

Competencies for the 21st Century: How They Can Be Learnt, Taught, and Evaluated

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.

Dept. of Psychology, Rutgers University

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

Director, The Collaborative Center for Community-Based Research and Service (engage.rutgers.edu)

848-445-2444 RutgersMJE@AOL.COM

Keynote Presentation at the Conference: Social Skills, Emotions and Attitudes to Learning: How Can They Be Taught and Evaluated

Barcelona, 17 November 2016

Palau Macaya, Barcelona

A person is a person through
other
persons.
—Bantu



A Feelings Walking Tour

Take a visualized walk through your school building. Look in on classes, lunch and recess times, meetings, extracurricular activities, after-school and evening events-- the entire gamut of what occurs on regular school days. Be aware of your feelings at different destinations on your tour.

Where do you experience positive emotions, such as pride, joy, and excitement?

Where do you experience negative emotions, such as stress, anxiety, frustration, and anger?

Where do you experience both types of emotions? What might be happening at these times and places to cause these emotions?

What feelings are most likely to serve as catalysts for action in your setting?

Has your school gotten used to being in a state of high stress?

- From: B. Novick, J. Kress, & M. Elias. (2002). **Building Learning Communities with Character: How to Integrate Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning**. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Developmental Rights and Ethical/Moral Imperatives

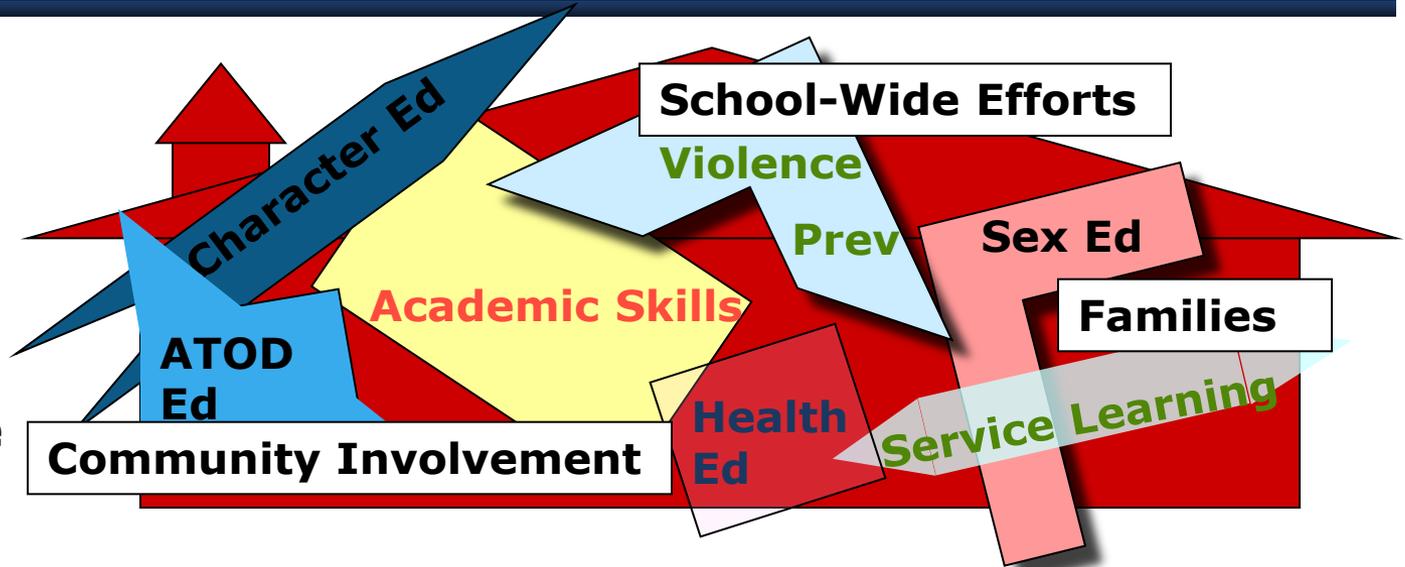
- **Children need supportive, nurturing environments created by caring adults for them to thrive, and all children can thrive**
- **Those working in educational or parenting contexts must act with respect, challenge, caring, safety, civility, support, inspiration, and encouragement of nurturance and resilience**

What Kind of Schools Do you
Want for YOUR Grandchildren?

