this publication. Such an effort ultimately could result in a model resource that gives general and flexible guidelines for the development of character education programs.
2. **Promoting of Leadership**—Ways to encourage and sustain leadership for character education must be found. State reports indicated that strong, visible leadership at both the state and local levels was essential to integrating character education into a school's culture and curriculum.
3. **Evaluating the Effects**—The relative impact on school climate, teacher efficacy, involvement of parents and community, and other components of character education programs should be measured to determine the level of success of each, using both process and outcome evaluation methods and valid, reliable survey instruments.
4. **Developing Secondary School Programs**—There should be more focus on developing models for character education in middle and high schools.
5. **Continuing Research**—Scientific research studies should continue in order to provide scientifically based evaluation of character education processes and programs, thus increasing knowledge about the potential effect of strategies on outcomes.
6. **Standardizing Student Outcome Data**—The reports of the states in the Pilot Project provided anecdotal evidence and some formal summative evaluations that indicated that students experienced great benefits from the character education programs, leading to safer schools and improved academic achievement. However, there is a need for standardized measurements and reports about changes in student outcomes as they relate to the impact of character education.
7. **Ensuring Community Involvement**—Because it is clear that only efforts with high levels of community and parental involvement are likely to be successful, character education programs and processes must be broad-based and adaptable so that all members of a community can identify with and participate in them.

Looking to the Future: Ongoing Support for Character Education

To continue the Department's support of character education, PCEP was authorized in 2001 as part of *NCLB* and was significantly enhanced with a major increase in annual funding from up to \$8 million to \$25 million per year. Now, instead of just SEAs, LEAs also could apply for grants, allowing individual school districts to gain support to develop programs at the grassroots level.

The program also was enhanced by a provision giving full authority to grantees to select the elements of character addressed in the grant projects. It has continued the emphasis on partnerships between home, school and community, as well as the focus on integrating character education into a

school's curricula and teaching methods. Projects now are required to be consistent with state academic content standards, to be founded on scientifically based research, and to include students with disabilities.

Today, PCEP grants authorized by *NCLB* are helping local school districts nationwide—as part of our **shared responsibility for character education**.

State Roll Call: What the States Accomplished With Pilot Project Grants, 1995–2001

LOCAL EFFORTS and initiatives were key to the success of character education.

Therefore, one step in preparing this report was to ask for input from states that received a grant under the Pilot Project. Each of the 46 grantees responded to surveys seeking information about significant accomplishments, lasting contributions to character education, activities that were effective, and challenges to effectiveness. Information in this report was assembled by the Department from analysis of grantee responses to that survey, from review of project performance and evaluation reports, and from discussions with grantees.

State responses illustrated significant accomplishments of the Pilot Project grants. First, the grants funded the development and initial testing of a number of character education models for schools. Second, the grants contributed to increased awareness of the schools' mission to provide character education in the community, which resulted in closer collaboration of schools, home and community, as well as the development of shared visions and ways of speaking about character.

State initiatives supported by the grants provided new resources, such as measurement tools, new curricula and training techniques. These initiatives created pilot, exploratory and anecdotal data on the impact of character education programs. In some cases, the projects allowed grantees to leverage additional funding from other public and private sources. The grants also have helped to create other resources, such as journals, professional networks, professional workshops and conferences. Finally, many grant efforts have resulted in creation of state clearinghouses to support character education at the local level.

What follows is a brief summary of each state's Partnerships in Character Education Pilot grant. Each state summary is followed by a person's contact information, the state's department of education Web site, and any Web sites with dedicated character education Web pages or information.* Web sites were current as of March 2008.

*All state Web site addresses following each state report can be clicked for direct access. However, if you have difficulty with access due to a dial-up connection, please copy the address and paste it directly into the URL space on your computer screen.

If the Web address has more than one line, copy each line of the address only to the last character of the line, and carefully paste it directly next to the previously copied characters in the URL space.

If you have any difficulty, please contact CETAC at 866-402-3822 for assistance.

Alabama

The Alabama Character Education Project 2001–05

Alabama's grant focused on the identification of educators from across the state to develop best practices and training for character education. These educators became part of the state training corps and began presenting at the annual State Character Education Showcase, where successful strategies and materials are shared, in the first year of the grant. These trainers also were available throughout the state to provide instruction on a comprehensive character education framework, best practices in instruction, and a menu of resources aligned to state-required character traits for students to know about and understand. In 1995, the Alabama legislature passed an act (*Code of Alabama 1975*, sec. 16-6B-2[h]) that requires public schools to spend not less than 10 minutes a day on instruction related to character and civic education. The grant provided resources to help meet this state requirement. An important component of the Alabama effort was the funding of school sites where best practices, training and resource development could take place. When individual partners shared their best ideas with other partners, the resulting concepts proved invaluable in the training of the educator corps.

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Alaska

The Character Education Program for Alaska 1998–2001

The activities sponsored by the grant were coordinated by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. The department disseminated character education materials statewide, including a course curriculum developed at the University of Alaska, which delivered credited courses for teachers and other training for parents and members of the community. The T.O.P.S. (Training of Promoters and Storytellers) for Building Assets program, an ongoing effort, was administered with the Association of Alaska School Boards, a department partner. Particular success stemmed from pilot programs developed in the Matanuska-Susitna (Mat-Su) and Chugach school districts. The Chugach program integrated character education into the curriculum and received the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2001 for performance excellence and quality achievement.

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Arizona

Arizona Partnerships in Character Education 2001–04

Because Arizona schools had no state funds for character education, the Pilot Project grant gave schools the necessary resources to develop character education programs and increased the visibility of these programs throughout the state. The grant allowed local school districts to integrate character education into individual school discipline and improvement plans. Thus, character education became a part of the foundation of local schools. Arizona found that a comprehensive approach to character education was important and integral to the school environment. One initial challenge involved the logistics of working with a university partner, although increased communication and collaboration alleviated this challenge.

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Arkansas

Partnership for Character-Centered Teaching in Arkansas 2001–03

Arkansas concentrated on Character-Centered Teaching, which helped integrate character development throughout the curricula. The emphasis on character education in the state resulted in legislation that requires the Arkansas Department of Education to provide resources (e.g., training, a handbook) for all schools to implement character-centered teaching. The grant supported statewide character education training and the creation of a handbook entitled *Character-Centered Teaching: Six Steps to Becoming a Model Program* (Marrazo, n.d.) for schools. All Arkansas school districts have been trained in the implementation and integration of character education. State evaluation of character education helped assess the effectiveness of programs before further implementation. The grantee noted, however, that implementation was more difficult at the higher-grade levels than in elementary schools due to the materials not being age appropriate. To remedy this, teachers were shown how to revamp character education activities, thereby making them more appropriate for higher grades.

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California

California Partnership for Character Education

1995–2000

The California Department of Education formed a partnership with the Sacramento County Office of Education, the Center for Youth Citizenship (CYC) and six schools districts to carry out a grant heavily based on staff development for teachers and community members to implement character education at participating school sites. Due to the success of California's innovative curricular frameworks, California's application focused on the integration of character education in all K–12 curricula, particularly history-social science and English-language arts. For example, highlighting character traits of men and women “who have made a difference,” and focusing on character in writing and speaking activities, made character education part of instruction every day. An annual state conference coordinated by CYC entitled "Building Communities and Schools of Character" provided information about other exemplary character education programs and practices. As part of the pilot project, the California Council for the Social Studies published a journal, *Character Education*, which was sent to all districts and county offices of education in the state and to all members of the council. A page on the California Department of Education's Web site was created, pointing users to character education resources, a bibliography and programs. While each school site plan for character education in the project was unique, the project identified similarities or "key elements" which can serve as lessons for others looking to establish character education programs. One thing California learned was that character education has an impact on the school's organizational culture and values and how a school operates. One challenge for this project regarding a quality research study was the difficulty in collecting uniform assessment data because each program was unique to its specific school environment. Programs could not be assessed adequately across these different environments, which made it difficult to draw quantitative conclusions on the impact of character education. The California pilot project, with its multiagency involvement, continues as a sustained partnership.

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Colorado

Partnerships in Character Education

1998–2002

The Colorado grant project focused on 10 elementary schools and results taught the grantees six important lessons that were shared with school districts statewide. These lessons were: 1) the need for leadership by principals; 2) the importance of teaching staff support; 3) the need for a vision created by principal, staff and parents; 4) the need for more than just adoption of a preset character education curriculum; 5) the need for modeling of character traits by staff, parents and the community; and 6) the need to integrate character traits into the existing curriculum. In 1999, the

Colorado State Board of Education adopted a resolution encouraging schools to establish character education programs (Colorado State Board of Education, 1999). At the local level, each school brought together parents, community leaders, teachers and administrators to develop a vision for character education in the school. The schools then took a year to implement their visions. This important step allowed all participants to have ownership in the program. The grantees found that three years were necessary for integrating character education into the environment of a school.

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Connecticut

Partnerships in Character Education

1996–2000

The state formed a partnership with 12 out of over 100 local school districts to develop comprehensive character education program models that could sustain themselves within local communities and assist in improving education achievement. Program development was focused at the local level. The State Department of Education provided assistance, guidance and funding for local schools to develop programs that were representative of their needs and abilities. The focus was on embedding character education into the school's ethos so that it was not treated as separate content. Efforts to integrate character education into school policies, environment, curriculum and after-school activities created an emphasis on more than just programs and activities. School culture was changed. "Aspects of Character" became part of Connecticut's Common Core of Learning, which comprises the state standards. Teachers from all content areas work to ensure that students are able to meet these standards. This state effort illustrated that character education could not be too programmatic. One challenge encountered during the project was ensuring that the statewide coalition adequately addressed the long-term needs of students. In the beginning, when the effort was focused on building a statewide organization, the emphasis was on fund-raising. The decision was made to dissolve the statewide initiative and support local site development. Successful strategies under the grant were those that were aligned with curricula and did not focus solely on monetary rewards or posters and banners with character education themes.

