

*Teaching Participatory Competencies for  
Success in School and Life: How to Bring  
Social-Emotional and Character  
Development into Every Classroom and  
Subject Area*

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**and Developing Safe and Civil Schools**

**[www.teachSECD.COM](http://www.teachSECD.COM)**

Keynote at the Second ENSEC Conference: Promoting Social-Emotional Education:

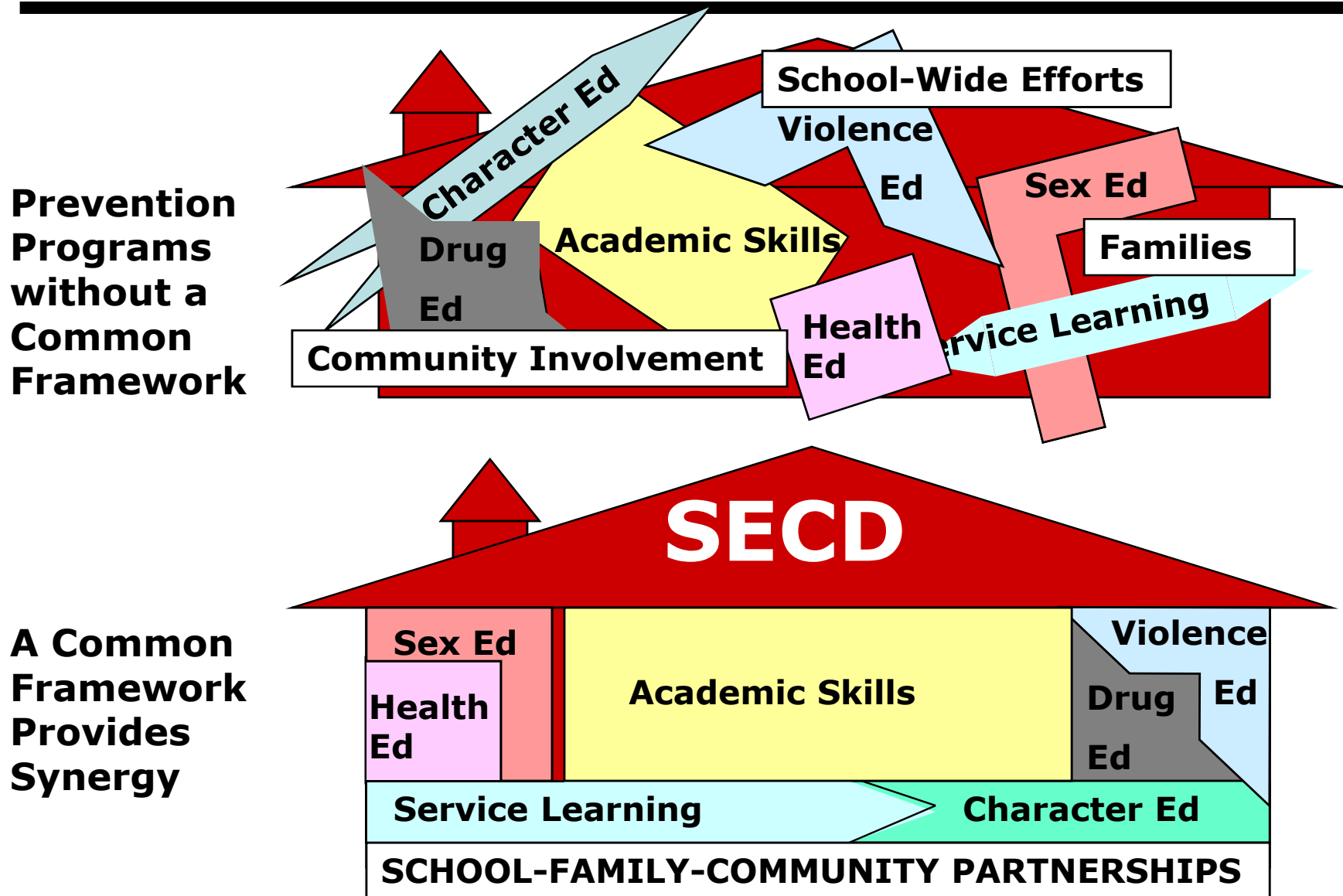
Practitioners and Researchers Exploring Evidence Based Practice,