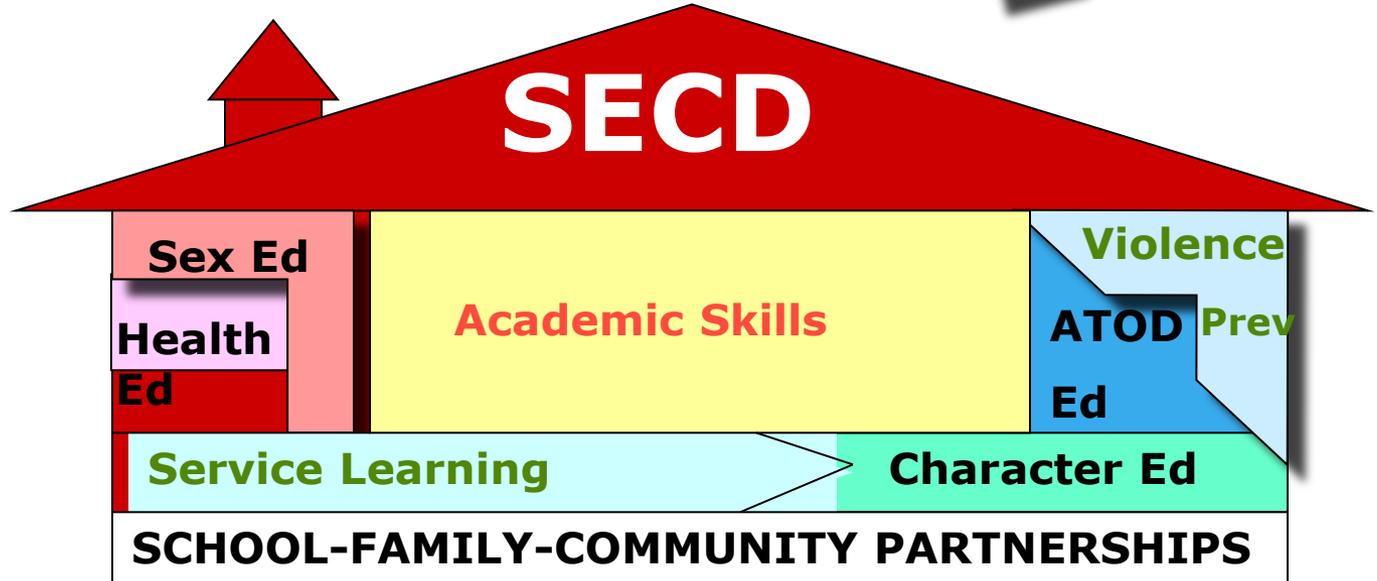


Social-Emotional and Character Development (SECD): *A Coordinated Framework Provides Synergy*

**A Jumbled
and
Fragmented
Schoolhouse**



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



What Allows Schools to Foster Resilience?