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District of Columbia
Character Education Initiative
2000–05

The District of Columbia Pilot Project grant was used to implement character education in the 11 schools selected as pilots for this project. Coordinators in the schools studied information locally and nationally to identify best practices for their students. From the beginning, the pilot schools focused on collecting data to determine the processes being used to effectively integrate character education into the school environment. The pilot schools also held monthly coordinators' meetings to share information about program progress. Another priority was training and providing resources to all school communities including parents and other stakeholders. The goal of this pilot effort was to create a replicable model for use in all D.C. schools. During the Pilot Project, the D.C. staff learned that there were many curricula and materials in the character education field from which schools may choose. However, the challenge they discovered was that few character education models were research-based, thereby lacking information regarding their effectiveness.

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Florida
Florida's Partnerships in Character Education
2001–05

Florida established a statewide partnership for program operation and support. The partnership was comprised of representatives from the Florida Department of Education, Consortium for Social Responsibility and Character Education at University of Central Florida, Florida Learn & Serve at Florida State University (FSU) and the Center for Civic Education & Service at FSU. The partnership established a statewide resource center at the University of Central Florida to assist schools in training and assessment of civic and character education. Professional development training was held at both regional and state levels. Another important accomplishment of the Florida effort has been the development of relationships among stakeholders, such as the state department of education, district supervisors, university faculty, pupil-services advisors, teachers, school guidance and mental health counselors, parents, students and community members. Equalizing participation among partner districts was a challenge for the project. Increased on-site support helped to bring more consistency in program implementation across participating schools.

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Georgia

Georgia Character Education Program

1999–2003

Georgia's effort focused on 25 schools in Habersham, Cobb and Fulton Counties. The schools, chosen to reflect a diverse range of educational settings from urban to suburban to rural schools, were responsible for developing and disseminating a comprehensive K–12 character education model. All participating partners used Character Education Partnership's (CEP) *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, 2003) as a foundation for planning. (CEP is a national organization dedicated to developing young people of good character.) Each year of the grant, the participating schools submitted a plan to implement character education curricula based on 26 character traits mandated in 1997 state legislation (*Code of Georgia Annotated*, sec. 20-2-145). Evaluation of the effort suggested that student behavior can be improved by an effective character education program, that an effective character education program can improve the culture and climate of a school, and that a change in one character trait of a student contributes to a change in the other 25 traits. One lesson learned in Georgia was that a consistent focus on one character trait over an extended period of time was more effective than a shift in emphasis from week to week.

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Hawaii

Partnerships in Character Education

1998–2001

In Hawaii, different schoolwide models for promoting core ethical values and infusing character education throughout the curricula were developed by seven pilot schools. This strategy led to increased understanding of and support for quality character education. Professional development, identification and development of curricular resources, technical assistance and leadership development sustained the effort. The grantee noted seven important factors for success in the state: 1) ensuring there was consensus on core ethical values; 2) administrative support and teacher leadership; 3) infusion of character development throughout the curricula in relation to state standards; 4) nurturing of caring communities; 5) time and support to develop effective schoolwide programs; 6) inclusion of a service-learning component; and 7) systematic evaluation. As other states also reported, Hawaii noted that major education reform occurring at the same time complicated its effort.

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Idaho

Comprehensive K-12 System Character Education Project 2000–04

Idaho developed the Character Education Institute, which brought teams of school and community members together for planning around CEP's *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, 2003). The principles formed the basis of local action plans, which embedded character traits into the curriculum. The institute also used grant funds to provide professional development in character education, bringing teams of teachers together to focus on curriculum and lesson plan design. This approach was aided by making computers and consultant resources available to the teachers. The lessons have been made available online by the project's university partners. Idaho learned that Web-based resources were more helpful than the initial central library, which was somewhat inaccessible for many parts of the state.

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Illinois

The School Community Partnership: Bringing Out the Best in Students 1999–2002

The Illinois grant project's most significant accomplishment was providing the opportunity for five school districts to develop unique site-based program models that incorporated character education into a schoolwide process, which included curriculum infusion, after-school activities and school leadership support. The idea was to individualize the program specifically to fit the needs of each school district, resulting in five, unique models within the state. One participating district was the Chicago Public Schools, which developed a parent involvement guide and character education categories on school report cards, allowing space for grading character measures in nine areas. An advisory board of school and community leaders was utilized to oversee the project, which included an active community partner with the Chicago Foundation for Education as a community partner that provided grant coordination throughout the grant. The five participating districts were represented on a state steering committee that assisted with coordinating project activities. Annual conferences were held so grant partners could share progress and plans. All partners established "mentee schools" with which to share and replicate the models. One challenge faced in Illinois, however, was the need for additional funding to disseminate the five models to other districts. Unable to obtain continued funding, the program did not expand across the state.

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Indiana

Indiana Partners for Character Education (IPCE)

1998–2001

Indiana developed two Pilot Project models, tailored to specific age groups. Three elementary schools piloted the Kids Care program and the Indianapolis Public School system piloted the Students Who Care middle and high school program. These programs have now spread to 182 schools in the state, all of which include character education as part of their school improvement plans. The grant supported the creation of the Center for Character Development at Anderson University, which provides resources (including capital) to schools. The Indiana Department of Education provided funding for several programs and published *Partners for Good Citizenship* (Indiana Department of Education, 2000), a Web-based resource guide with sample K–12 lesson plans for promoting citizenship and character education. Each year, the center and the department continue to host a summer character education institute, which offers opportunities for national experts to provide training to approximately 1,000 educators from across the Midwest. Until additional funding is available for regional workshops on character education, Indiana will continue to focus on service learning, which teaches students to put their good character traits into action.

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Iowa

Partnerships in Character Education

1995–2000

One of the first states to receive a grant, Iowa's project benefits included a substantial increase in awareness of the importance of character education in Iowa schools. Momentum for developing good character increased throughout the state with the addition of private sector efforts, including television commercials, public displays, and events focused on teaching and modeling good character. The grant supported the creation of a consultant position at the Iowa Department of Education that has continued since the grant ended, keeping character issues on the agenda of the state's education system. The effort in Iowa led to a realization that good behavior *can* and *must* be measured to ensure that character development programs are being implemented effectively. Iowa reported that prior to the grant, most schools didn't think character could be measured nor did many schools see character development as one of their responsibilities. Key to the accomplishments in Iowa were efforts to make training convenient for teachers and obtaining financial support for training from the private sector. The training gave teachers the opportunity to learn new ideas that

could then be shared with colleagues at their schools. Iowa noted that the commitments of the Institute for Character Development and of former Gov. Robert D. Ray were particularly noteworthy and helpful.

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Kansas

Kansas Character Education Project

1999–2003

One of the most significant accomplishments of the Kansas effort was the success of some school districts in implementing the aspects and values of character education not only in their schools, but also throughout their communities. This meant engaging community leaders to support character education efforts and encouraging positive modeling of good character by adults throughout the community. Feedback from Kansas school districts suggested that the Pilot Project grant made a lasting contribution by providing the means to create a statewide character education conference, which allowed sharing of ideas and programs and professional development. Dissemination of information about the project was a key factor in the success of Kansas' effort, which involved creation of a book and video that were distributed to all school districts. During the grant period, the project provided a clearinghouse at Emporia State University as a lending library for character education materials, e.g., lesson plans, books, tapes. The challenge for the Kansas project was the lack of baseline data collection, which made it difficult to draw quantitative conclusions on the impact of character education in the state's classrooms.

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Kentucky

Kentucky Character Education Program

1997–2001

The Kentucky grant involved a partnership with the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative and the Kentucky Department of Education. The grant was used to increase the number of schools offering character education as part of their curriculum. This project resulted in increasing the statewide profile of character education and created a climate conducive to the passage of state legislation regarding character education. Other activities supported by the grant included professional development, coaching and mentoring of teachers, the creation of a state document describing 10

character traits, and the creation of a video and workbook for teachers. Because of the effort, grantees learned that the principal of the school has to feel significant ownership in the program at the local level in order for the program to be successful.

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Maine

Character Education Partnership 2000–04

As a result of its grant, Maine published and circulated to its educators across the state a report, *Taking Responsibility: Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and Communities* (Maine Department of Education, 2001). This report, written with student input, provided guidance for the development of local school codes of conduct across the state. Local districts were able to develop programs, consistent with state standards set forth in the report, which integrated character education into school culture and curriculum. The federal funding also supported: a set of grants for conflict resolution; a set of grants for the development of model character education curricula at the elementary, middle and high school levels; and the development of a Web site that provided a clearinghouse of character education resources. Maine's experience suggested that grant activities directed toward character development prompted discussion of issues, such as school climate, expectations for behavior, and the importance of gender equity (especially as it pertains to boys), and the importance of respect for others. Maine's experience also illustrated the need to ensure that standards are embedded in the curriculum rather than relying solely on more programmatic efforts. The state project was challenged by pilot districts that spent more time implementing program activities around certain core values instead of embedding a full character education program into the curriculum. Evaluation also was a challenge because there was little consistency in following data collection protocols, making it difficult to fully assess the impact of the state's project.