*9-12<sup>th</sup> September, 2009, Izmir, Turkey*

# The Issue:

**Fragmentation** of SE Competence/SECD/  
Prevention/Counseling/ Service Learning/  
Positive Youth Development/ After-School  
Socialization and related programs:  
**reduces** their effectiveness,  
**frustrates** and demoralizes staff,  
**compromises** sound SE skills development, and  
**erodes and interferes** with academic competence  
and success

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



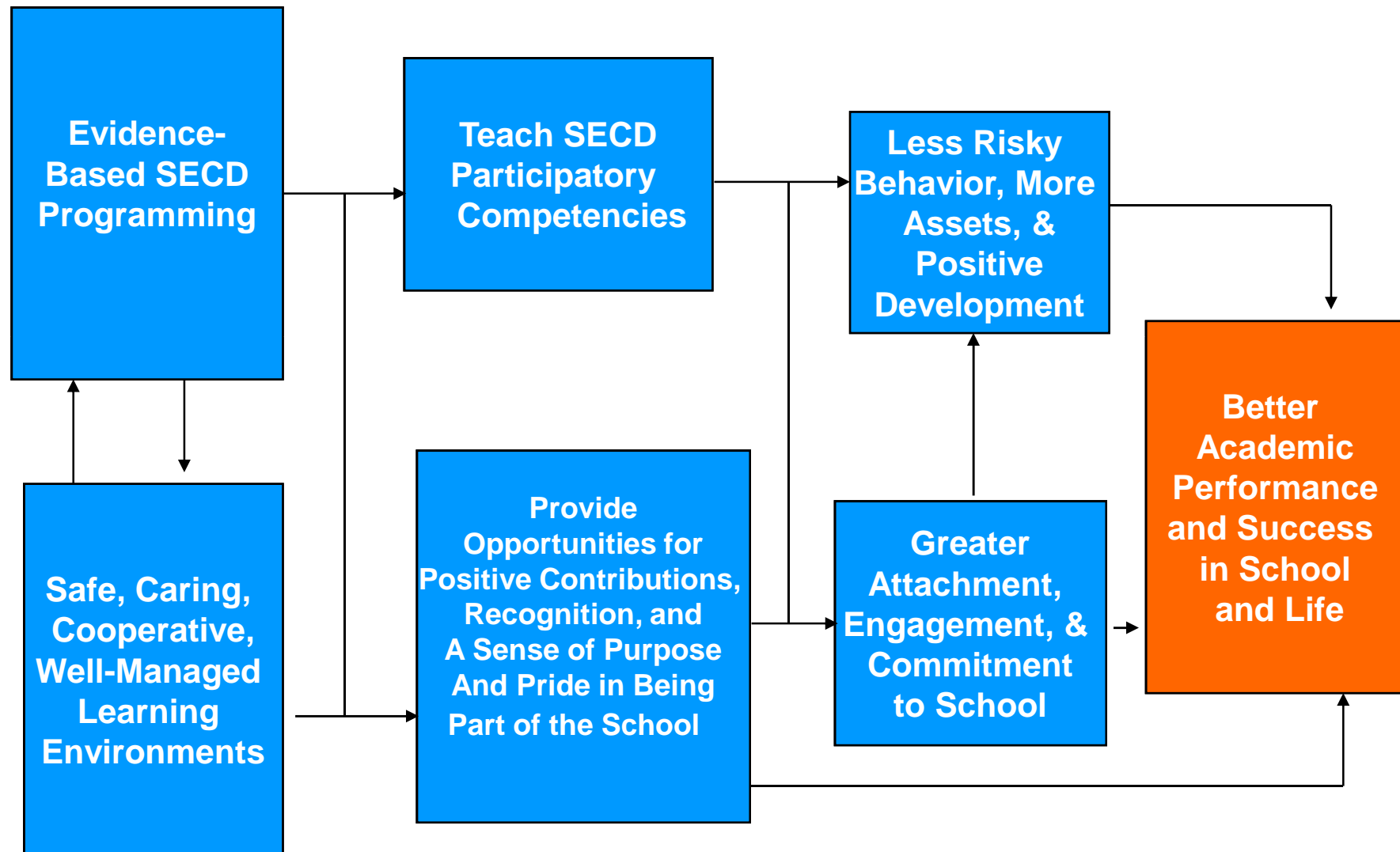
# Weaving a Warm Quilt

- Think of various programs as pieces of a quilt. Even if each piece is of high quality, we only get warmth as the pieces are stitched together well. The more pieces we have stitched together, the more warmth we provide to our students. At some point before we have an entire quilt, we reach the tipping point. That is when the school climate significantly improves



# Pathways to Success in School and in Life:

## Summary of Research on the Role of Evidence-Based SECD Programming & School Climate & Engagement



# Operational Assumptions

- Effectiveness of SECD-related programs is essential to reduce emotional barriers to learning
- Reducing emotional barriers to learning is essential for low performing students to learn academic content and skills deeply and for all students to reach their potential and apply what they learn in school to life inside and out of school
- Students require learning environments that are respectful, orderly, safe, academically challenging, caring, involving/engaging, and well-managed
- Impact on students follows impact on staff perceptions of climate

# If You Had a Magic Wand, What Values Would You Wish for Children?

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

# **THE NEW CHALLENGES FACING CHILDREN**

- **Increased pace of life**
- **Greater economic demands on parents**
- **Alterations in family composition and stability**
- **Breakdown of neighborhoods and extended families**
- **Weakening of community institutions**
- **Unraveling of parent-child bonds due to work, school demands, time, drugs, mental health, and economic burdens**
- **Climate of war, terror**