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

Positive,
Character-
Building
School
Culture and
Climate

+

Explicit
Instruction
in SEL Skills

+

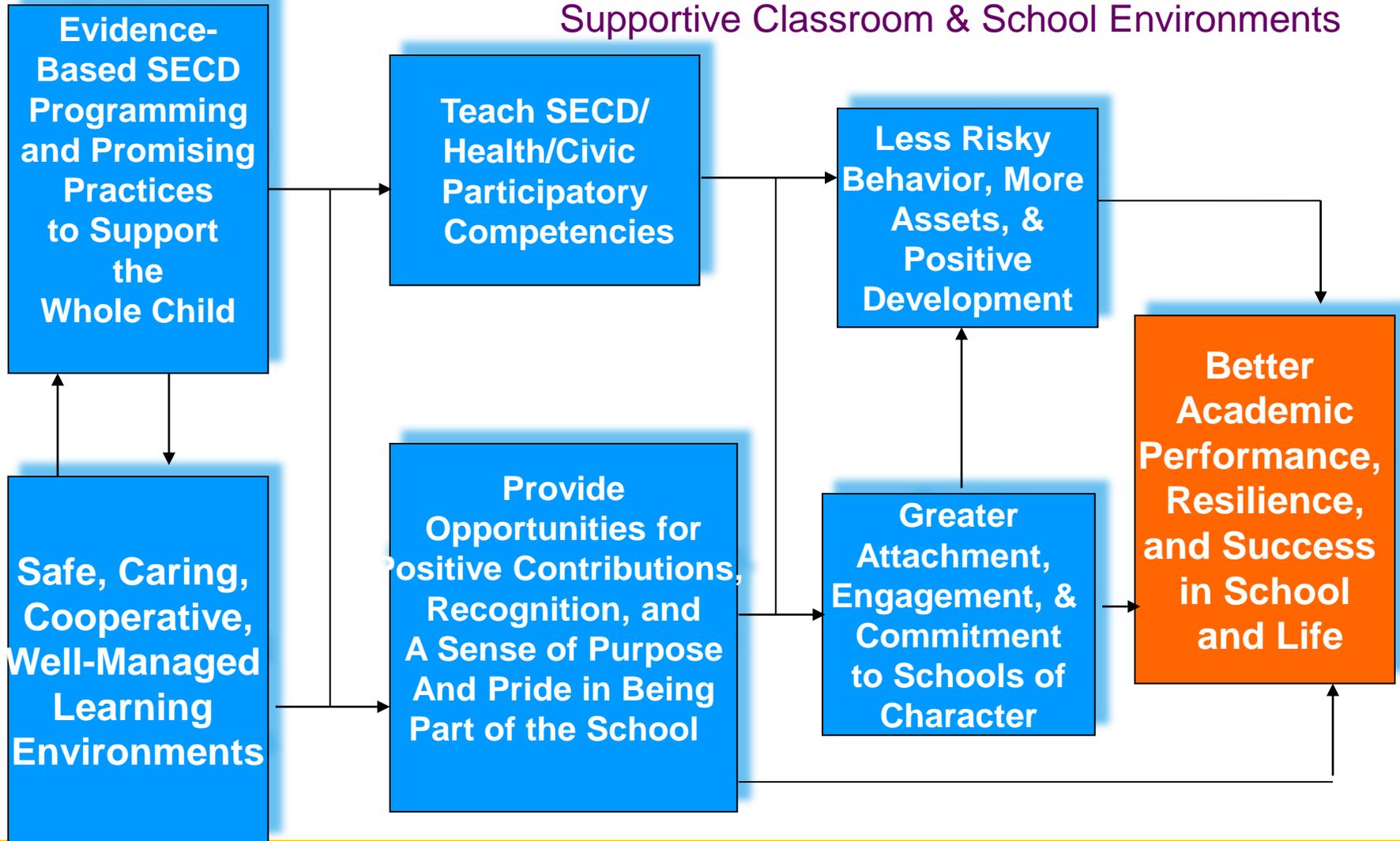
Habits of mind that include:

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

Source: *SEL and Academics: Research Brief*, Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, 2007.

Paths to Success in School and in Life:

Competence and Resilience Come from a Confluence of SECD and Supportive Classroom & School Environments



Essential Tasks of Schools

- **INSPIRING**.....*of one another*
- **CHALLENGING**.....*take risks to improve*
- **SUPPORTIVE**.....*collective efficacy*
- **SAFE AND HEALTHY**.....*others' keepers*
- **ENGAGED**.....*collaborative norms*
- **RESPECTFUL**.....*no-fear communication*
- **COMMUNITIES OF LEARNERS**...*set and pursue goals for learning together*
- **From** NJSHACC Guidelines for Successful Schools: The Culture of a Learning Organization
<http://selinschools.org/new-jersey-culture-and-climate-coalition/>

We Must Provide the Forward-Looking Education to Ensure that ALL Students are College, Career, Community, & Life Ready



Reaching the Adults, Not Training Them

- Begin by asking, “What do you most want school life to offer your students?”
- Ask educators to share their moments of greatest professional joy.
- Follow with a list of things that bring them a sense of “oy” as professionals.
- Consider what contributes to joy and to “oy,” and how can they go from “oy” to “joy” more often.

These discussions will lead naturally into a consideration of factors essential for students’ social-emotional and character development, including school contexts that will be more personally and professionally enhancing for educators.

Conversations to Foster Valuing of SEL Skills and Mindsets

From Rabbi Abraham Twersky: “Let our children see that we are forever trying, that we continue to try throughout our lives, and that we do not condemn ourselves if we have not reached our goal. We try harder.”