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Maryland

The Maryland Partnership in Character Education 1996–2001

The goals of the Maryland Partnership in Character Education were to build upon the history of the state's commitment to character education, to reaffirm the commitment in a systematic way and to develop and implement models for character education to support Maryland's systemic educational

reform. In pursuing these objectives, the grantees created five models, piloted in county school districts in various parts of the state, which later became examples for programs statewide. As a result, all school districts in the state now have character education programs and a designated character education contact person. As part of the federal grant, Maryland provided state funding to cover the costs of a project coordinator, project director and a character education specialist. Today, the state still funds the specialist, a support person and some training. Besides local character education contacts, keys to the success of Maryland's work were regional training, conferences and technical support. Fact sheets, newsletters, a Web site, and other communication efforts supported awareness and dissemination. Maryland also has focused on using evaluation data for program improvement. But like other school systems, staff turnover has provided a challenge. The grantees responded by trying to make character education integral to schools so personnel changes did not threaten the ongoing progress of a school.

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Massachusetts

A Foundation for Citizenship Through Character Education 2000–05

A Foundation for Citizenship Through Character Education was formed as a partnership among school and community leaders in Massachusetts to implement character education through school-to-career program and community service learning. Educators participating in the Pilot Project stated that effectively implemented character education had a positive impact on school climate and academic achievement. For example, one of the three implementation sites in the project—Brighton High School in Boston—was designated by the Massachusetts Department of Education as a Compass School (a competitive designation for schools that demonstrate significant improvement in student performance) in recognition for its greatly improved student scores on the statewide 10th-grade standardized achievement test. The character education effort helped schools to implement a service-learning program, which provided students with opportunities in understanding how to work as a team on projects that benefited their community, their school and themselves. Massachusetts' response indicated that its effort has been very successful in combating bullying. In the final year of the grant, grant partners disseminated the effort beyond the three initial implementation sites. The state learned several lessons from the project: 1) support of administrators and guidance counselors was crucial to the success of the effort; 2) guidance counselors were particularly important in infusing character education into curriculum, activities and programs; and 3) setting manageable goals was important.

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Michigan

Michigan Model Partnership for Character Education 2000–04

The Michigan grant was used to develop and pilot a model character education and service-learning program for middle and high schools. Approximately 400 teachers were trained in the use of character education lessons. The effort appears to have made its strongest impact on knowledge gained about character education and self-efficacy (belief in one's ability to make a difference) gains and helped to increase positive attitudes regarding beneficial character traits among students in alternative high schools. Evaluation of the grant effort suggested that it changed students' perceptions in areas, such as respect, ability to influence their environment, and support from and for parents. With the generous help of private and public organizations, the Michigan Department of Education was able to cosponsor a Partnering for Character conference and to develop a statewide character education policy. Significant to Michigan's success has been developing model curricula, providing teacher training, and providing mentoring and consulting services to schools making efforts to implement school climate initiatives. Another accomplishment of the partnership was working with the state board of education to develop and approve a statewide policy on character education for Michigan schools. One hurdle to program implementation was the requirement that pilot schools be identified at the outset, rather than selecting the pilot sites through a competitive process, to ensure teacher commitment and involvement. Because Michigan is a local control state, a second obstacle limited its results—providing no mandates regarding types of school climate initiatives from which local schools could select. Had *effective* school climate strategies been offered, the Pilot Project would have had stronger results.

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Minnesota

Partnerships in Character Education 1998–2002

The grant supported the creation and piloting of the Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education framework for character education, developed by Darcia Narvaez (Narvaez and Rest, 1995; Rest and Narvaez, 1994; Rest, 1983) during her tenure at the University of Minnesota. The state's effort focused on providing middle school students with classroom experiences that integrated character and standards-based education. Specifically, the project was designed to help students develop skills for behaving ethically, to provide in-service training to teachers on a process model of ethical behavior, to solicit community involvement at every step and to conduct action research. Pilot Project schools working with the framework were able to share their experiences at a variety of

middle school conferences. The effort created dialogue between educators and the state legislature regarding schools' interest in character education. The grantees created manuals and other reference tools, such as a CD containing the materials and resources developed. The verification that character education can be implemented within the context of local control of curriculum and educational programs has been especially important. School districts selected components from a variety of programs, allowing the individual schools to determine which components were used and how they were implemented. This fluid approach, however, presented a challenge in isolating the direct impact of the Pilot Project's framework for character education.

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Mississippi

Mississippi Character Education Partnership 2001–04

The Mississippi grant was used to create a pilot program to train 37 school districts in character education, which helped to establish a model with the support of stakeholders and community organizations. One innovation developed in the state was a competitive grant process for designated partner school districts in the Mississippi Character Education Partnership. These districts then implemented a character education program. For two years, Mississippi grantees also conducted the Celebrating Healthy Choices for Youth Conference, which provided training and networking for educators in the state. The Mississippi Department of Education sponsored the Character Education Awareness Day Program to recognize outstanding efforts in promoting character education statewide. During the Pilot Project, Mississippi hired a social studies-character education specialist, which resulted in a challenge—the responsibilities for both areas were quite demanding. Project staff reported that a position dedicated full time to character education initiatives would have accomplished higher quality implementation and sustainability.

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Missouri

Missouri's Character Education Pilot Project 1997–2001

Missouri's goal was to pilot the statewide implementation of character education based on a community-developed resource entitled CHARACTER_{plus}, a project of Cooperating School Districts (CSD) of greater St. Louis (CSD is a nonprofit, educational service agency). CHARACTER_{plus} was created in 1988 to unite the school, home and community as partners in character education. The grant established a statewide partnership joining Cooperating School Districts, the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, Jennings School District, Missouri Chamber of Commerce, Missouri School Boards Association, University of Missouri, Missouri 4-H Cooperative Extension Center, representatives from the Governor's Office, and nine state-funded Regional Professional Development Centers to provide statewide guidance and support. The result was a replication model that was piloted and tested in one school district, then implemented in twenty-eight school districts statewide. Central to the grant design was the development of four written resources and a video to guide program implementation, the development of an evaluation system and tools to assess the success of character education, and training conducted throughout the state. The training emphasizes that character education is a process involving all aspects of the school day. Due to increased interest in character education, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mailed at the end of the project the grant-developed resources to all 524 school districts in the state, a dissemination effort that exceeded the requirements of the grant. A challenge faced in Missouri was having one person provide adequate support to all of the pilot sites. Therefore, during subsequent implementation years, trained coaches were assigned to each school.

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Montana

Montana Character Education Project 2001–05

Montana's project was designed to test a character education model in five school districts with high populations of American Indian students. The effort accomplished not only the assessment of current models but also created an entire school reform model around the character values reflective of these communities. Project staff followed state legal requirements in developing a character education curriculum that is culturally appropriate, respects the unique heritage of American Indians and is aligned with the state's academic standards. Preliminary data suggested that the character-based school reform model resulted in decreased dropout rates, decreased disciplinary incidents, increased academic success for students, increased student participation in extracurricular activities, increased community participation, and overall increased community, parent and student approval

of the school system. Most significantly, Montana was able to replicate the project's character education model in additional school districts. Factors key to the project's success included: 1) immediately engaging the community and 2) curriculum development based on American Indian cultural values, which provided the effort with widespread community support. A significant initial challenge—the need to create new materials that fit local values—resulted in a great benefit because it garnered broad local support for the effort.

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Nebraska

Nebraska Character Education Partnership Project 2000–05

The Nebraska project involved four school districts joining with the Nebraska Department of Education, University of Nebraska, 4-H Program of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, and the Nebraska Educational Service Unit of the four school districts to design and implement a statewide network to support K–12 character education. The program goal was to empower students with the realization that they have control over the kind of person they become and have opportunities to learn about and practice the character traits that shape good citizens. Because of the grant activities, students now understand the language and meaning of character concepts. The grant assisted in training staff to have the motivation and skills necessary to develop positive character traits in their students by integrating character lessons and messages into all curricular areas, school sports and school activities, as well as school climate and culture. The project also increased connections among parents, schools and community groups so that future related work together can be more productive. It has given emphasis to professional development opportunities for staff, such as training meetings and workshops based on CEP's *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, 2003), clinics, sharing sessions and conferences. These trainings allowed participants to adjust best practices to their particular needs. *Nebraska Character Education Guidelines* (Nebraska Department of Education, 2002) are distributed statewide to teachers and administrators via the state's Web site. One project result was that the most successful programs in the state were those that were comprehensive in their approach and were developed at the grassroots level. These programs involved K–12 classrooms in all curricular areas, extracurricular activities, and community and parent involvement. A challenge for project staff was the length of time it took to organize school-community pilot steering committees. However, the time invested resulted in communities with the most effective programs, led by dedicated steering committees with the most inclusive leadership.

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New Hampshire

Partnerships in Character Education

1999–2003

New Hampshire's effort involved children, parents, business leaders, educational staff and administrators, as well as elected officials. The effort connected character education with service-learning opportunities that helped students contribute to communities and made character education a part of the civic engagement and citizenship conversations that were taking place in the state. The grant facilitated teacher training, partnership training, curriculum development, community events, parent education and family nights. Particularly significant were training and development activities, creation of advisory boards, and the focus on parent and community involvement. In addition, students carried out many activities. One key result was that the state school board agreed to discuss character education standards for all schools. In 1993, the state board approved a change to teacher certification expectations that required five of every 50 clock-hours of professional development over a three-year period, to be related to character and citizenship education (New Hampshire State Department of Education, 1993). One challenge for New Hampshire involved the creation of an online course that drew little interest. Subsequently, the development of a graduate service-learning course, offered at New England College for a reduced price, has been more helpful.