- **Ongoing exposure to an array of digital media and pervasive advertising that encourage violence as a problem-solving tool and other health-damaging behaviors and unrealistic lifestyles**

# What Is Required for Success

- Staff must have a positive view of the school climate, their roles, and their students
- Students must be literate in a range of areas and acquire skills in participatory competence for classroom, school, workplace, family, and community life
- Students, staff, and community must be engaged in and committed to schools and schools must be connected to and committed to their communities

# **Social-Emotional and Character Development (SECD): Fundamental Principles**

- Successful academic performance by students depends on:
  - ✓ students' social-emotional skills, especially emotional vocabulary and management and problem solving/decision making/nonviolent conflict resolution,
  - ✓ their approaching education with a sense of positive purpose and meaning,
  - ✓ having positive, caring relationships in schools, and
  - ✓ the presence of a safe, supportive school climate that fosters a respectful, challenging, and engaging learning community

# SEL/SECD Participatory Competencies

- **Self-Awareness** – Recognizing one’s emotions and values as well as one’s strengths and limitations
- **Self-Management** – Managing emotions and organizing behaviors to achieve goals related to school, family, workplace, community
- **Social Awareness** – Showing understanding, empathy, active caring and compassion for others
- **Relationship Skills** – Forming positive relationships, working in teams, dealing effectively with conflict, welcoming, greeting, and communicating appropriately and effectively for school, family, community, vocational, and leadership roles
- **Responsible Decision Making** – Making ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior, solving problems thoughtfully, avoiding negative, high-risk, unhealthy behaviors

# How Do Skills Become Internalized?

- They must be taught in coordinated, continuous, and consistent ways and
- Their use must be recognized and appreciated and shown to have value