From Albert Schweitzer: “At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

The Underestimated Role of Purpose

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

Carl Jung

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

Helen Keller

A MOSAIC Approach: The Next Iteration of SEL

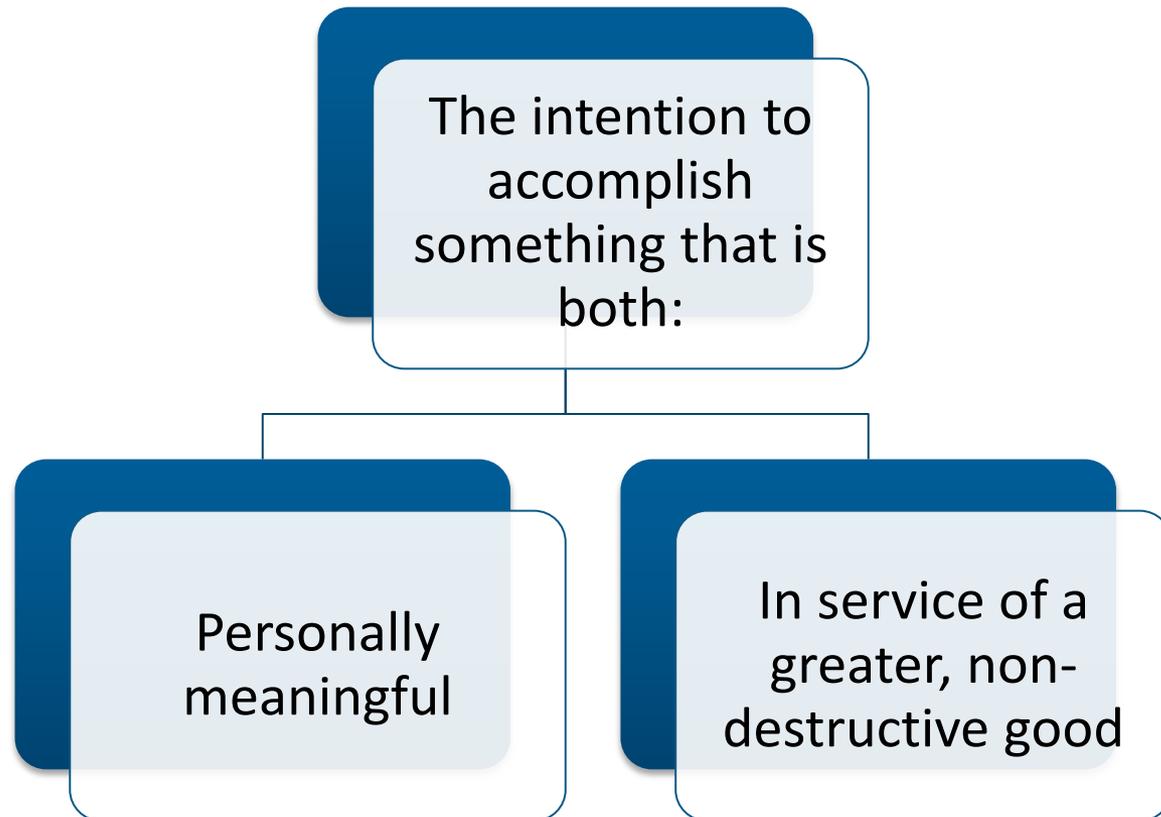
MOSAIC

Mastering Our Skills And Inspiring



Character

Positive (Noble) Purpose



Know What You Are Doing and Why: Discussions of Values and Purpose

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

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

We don't live for happiness, we live for holiness... All human beings seek to lead lives not just of pleasure, but of purpose, righteousness, and virtue.

David Brooks

Character Virtues Supporting Noble Purpose

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



Integration of Social-Emotional Skills

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



Create Opportunities That Support Contributions

Everyone can be great because everyone can serve.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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

Albert Schweitzer

Best Practices for Fostering Youth Engagement and Building Students' SECD

- **Meaningful, Participatory Student Government**
- ***Service Learning-- Lions-Quest International***
- **Feedback/Sharing Opportunities**
- **Open Forums for School Problem Solving**
- **Staff/Student Committee Involvement**
- **Having a Voice/Diversity Monitoring**
- **Buddies, Mentors, and Tutors**
- **Opportunities for Reflection**
- ***Opportunities for Identifying and Developing one's Laws of Life and Sense of Purpose***

MOSAIC Approach: Best Practices

- **Skill Mastery:** Focus on a few key skills
- **Character Inspiration:** Focus on a few, salient virtues, ideally consistent with school motto, mission, values
- **Purposeful Action:** Youth voice and service
- **Supportive Contexts:** Both implementers and students need others' support— and supportive environments— to succeed

Key Recommendations to Guide Policy

- Each student should receive a minimum of **one-half hour of explicit instruction per week in skills related to social-emotional and character development (SECD)** as part of a comprehensive prek-12 scope and sequence (see Anchorage, Alaska, public schools for an example of such a framework, as well *The Other Side of the Report Card: Assessing Students' Social, Emotional and Character Development*).
- Every teacher, student support services provider, and administrator should have **demonstrated competence** in implementing evidence-based SECD programming and positive climate promotion at the classroom and/or school level (as appropriate).