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New Jersey

New Jersey Character Education Pilot Project

1997–2001

With the support of the Pilot Project grant, the Newark Public Schools developed, tested and implemented a fully infused character education program in language arts and literacy for first through fourth grades and in social studies for fifth through eighth grades. Over 60 schools implemented a program called the "Do Something Community Team Coach," an after-school, service-learning program. New Jersey created a Character Education Network database with the names of 1,400 educators and others who attended grant-sponsored events. This led to the New Jersey Character Education Partnership Initiative, which has provided more than \$23 million in state resources to schools over a five-year period. A *Character Education Program Resources Profile Directory* is available statewide to provide guidance to school districts in their choice of selecting, implementing and evaluating character education programs, activities and services. One unique aspect of New Jersey's experience has been the contribution of all branches of state government: 1) the governor's office provided state funding to school districts and created a Character Education Commission to help guide the state's efforts; 2) the legislature appropriated state funds and passed supportive legislation in such areas as violence prevention, bullying prevention and holocaust education; and 3) the state department of education created a simple administration system for

distributing state aid and tracking outcomes, which continues to provide evidence of program participation and impact. During the project, staff learned that significant support, clear direction and consultation were needed to ensure high-quality, sustainable program implementation.

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New Mexico

Partnerships in Character Education 1995–2000

New Mexico used its grant to provide training to local communities to develop character education approaches tailored to their needs by training 300 local citizens to be CHARACTER COUNTS! trainers (a program developed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics). The training was supported by community and grant funds. The Pilot Project grant led to the establishment of common language for discussing character education based on the CHARACTER COUNTS! six pillars of character, which are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Some unique factors contributing to New Mexico's success were training of trainers; providing materials to local districts; creating K–12 curriculum frameworks; developing leadership council materials, school-community networks; and garnering support from government representatives. The grantees learned that strong administrative support was crucial to the project's success.

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New York

New York State Partnerships in Character Education 1998–2002

New York reported that its most significant accomplishment was the development of Pathways to Character by the EPIC (Every Person Influences Children) organization and Teachers College at Columbia University. Pathways to Character is a comprehensive curriculum for elementary schools to help students develop core ethical values. The grant also helped schools around the state understand that character education need not detract from addressing academic standards. At the end of the grant period, the state saw improvements in student behavior and 89 percent of teachers rated the curriculum as highly connected to learning standards. The activities of the grant pointed to the need for a schoolwide commitment to creating a culture of character, which began with

dissemination of information about character education to participating schools. Challenges for the state's grantees were obtaining ongoing funding and defining the role parents would play. Grantees recognized a need for more work to bring parents and educators together to address these challenges.

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North Carolina

The North Carolina Character Education Partnership 1996–2001

The grant provided to North Carolina was used to create an implementation model for schools based on the three C's: community, curriculum and climate, all held together by an important fourth C—commitment. Significant activities supported by the grant included a statewide conference; staff development; community and parent meetings; and goal alignment across agencies, districts and within the Department of Public Instruction. Participants indicated that having a designated resource person at the state level was important for successful implementation. Likewise, LEAs that had an individual character education coordinator fared far better than districts that did not provide a person with that responsibility. During the North Carolina effort, two lessons became apparent: 1) alignment to the community and the school curriculum was essential for success and 2) programs based solely on increasing awareness by using posters and a “character trait of the month” did not have the same impact.

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North Dakota

Community of Character Education Across a Distance 1999–2003

North Dakota's most significant accomplishment in effectively implementing character education was the way rural communities made character education a community norm, not just a school initiative. The rural communities were able to “stretch” their funding to accomplish projects that were designed just for their communities. Another significant feature of the grant was the development of coalitions with community leaders. The dissemination of information and the implementation of projects were aided significantly by technology, including e-mail, Internet and interactive video. North Dakota noted that the character education program has been very important to the state, exemplified by each community taking ownership of a diversity of programs

specifically created to meet its unique needs. As a result of the Pilot Project, character education has become embedded in policy and framework at the district level throughout the state.

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Ohio

Ohio Partners in Character Education (OPCE) 1998–2002

Ohio created models of effective character education for a variety of settings—urban, rural, suburban and small towns. Participation of the statewide 4-H program and the Ohio National Guard helped in the adaptation of these models that could be applied statewide. The grantee noted that all of the programs were “homegrown,” developed from locally identified needs, shared values, and conditions, rather than an imposed model, which resulted in contagious enthusiasm for the local projects. More established programs mentored new programs, and successful practices were shared and replicated. Ohio created an active and still-growing character educator network, its most lasting and significant contribution from the Pilot Project, which uses a listserv that is continuously updated with changes in program personnel and project announcements. The enhanced communication among participants has led to the development of many new projects and professional development opportunities at an annual, statewide conference. Ohio's challenge related to the original design of the project, which was for local partners to take ownership and an active role in determining project activities and professional development, but circumstances, such as not enough time or high personnel turnover, resulted in partners not being able to take on this added role. In response, OPCE staff expanded communication vehicles, such as more extensive questionnaires, to assess needs and interest so project staff could plan professional development to meet those needs.

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Oklahoma

Reaching Back: Character Building in Oklahoma 1999–2003

Oklahoma's effort allowed 57 communities and more than 50,000 children to be exposed to character education concepts. The grant provided direct services for almost 10 percent of the state's school-age population. With sub-grants, local schools created programs and developed materials to support their unique local needs. The grantee developed a Character Education Clearinghouse located at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, which included reference materials, sample

kits of materials, products from vendors (books, videos, CDs, curriculum kits), assistance with program evaluations and information on existing programs. Most of the local schools participating in the project used advisory committees composed of community leaders, business people, teachers, parents and students. This process engaged community members' support and participation in school efforts. The sub-grantees noted that in larger communities corporate sponsors provided materials, publicity and staff time while in smaller communities, partners, such as the local grocery store or bank, assisted with project activities and provided incentives for student participation. Since sub-grants to school districts were provided only for the project's implementation year, project directors found it a barrier to infusing the elements of character into the culture of the school site and community—a slow process that required continual education for teaching staff and obtaining ongoing support at the state and local levels. A statewide budget shortfall prevented sustainable funding sought by local districts, resulting in redirecting efforts to other or new programs.

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Oregon

Oregon Partnership in Character Education Program 1998–2003

Oregon used the grant to encourage use of a variety of local models for schools and districts. All participating sites agreed that simply adopting a packaged program would not be effective. One particular caution offered by the state's grantees was that programs that depended upon the offer of material awards were not effective. The Pilot Project also emphasized the creation of a caring school culture. As a result, the schools saw an improvement in general school climate when character education was integrated into the environment of the school. The most successful school programs concentrated on parental involvement in deciding which character traits to emphasize and strategies to pursue. Successful implementation at the school level required “buy-in” by the whole school community. As other states experienced, Oregon found that high turnover among administrators and teachers was a challenge to implementing character education. The support needed to nurture the change in school culture was difficult to maintain when new staff were continuously introduced into the project.

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?id=94](http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=94)

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Alliance for Character Education

1999–2004

In Pennsylvania, the grant was used to develop and implement a year-long Journey of a Champion curriculum with Philadelphia high school students. The curriculum was taught as a course using multicultural literature, videos and historical sources. Students learned about bigotry and genocide with the intent of helping develop service-learning projects that would assist their communities. The grant demonstrated that students understand and appreciate character education concepts in the context of a service-learning activity. In addition, Pennsylvania used many other activities to promote character education including summer training conferences, mini-grants to teachers to encourage service learning, and student design of projects. One challenge was the inability to achieve a high level of parental involvement given restrictions on many parents' time due to such factors, as employment.

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Rhode Island

Modeling Character Education in Partner Districts

2000–03

Rhode Island's focus was on professional development opportunities that included an annual conference, a summer institute and development and dissemination of publications, such as *Cultivating Understanding and Compassion in the Classroom: Improving Academic Achievement Through Social and Emotional Learning*; and *Educating for Character and Social Emotional Competency: Higher Education Faculty Resource Guide*. The state's academic reform agenda now includes implementation of character education and social and emotional learning (SEL). Incorporation of character education and SEL into postsecondary courses for teachers, administrators and school support staff made these a part of the education process, not an add-on. A cadre of educators across the state formed a network that continues to provide training and technical assistance on character education and SEL to individual schools. From its experience, Rhode Island learned that top-level support is critical to successful implementation of a program, and can be encouraged by professional development opportunities for principals at participating schools.

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South Carolina

Character Education in South Carolina

1997–2001

Efforts funded by the grant involved the creation of the South Carolina Character Development Partnership Team, which now has the responsibility for setting the course for character development in South Carolina. The team includes business, education, community and youth leaders. Grant efforts also contributed to the enactment of the *South Carolina Family Respect Act of 2000*, which requires all school districts to develop a character education policy. One innovation in South Carolina has been the inclusion of a character development measure on the state report card. The grant also provided professional development academies during summers. One lesson learned was that the Web site has been more effective than a library for disseminating information.

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South Dakota

South Dakota Character Education Partnership

2001–04

South Dakota grantees worked with an advisory board comprised of educators, parents, students and community members, and this made it a community effort from the start. All participating districts incorporated CEP's *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps and Lewis, 2003) into their program implementation. Because of the population dynamics of South Dakota, Native American traditions were incorporated into the character education efforts of the partner schools. One noted outcome of the project was the placement of coordinators in the community to direct and support local efforts. An annual conference allowed for sharing of ideas, mentoring and providing an opportunity for learning from national leaders. Like other states, South Dakota learned that a statewide mandate for program materials and methods would not work, and that each district needed to develop its own direction and plan.