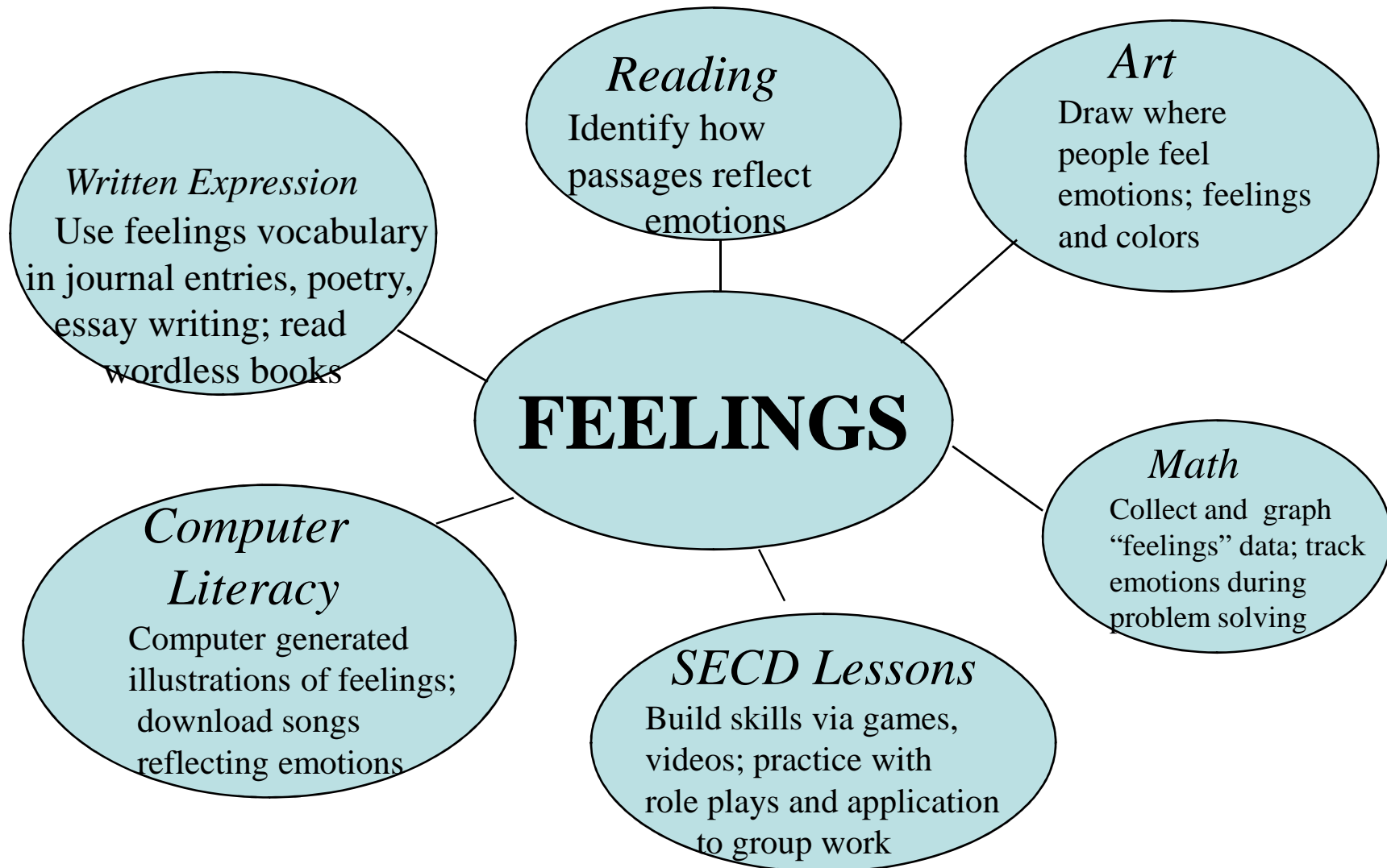


# Starting Points for Comprehensive SECD Programming

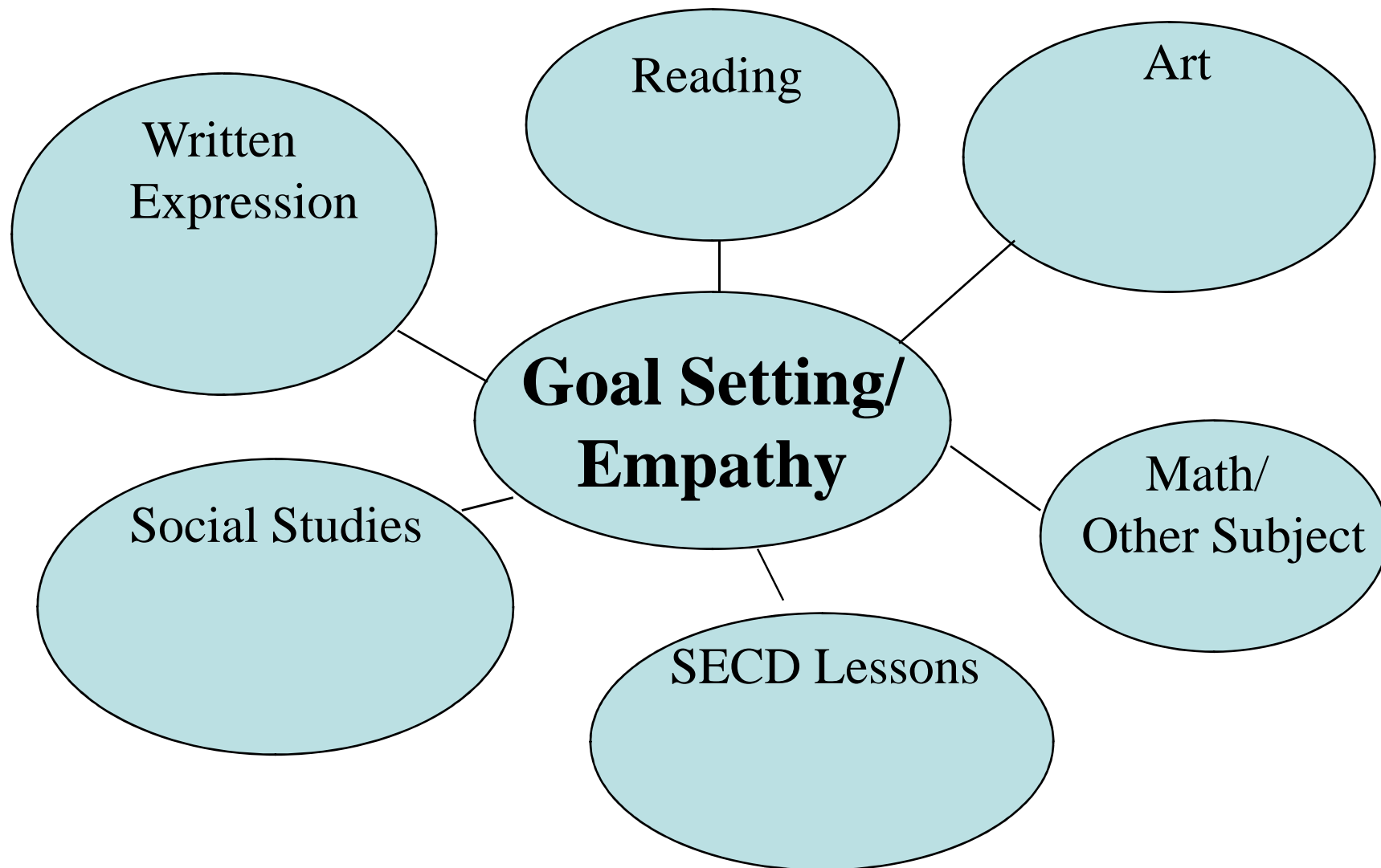


- Establish a school climate articulating specific themes, character elements, and/or values
  - Examine and make more systematic current efforts to build students' participatory competencies
  - Set up systems to enhance coping skills and social support for transitions, crises, resolving conflicts
  - Provide high-quality, genuine, reflective service opportunities for all students
  - Foster enduring and pervasive SEL/CE effects through collaboration between home and school.
- Based on : Elias, Zins, Weissberg, and CASEL Associates, ASCD, 1997; Novick, Kress, & Elias, ASCD, 2002.