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

- Overarching goals are to address the gap in professional development of school leaders and diverse education professionals that exists today and to create a community for on-going mentoring, resource support, and sharing of experiences from walking the talk!
- The Academy offers a two certificate programs connected to a virtual Professional Learning Community:
- Certificate for School Leadership in Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development. (SELinSchools.org)
- Certificate for Direct Instruction of Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development. (sel.rutgers.edu)
- Academy Overview Video: <http://novo.cse.edu/>



Academy for
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
Learning in Schools



Assessing What Matters

Tony Bryk:

The SEL/Character Assessment Debate
is a Choice Between Assessment for
Research and ***Assessment for
Improvement***

The Nature of SEL Assessment Conversations

- Schools arrive at a decision to integrate SEL and/or character into their report cards in one of two ways:
- Option 1: Schools have an existing approach to building specific SEL skills in students and now wish to have an explicit, congruent way of assessing progress for the purposes of ongoing feedback.
- Option 2: Schools realize the importance of SEL for their broader purposes of developing the whole student, fostering academic achievement, etc. and want to begin by identifying the focal skills they wish to develop and engage parents as partners

Alignment is Essential

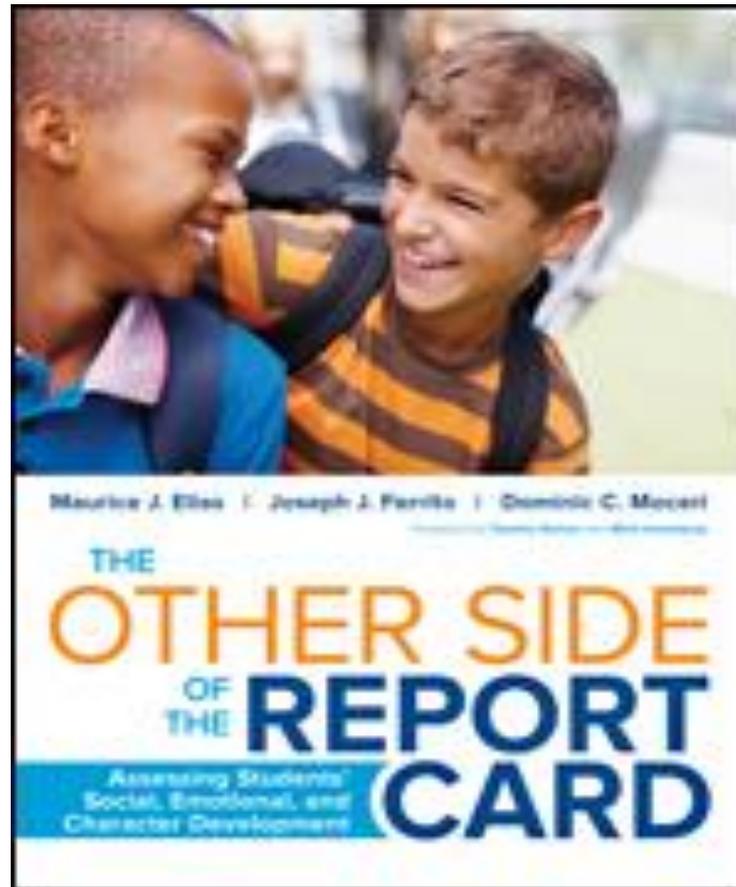
- Either way, the best process is to create assessments that are aligned with your school and district priorities.
- What is most valuable is the process of dialogue, conversation, and selection of SEL priorities and focus. The resulting system is tailored to your school and truly “owned” by the school community.

Report Cards As Opportunity for Communication

Guiding Parent-Teacher Conversations

- Identifies areas of strength and areas in need of improvement that parents should know about
- Conversation frames teachers and parents as allies in building children's SECD
- Serves as springboard for planning interventions and monitoring progress
- Outreach within a naturally occurring communication

New From Corwin Press



Reflections: What Are Your Takeaways?



No one tests the depth of a river with
both feet.- Ashanti



Wait No Longer: Now is the Time for Courageous Leadership and Action

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

John Wooden

*“The children are
watching.”*

Ted Sizer



Contact Information

- Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.
- Department of Psychology, Rutgers University
- Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab

(sel.rutgers.edu, www.secdlab.org)

- Director, The MOSAIC Project
- Co-Director, Academy for Social-Emotional Learning (SELinSchools.org)
- RutgersMJE@AOL.COM