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Tennessee

Tennessee's Character Education Project: A Commitment to Children 2000–04

The Tennessee grant helped to create “a presence within the Tennessee Department of Education that promotes and focuses on character education.” The department required school systems to complete an annual character education report, with resulting data compiled into an annual state progress report. The State Board of Education adopted CEP’s Character Education Quality Standards for local initiatives and adopted a unified state definition of character education. Tennessee also provided mini-grants to local school districts to develop and expand character education to meet a state general assembly requirement: “The course of instruction in all public schools shall include character education to help each student develop positive values and improve student conduct as students learn to act in harmony with their positive values and learn to become good citizens in their school, community and society” (*Tennessee Code Annotated, sec. 49-6-1007[a]*). In addition, the grant provided support to create a Web site and host an annual symposium, which continues with support from the state and other funding.

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Utah

Utah Community Partnership for Character Development 1995–99

The greatest accomplishment of the Utah effort was the development of a climate of support for quality character education across the state. As a result of the grant, character education became part of school and district activities, staff development, teacher education state standards and legislative funding. It also built on work already in place in the state core curriculum, a state board of education position statement on character education and the state’s life skills document. All these outcomes created an expectation that schools take their mission regarding character education seriously. The effort created a sense of unity and a common language in schools and a process for quality character education implementation and evaluation. A key component of Utah’s effort was inclusion of parents and the community in the process based on the belief that parents are their children’s primary moral educators, but that schools also have a role to play in the character development of young people. The approaches used in Utah were highly individualized, which allowed: 1) investment of teachers and administrators in the programs; 2) programs that reflected the needs and goals of individual communities; and 3) encouragement of values across the curriculum and throughout the school culture. Utah’s first activity was a statewide workshop with key school and community leaders to develop a consensus on core values and the need for character development in schools. This was followed by staff development workshops on character education

implementation and evaluation and continuing assistance for school personnel. Statewide character education conferences were held to share ideas among grant schools and others. The result of these efforts was a process for how a community could think together about reintegrating character education into the basic school program. Because Utah was one of the earlier grants, significant public relations work by all grant partners was necessary to convince various stakeholder groups of the value of character education, which ultimately resulted in broad support of implementing the Pilot Project across the state.

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Vermont

Vermont Character Education Program: Safe, Orderly, Civic and Positive Learning Environments 2001–06

Although character education efforts had been ongoing in Vermont before receipt of the grant, the project allowed the state to pilot a specific social skills approach in two school districts. Since grant receipt, the state has seen the passage of legislation (An Act Relating to the Crime of Hazing, Act 120 [S.76]) addressing bullying and harassment. The Vermont grant has been used to host statewide meetings to expand interest in character education so that now every school district in the state has incorporated some form of character education into their improvement plans. The work of the model districts and the statewide summer institute for professional development in character education strategies has contributed to this accomplishment. In addition, grantees have created a clearinghouse for information about the effort. Like other states reported about their projects, Vermont's experience suggested that the effort must be pursued school by school rather than being imposed from the top down.

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Virginia

The Virginia Character Education Project 2000–03

In Virginia, the grant was used to create a partnership among three local school divisions and the state Department of Education. Through the Virginia Character Education Project, the department provided resources and training to school personnel. Each school division appointed a character

education contact, who provided accountability for services and ensured dissemination of information and resources. Successful schools integrated character education into all of their programs including those relating to discipline, academics and community service. A tangible result of the Virginia effort was a CD training module called *Educating for Character: A Virginia Tradition*. The training focused on how to most effectively permeate the school climate through integrating the character education program. The project Web site has continuously updated resources and contact information available to schools. The Pilot Project provided summer institutes for character education through a partnership with three state universities. Additional forums were held throughout the state. One lesson learned was that a statewide steering committee was somewhat cumbersome, perhaps suggesting the importance of local efforts.

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Washington

Washington State Character Education Partnership 1996–2000

Following its tradition of local control, the Washington grant allowed for development of character education programs and strategies at the local district level. Although goals were similar, each pilot site used different “community-endorsed” methods for introducing character education into the schools. A video and interactive CD were developed that included information on site program implementation, individual site products, evaluation instruments and the final evaluation report. The grant additionally created an evaluation process using analysis of student writing about character, a qualitative method that examines the level of understanding students achieved.

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West Virginia

Integrating Character Development in West Virginia 2001–05

In West Virginia, school officials developed a strategic plan to implement CEP’s *Eleven Principles for Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps & Lewis, 2003) and improve the school’s culture and climate. As a result, West Virginia schools have seen a decrease in discipline referrals, an increase in attendance and a positive difference in student behavior, which have had beneficial effects on academic achievement. The West Virginia grantees particularly focused on professional development, with training and workshops based on nationally recognized character education

models for educators. A challenge experienced in West Virginia and shared by other states is the difficulty caused by personnel turnover. The resulting changes in school leadership and consolidation of schools negatively impacted character education efforts in a few schools.

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Wisconsin

Partners for Citizenship: Wisconsin's Character Education Partnership Project 1998–2003

Rather than creating new programs, schools in Wisconsin focused on integrating character education into the curriculum as outlined in the publication *Citizenship: Building A World of Good—A Tool Kit for Schools and Communities* (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1998). A statewide partnership comprised of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Congress of Parents and Teachers, and 12 regional Cooperative Education Service Agencies joined with 144 school sites to implement demonstration projects following the guidelines of this publication. The partner schools, in conjunction with community members and parents, developed action plans to strategically infuse character education activities across the curriculum, in the school environment and in the community. Some schools developed a character education component for their report cards. The Wisconsin pilot project resulted in the creation of a number of Web resources to support program implementation. The project benefited from a partnership with Learning Points Associates (a nonprofit organization), which provided additional funding for the character education programs. A great benefit for program implementation was the consistent support of the state superintendent and several department program areas, such as career and technical education, related student organizations, service learning, social studies, prevention and wellness.

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Appendix A. Analysis of State Pilot Project Information

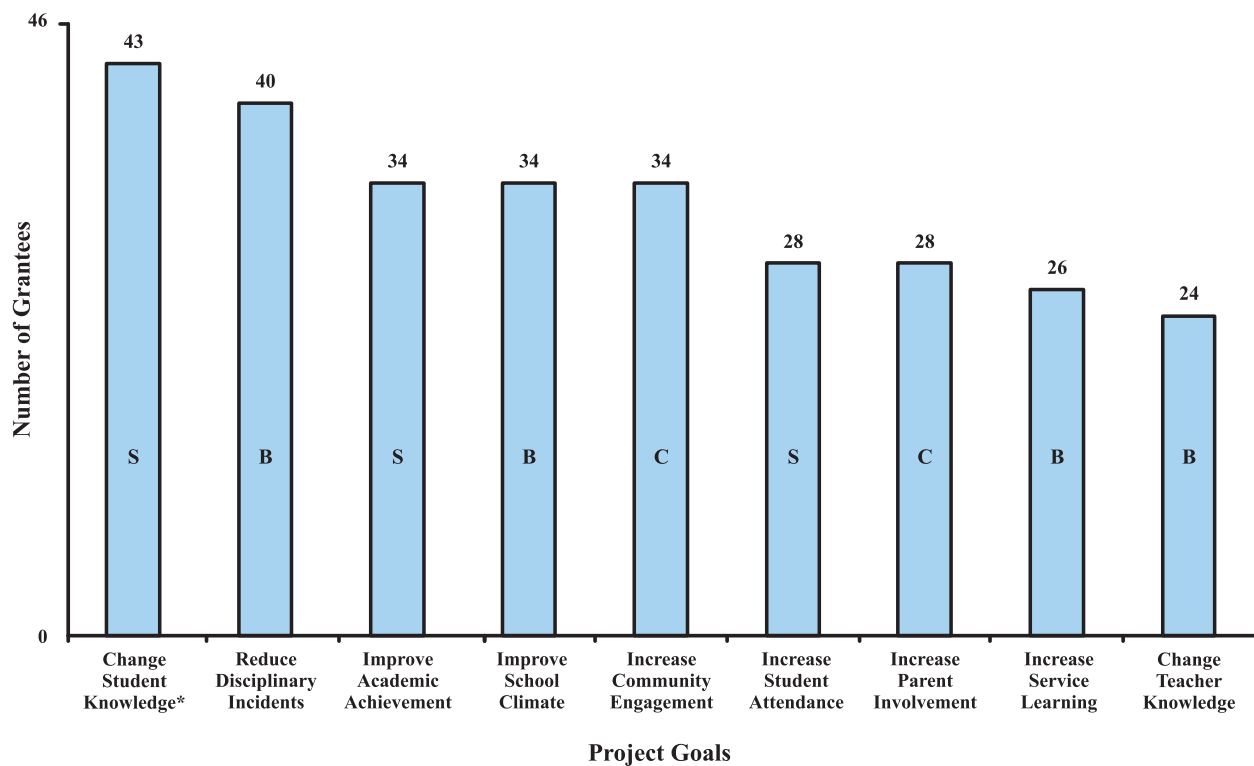
THE ASSESSMENT of the information submitted by the grantees (grant reports, a survey and selected interviews) is designed to help the reader understand the results of the 46 projects. The projects began over a seven-year period, from 1995–2001, and the last project concluded in 2006. Each project was largely independent of the others. Therefore, it is significant that the 46 separate projects had numerous areas of agreement—in approach, in execution and in impact. The following illustrations help indicate that commonality.

These illustrations are not a measurement of the degree of success of any project or a group of projects. They are not a judgment of the value of any project or group of projects. However, they are an effective tool for looking for common ideas, similar approaches and key concepts that link all of the state projects. This information can form the basis upon which individual districts and schools may now build when they begin a character education program at the local level.