# Integration of SECD into Lesson Content and Instruction



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# How Laws of Life Essays Unify Schools and Professionals

- What is a Law of Life Essay?
- Case example: Plainfield Public School District, Plainfield, NJ and *Urban Dreams*
- Extending the effects into homes and communities



# Contract procedure rationale

- Writing down goals makes them easier to remember
- Identifying specific steps that offer contextual cues prompts goal-directed behavior
- Anticipating and planning for obstacles increases likelihood of perseverance

# **Three Interlocking, Overlapping, Networked Service Components**

We envision being able to “go to scale” and reach every school in New Jersey over a period of 3-4 years. But this can’t be done only by providing services.

We envision three key pieces:

# Three Components

- **Centralized and Regional DSACS Services**, connected to with the Safe and Drug Free Schools Unit's proven capacity for needs assessment, planning, and support in seeking funding
- **Credentialing Process** to build the field of Instruction and Coordination in Social-Emotional and Character Development Competencies, connected to the NJ Center for Social and Character Development and an evolving professional association
- **Coordinated Training and Support Opportunities** provided within Stakeholder Organizations

# Types/Levels of Credentialing

- Instruction in Social-Emotional and Character Development (these include programs for social-emotional learning, character education, bully/violence/victimization prevention, suicide prevention, substance abuse and steroid prevention, group guidance, social skills groups in and after school, service learning, conflict resolution)
- Master Teacher of SECD (the capacity to train staff in one's school building in SECD)
- School Level Coordination of SECD
- District Level Coordination of SECD

# Linking with Stakeholder Organizations

Integrate into Stakeholders' already extensive and high quality professional development services, systematic opportunities to build competencies around SECD.

Link systematically with professional preparation programs, including those for teachers, school psychologists, counselors, social workers, student assistance professionals, and administrators and convene a Higher Education Advisory SECD Panel to coordinate and sustain this work.

# Creating Commitment: Social Marketing, Buy-in and More

- Articulate a clear theory of action, relentlessly communicated and modeled by the superintendent and colleagues at all levels of the organization.
- Establish a diverse critical mass of staff and stakeholders with a strong commitment to mission.
- Build on this commitment by using pressure and support to communicate clear and consistently held expectations, and support to help staff to meet the expectations
- Distribute leadership opportunities without regard to appointed or formal position and hierarchy.
- Display zero tolerance for alibis, excuses, or exceptions!

# Key Elements for Sustainability

- Presence of a program coordinator or committee to oversee implementation and resolution of day-to-day problems
- Involvement of individuals with high shared morale, good communication, and a sense of ownership
- Ongoing processes of formal and informal training, including the involvement of acknowledged experts
- High inclusiveness of all school populations

# Key Elements in Sustainability

- High visibility in the school and the community
- Components that explicitly foster mutual respect and support among students
- Varied and engaging instructional approaches
- Linkage to state goals of schools or districts
- Consistent support from school principals
- Balance of support from both new and seasoned administrators

# Some Observations

- You can't make people do what they don't want to do
- People need to be reminded about values they hold deeply.
- We are marketing to people's true selves
  - We're helping give a voice to things that many people went into education to do
- People sometimes lack the courage to follow their hearts
- Social marketing does not come naturally to most educators because it is not part of training
- We have to get the word out often and in ways that make sense to people and don't require a tremendous amount of energy from them to get the message

How Shall We Proceed to  
Get to Where We Know  
We Must Go?



# Resources:

- [www.teachSECD.com](http://www.teachSECD.com) • Developing Safe and Civil Schools
- [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org) • The George Lucas Educational Foundation
- [www.CASEL.org](http://www.CASEL.org) • The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
- [www.ESRNATIONAL.ORG](http://www.ESRNATIONAL.ORG) • Educators for Social Responsibility
- [www.COMMUNITIESOFHOPE.ORG](http://www.COMMUNITIESOFHOPE.ORG) • The H.O.P.E. Foundation
- [www.NPRINC.COM](http://www.NPRINC.COM) • National Professional Resources
- [www.csee.net](http://www.csee.net) • Center for Social & Emotional Education
- [www.teachEQ.com](http://www.teachEQ.com) • Institute for Emotionally Intelligent Learning