Project Goals

Most grantees had significant agreement in project goals (exhibit 1). Over 90 percent (43 of 46) selected (from the survey) “Change in student knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, and actions related to chosen elements of character”; 87 percent (40 of 46) chose “Reduce disciplinary incidents”; 74 percent (34 of 46) identified “Improve academic achievement,” “Improve school climate” and “Increase community engagement”; 61 percent (28 of 46) named “Increase student attendance” and “Increase parent involvement”; 57 percent (26 of 46) indicated “Increase service learning”; and 52 percent (24 of 46) chose “Change teacher knowledge” as goals. The exhibit below shows those goals selected by more than half of the grantees, which can be grouped into three focus categories of Student (S), School Building (B) and Community (C) as indicated. Table 1 on the next page shows information sorted by category. All grantees answered this question.

Exhibit 1. Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Project Goals by Number of Grantees Who Selected the Goal, and by Category



Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports, follow-up survey and selected interviews.

Note: The categories S = Student, B = School Building, C = Community denote the general focus of the goal.

* Change in student knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, and actions related to chosen elements of character.

Table 1. Number and Percentage of Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Project Grantees by Goal

Goals	No. of Grantees Selecting From Survey	Percentage of Grantees (%)
<i>Student-related</i>		
Change student knowledge *	43	93
Improve academic achievement	34	74
Increase student attendance	28	61
<i>School-building-related</i>		
Reduce disciplinary incidents	40	87
Improve school climate	34	74
Increase service learning	26	57
Change teacher knowledge	24	52
<i>Community-related</i>		
Increase community engagement	34	74
Increase parent involvement	28	61

Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports, follow-up survey and selected interviews.

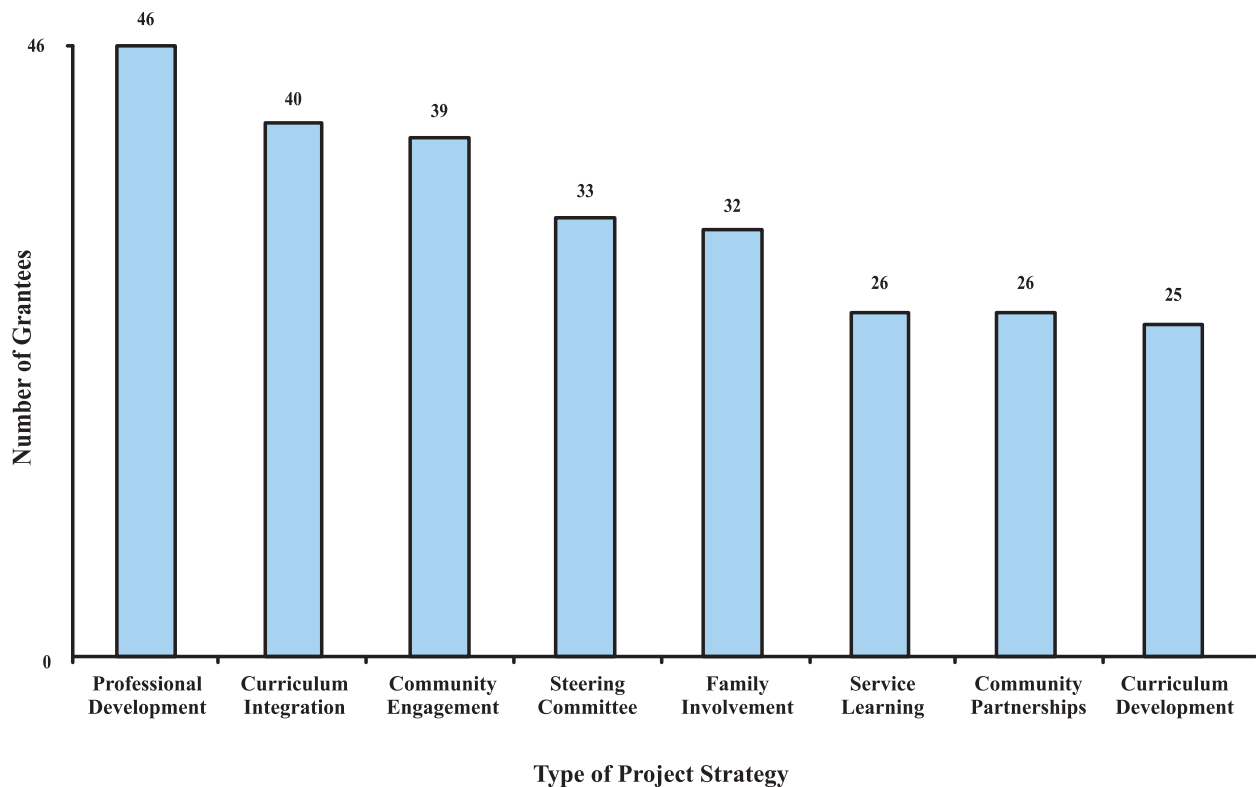
Note: The categories are not mutually exclusive. All grantees could choose more than one goal. There were no survey restrictions on the number of goals selected or on the categories listed.

* Change in student knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, and actions related to chosen elements of character.

Project Strategies

Exhibit 2 below shows data for the eight strategies selected by more than half the grantees (from 20 strategies listed on the survey). Every grantee ($N = 46$) used professional development as a key strategy to accomplish the project goals (exhibit 2). Each project reported the use of at least two additional strategies from the ones shown on the chart below. Forty projects (87 percent) used curriculum integration, 39 projects (85 percent) selected community engagement, 33 projects (72 percent) chose a steering committee, 32 projects (70 percent) utilized family involvement, 26 projects (57 percent) implemented service learning and community partnerships, and 25 projects (54 percent) used curriculum development as key strategies. Exhibit 2 illustrates a high degree of agreement among the projects regarding the strategies used for implementation. All grantees answered this question.

Exhibit 2. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Project Strategy

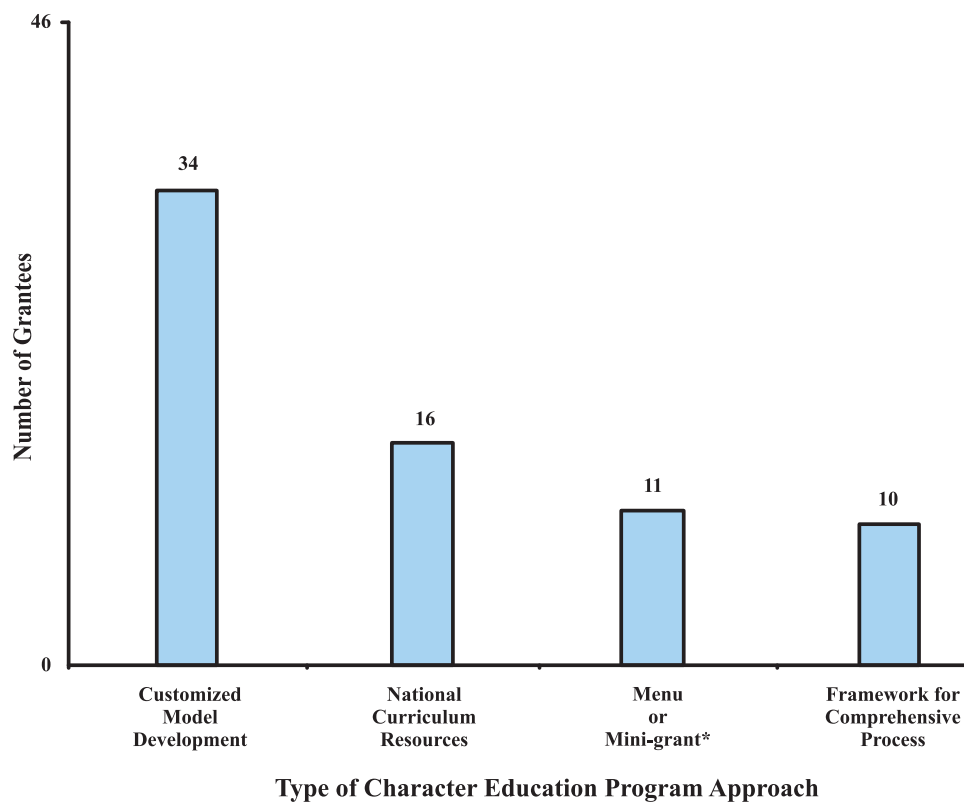


Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports and follow-up survey.
Note: Grantees selected from a total of 20 strategies.

Program Approaches

The types of character education program approaches implemented by the grantees are shown in exhibit 3 below. Most grantees took similar approaches. Thirty-four states (74 percent) developed their own approaches to fit the specifications of their school systems and communities (the customized model development); more than half of the grantees chose more than one of the four approaches. For example, some who said they used customized model development also reported using one of the other three approaches. The other approaches included selecting curricula from national curriculum providers (16 states, 35 percent); providing a menu of program components from which school districts could select or a mini-grant (a sub-grant of a state's grant, often distributed through a competitive process; 11 states, 24 percent); and using a framework to develop a comprehensive process (10 states, 22 percent). Six grantees did not respond to this question.

Exhibit 3. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Program Approach



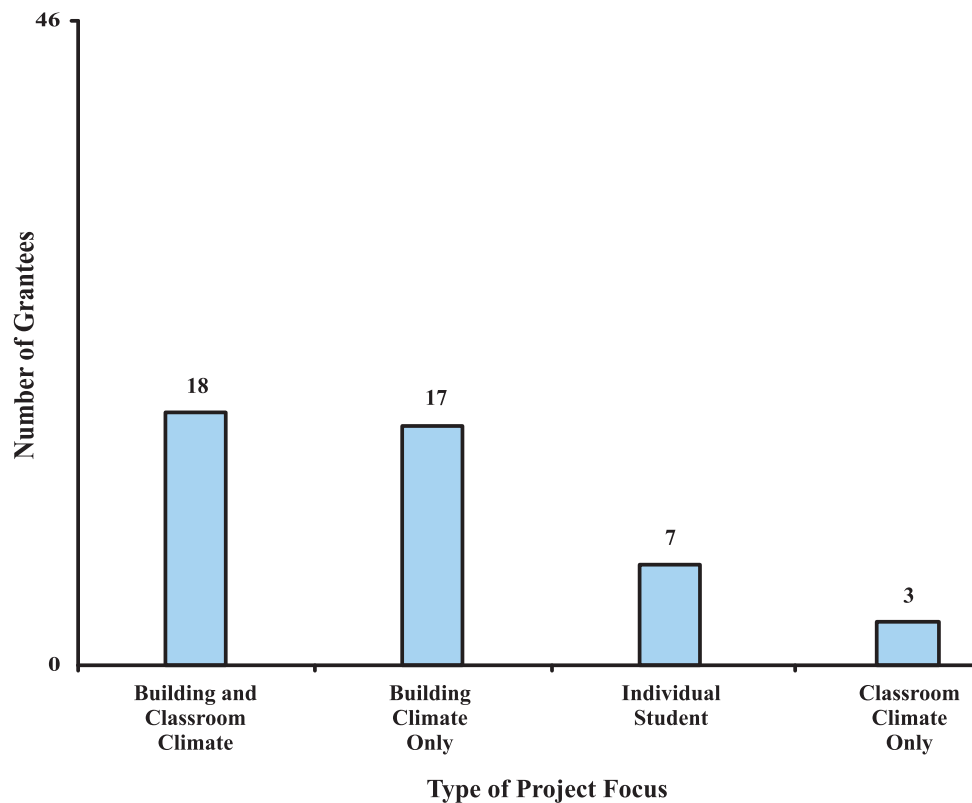
Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports.

* Mini-grant is a sub-grant of a state's grant, often distributed through a competitive process.

Project Focus

Responses indicated that the primary focus of the pilot projects was improving the climate of schools and classrooms (exhibit 4). On the survey disseminated for this report, grantees were permitted to select as many of the four choices provided for project focus as they believed applied to their projects. Analysis of the response data from the 34 grantees who answered this question reveals that 32 of the projects (70 percent of grantees) selected one of the three choices dealing with climate, with eighteen (39 percent) focusing on building and classroom climate. Seventeen grantees (37 percent) focused on the building climate only; seven (15 percent) on individual students; and three (seven percent) on classroom climate only. Twenty-five grantees used only one of the four approaches; seven used two approaches, and two used three approaches. Twelve grantees did not respond to this question.

Exhibit 4. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Project Focus

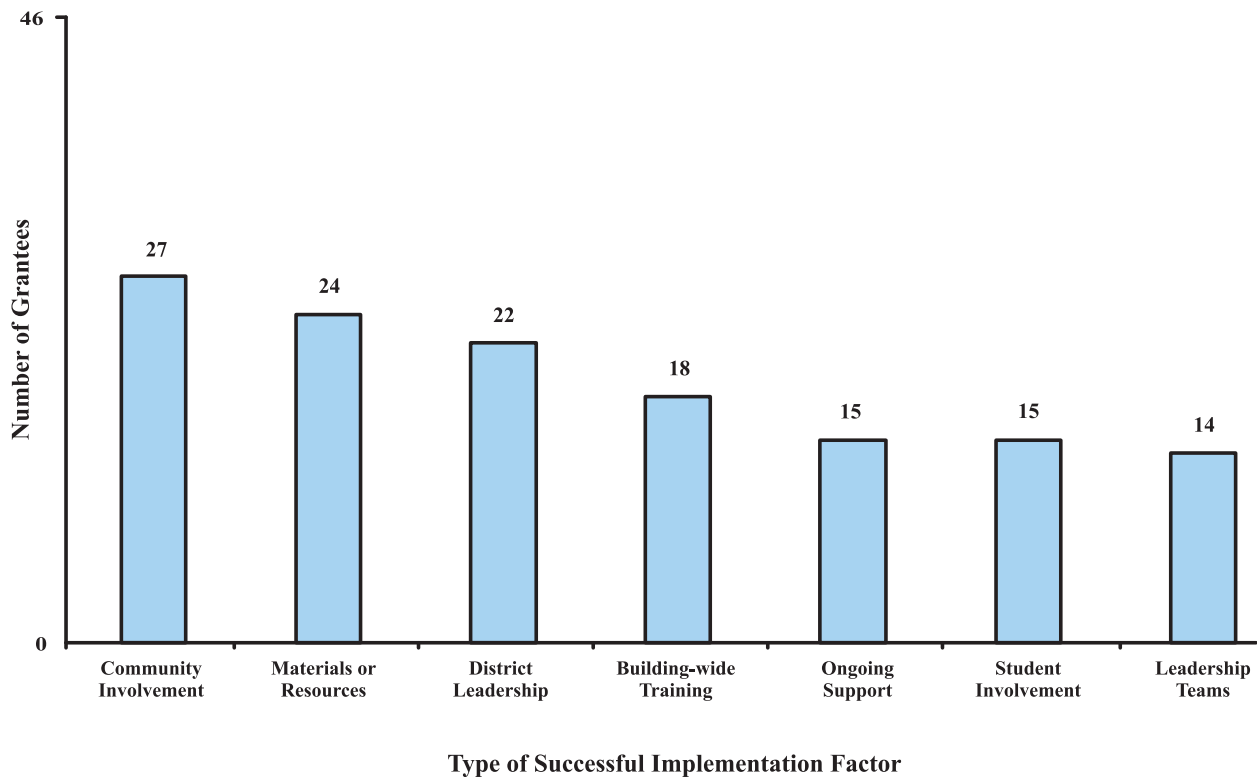


Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports and follow-up survey.

Successful Implementation Factors

Community involvement and materials or resources were the two factors selected by over half the grantees (27 and 24 grantees, respectively) when asked to pick successful implementation factors from the list of seven shown in exhibit 5. Twenty-two grantees (48 percent) chose district leadership; 18 (39 percent) selected building-wide training; 15 (33 percent) indicated either ongoing support or student involvement; and 14 (30 percent) opted leadership teams. “Other” was also a choice but was selected by just seven grantees (15 percent) and always in combination with at least two additional factors. Thirty-five grantees responded to this question and all but two selected at least two of the seven success factors. Eleven grantees did not respond to this question.

Exhibit 5. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Successful Implementation Factor

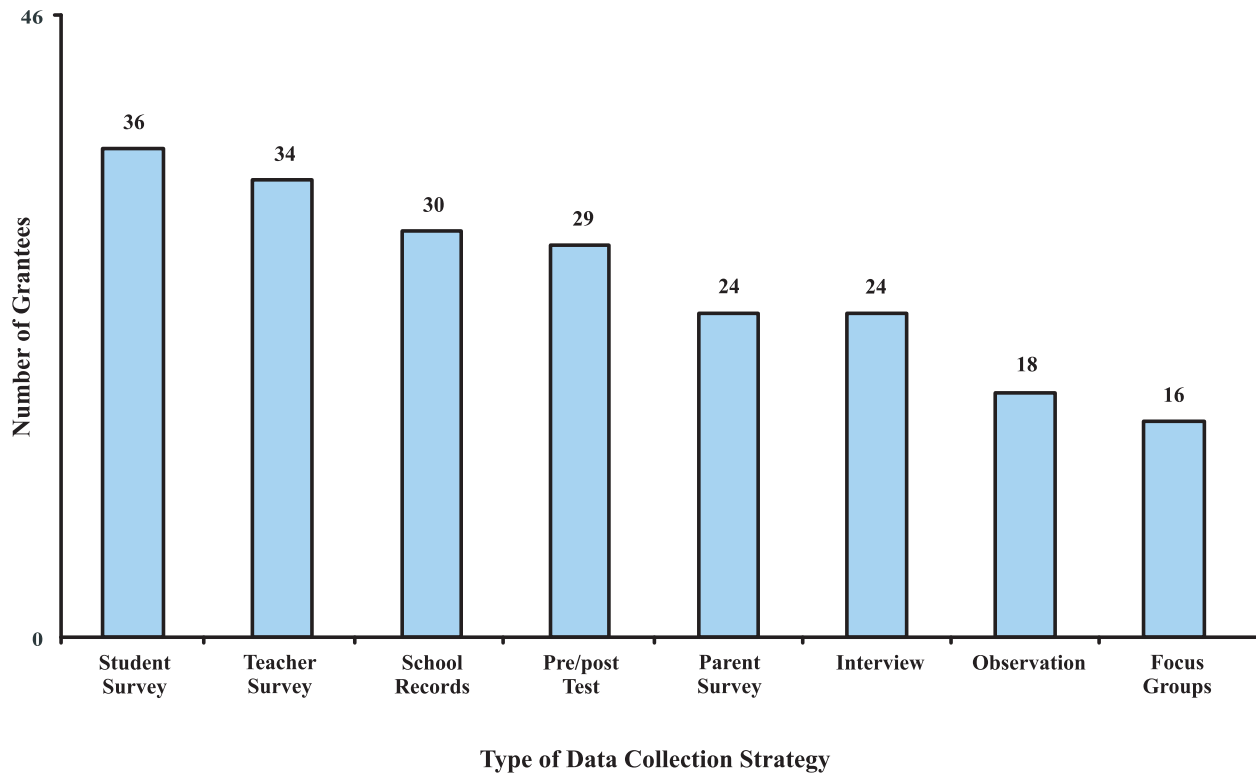


Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports and follow-up survey.

Data Collection Strategies

Exhibit 6 illustrates that the state Pilot Project grantees relied extensively on surveys as a data collection tool to determine the success of their character education projects. Thirty-six projects (78 percent) used student surveys, 34 (74 percent) selected teacher surveys, 30 (65 percent) chose school records, 29 (63 percent) utilized pre/post tests, 24 (52 percent) chose parent surveys and interviews, 18 (39 percent) used observation, and 16 (35 percent) selected focus groups as one of their data collection strategies. Forty-one projects (89 percent of grantees) reported using three or more data collection strategies, whereas just two projects used only two. Three grantees did not respond to this question.

Exhibit 6. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Data Collection Strategy



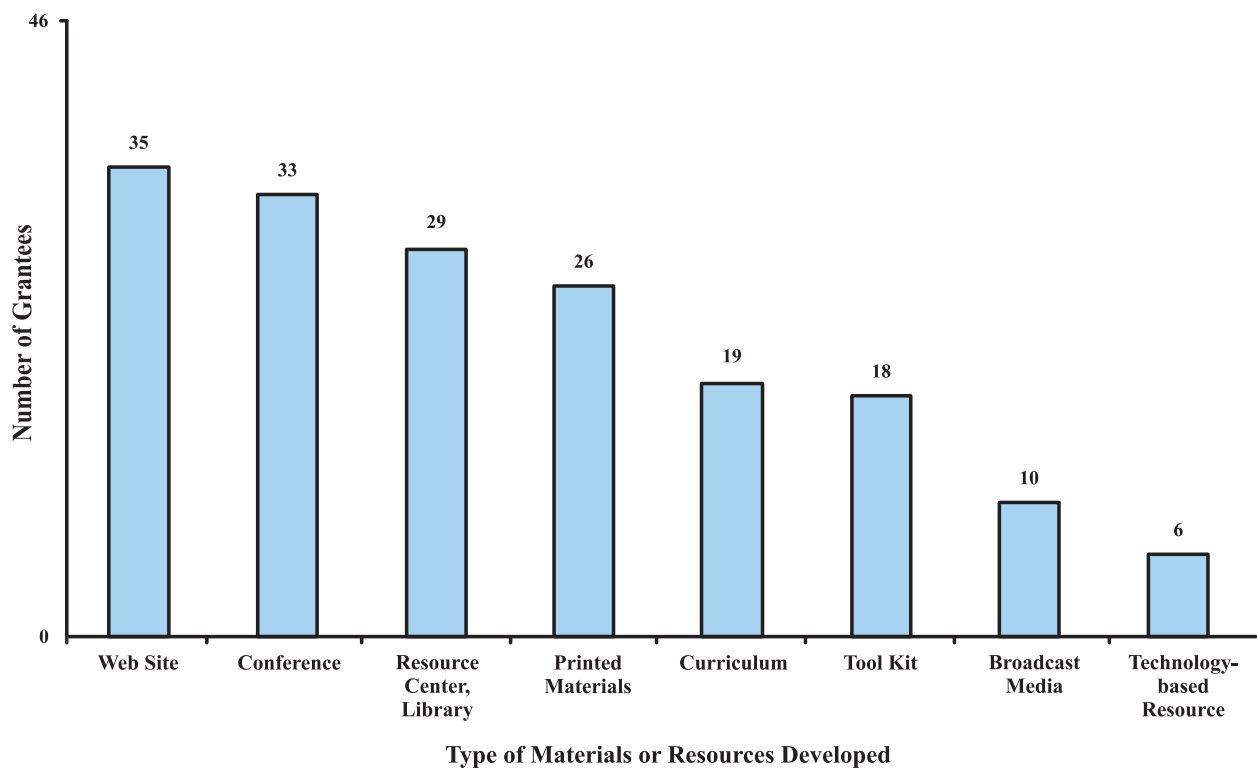
Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports.

Development of Materials or Resources

Four types of materials or resources were used by more than half of the grantees to implement their pilot projects and disseminate information about character education. Over 70 percent of the grantees reported that they developed Web sites (35 grantees) or used conferences (33 grantees) during their projects. Twenty-nine (63 percent) developed a resource center or library, 26 (57 percent) created printed materials, 19 (41 percent) developed a curriculum, 18 (39 percent) created a tool kit, 10 (22 percent) developed broadcast media, and six (13 percent) created a technology-based resource.

Forty-two of the projects (91 percent of grantees) reported they used two or more of the eight types of materials listed in exhibit 7. Two grantees reported using just one type and two grantees did not respond to the question.

Exhibit 7. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Type of Materials or Resource Developed

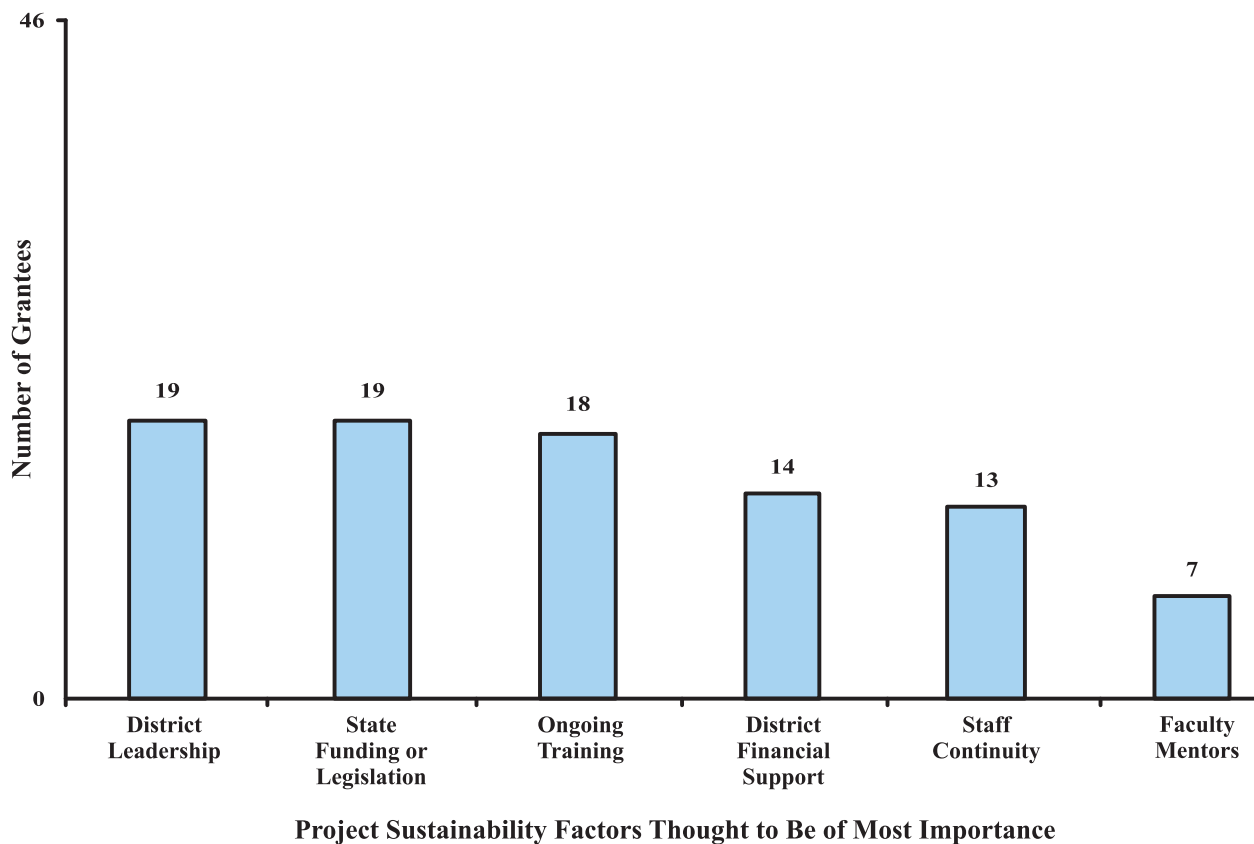


Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports and follow-up survey.

Sustainability Factors

Exhibit 8 shows that among the 22 grantees who responded to this question, there was substantial agreement as to which were considered the most important factors for sustainability of character education projects: district leadership (19 grantees or 41 percent), state funding or legislation (also 19 grantees, 41 percent), and ongoing training (18 grantees, 39 percent). District financial support (14 grantees, 30 percent), staff continuity (13 grantees, 28 percent) and faculty mentors (seven grantees, 15 percent) were other factors mentioned by some grantees. Twenty-four grantees did not respond to this question.

Exhibit 8. Number of Grantees Implementing Character Education 1995–2001 State Pilot Projects by Sustainability Factors Thought to Be of Most Importance



Source: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project grant reports and follow-up survey.

Appendix B. U.S. Department of Education Additional Resources Related to Character Education

For additional information, please contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools
400 Maryland Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-6450
1-800-872-5327
<http://www.ed.gov/osdfs>

Additional resources:

Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center
<http://www.cetac.org>
Call 1-866-40-CETAC (1-866-402-3822).

Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen
<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/citizen>
Call 1-877-433-7827 to order.

Character Education – Our Shared Responsibility
<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/character/brochure.html>
Call 1-877-433-7827 to order.

Partnerships in Character Education Authorizing Legislation
Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, Sec. 10103
<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/sec10103.html>

Mobilizing for Evidence-Based Character Education
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/charactered/mobilizing.pdf>
Call 1-877-433-7827 to order.

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