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Educating for a Just and Caring Democratic Society:
Foundations of Effective School Reform

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Abstract

Heraclitus said that "character is destiny," a claim that has been echoed through the ensuing millennia. No society can be ethical, just, or caring without citizens who share those values and virtues. The challenge then is how to maximize the likelihood that such characteristics (moral character and other supportive characteristics) will flourish among the citizens of a society. In democracies, this goal is even more critical, for the citizens of a democracy *are* the democracy. Educators typically struggle, however, to understand and/or implement methods that support the development of ethical, just, and caring democratic citizens. Research on child development and educational psychology, among other disciplines, has much to offer in the design of schools that optimally foster character development. *PRIME* is a model of five foundational characteristics of schools that support the flourishing of youth, both academically and developmentally. Such schools *Prioritize* the goal of child development, especially character development. They strategically and intentionally nurture positive *Relationships* among all stakeholders. They avoid the use of extrinsic motivators and promote *Intrinsic* motivation to act ethically toward oneself, toward others, and in support of the common good. The adults in schools *Model* the values and character they wish to see develop in students/pupils. Such schools embrace a pedagogy of *Empowerment*, inviting and respecting the voices of all stakeholders to democratize schools and classrooms. Ultimately the successful focus on PRIME depends on school leaders who take responsibility for nurturing a positive adult school culture. Only then do students become the ethical democratic citizens that our societies require.

It is an age-old human enterprise to socialize each subsequent generation to at least carry forward and at best improve one's society (Berkowitz, 2000). Hunter-gatherer clans had to offer apprentice experiences and rites of passage to adulthood so that the youth could master the requisite tasks and skills and thereby support the survival of the clan. Aristocracies had to find ways to prepare future royalty and at the same time mechanisms for a sustained labour force. Democracies have to support the socialization of youth to be ethical, effective, participatory members of the democratic process as well as prepared for other critical roles such as production. The architects of modern western democracies opined repeatedly that the survival of democracy depends in large part on the virtue of its citizens. This is not far from the mark set by Heraclitus in his assertion that "Character is destiny."

The United States' grand experiment in democratic self-governance has just celebrated its 236th birthday in July of 2012. Many of the seminal authors of US democracy insisted that the future of this experiment, its "destiny" relied on the character of its citizens. Thomas Jefferson repeatedly argued that this democracy depended upon "public-spiritedness" and that this does not come naturally but must be educated. Benjamin Franklin asserted that "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom." The history of education in the US (and elsewhere) reveals a continuing concern with the moral education of youth (Arthur, 2003a, 2003b; McClellan, 1999). The advent of the common school in the mid-nineteenth century was directly linked to the moral formation of the citizenry

> Deeply concerned that liberty could turn into anarchy, leaders of the movement to create public schools sought to use moral education for more than the achievement

> of personal salvation; they saw the widespread diffusion of moral education to all groups in the society as a way to preserve harmony and order…What was critical was that all children learn self-restraint through a common moral code. (McClellan, 1999, p. 23)

Progressive philosophers of education argued more pointedly that a democratically run school is essential for educating for democratic citizenship (Dewey, 1966); in other words, that merely teaching *about* democracy and civics was not sufficient to socialize the next generation of democratic citizens, but rather that the experience of democracy in microcosm in schools and classrooms was essential to this civic development project. In a sense, educators need to focus as much on sociology and psychology as on pedagogy in order to optimally impact the development of students.

The general argument being put forth here is that:

1. Any social group that wishes to endure beyond one generation must be concerned with socializing each subsequent generation to carry the unique features of that group forward.
2. In a democratic society, this entails socializing youth with the civic and moral knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for effective functioning as a democratic citizen (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006; Arthur, Davies & Haan, 2008; Berkowitz, Althof & Jones, 2008; Berkowitz & Puka, 2009; Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, 2003; Torney-Purta & Lopez, 2006). According to Flanagan et al. (2007), "For democracy to work, society has to nurture certain key dispositions in the people" (p. 422).

3. This is the responsibility of all youth-impacting institutions, including families, government, media, and, of course, schools.

For this chapter, the central question will be to explore what we know about how schools can optimally contribute to the enterprise of socializing ethical individuals who function as effective and participating citizens of a democratic society.

Talking Good

As I have noted elsewhere (Berkowitz, 1995; Berkowitz, 2012a), the semantics of educating for positive, pro-social youth development is a diabolical maze built on a foundation of quicksand. I have recently come to the conclusion that finding a consensual terminology is a fundamentally insoluble problem. Prescribing human nature is an inherently polarizing and threatening proposition for too many people for any terms to be universally or even widely accepted. I have worked alternatively under the various rubrics of moral education, values education, character education, civic education, education for positive youth development, positive psychology, pro-social education, and moralogy, and all tend to stir up opposition. In fact, they almost serve as projective tests with opponents projecting often quite distortive interpretations onto terms and movements that they personally find threatening. There are enough straw men put forth in response to these endeavors to keep all the crows out of all the crop fields in the US.

For the sake of this discussion, two points are important. First, character education is being used here as a generic term for all youth-focused initiatives designed to promote positive,

pro-social, ethical development. Second, the bias in this discussion is towards more developmental, constructivist, and sociological approaches to character education (as opposed to behavioristic, lesson-based, didactic approaches). This will become apparent as the nature of what is proposed is presented in more detail below.

The Role of Character Education in Democracies

We have already established the need for character education in any society, and argued for the particular need of a particular kind of character, and consequently character education, in a democratic society. Torney-Purta and Lopez (2006) describe the three categories of civic education outcomes: civic and relevant knowledge; civic skills; relevant dispositions. It is these dispositions where the greatest overlap between character and civic education can be found (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). While there is no consensual list of such democratic dispositions (and skills), many have nominated lists of such characteristics (e.g., Berkowitz & Puka, 2009; Sehr, 1997; White, 1996). These lists include, but are not limited to, honesty, courage, an ethic of care and responsibility, a critical/analytical social perspective, a principled moral perspective, faith and optimism, a commitment to the common good, and respect for opposition/tolerance. This list, even in this abbreviated form, represents a picture of democratic character that is neither common nor easy to foster. So it behooves us to consider an effective pedagogy for democratic character. I have seen far too much reliance on pedagogical faith in this arena; i.e., the belief that if we sincerely want students to develop in a certain way, that surely our naïve efforts will be successful. There is far too little reliance on educational, psychological and sociological scientific evidence of effective practices (Berkowitz, 2012a; Colin, 2009).

It is worth noting that the title of this paper "Educating for a Just and Caring Democratic Society" suggests that "democratic society" warrants qualifications, in this case "just" and "caring." Democracy can take many forms. The focus here is a democracy that is more than procedural, but is truly just; a democracy based on an ethical orientation toward the common good and a genuine concern for those who cannot adequately advocate for their own rights and welfare. When Lawrence Kohlberg designed his radical experiment in school democracy, he supplemented a purely procedural democracy with two core values: justice and community. Hence the name "Just Community Schools" (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). All democratic and judicial decisions were intended to be made with a focus on promoting what is just and ethical and on building a caring moral community. That experiment in moral education is a framework from which the model of character education being put forth here emanates.

In essence, the argument here is that democracies depend on the character of its citizens, and that character can be defined and promoted. It is the responsibility of all institutions in a society that impact youth to support the development of moral democratic character (and the requisite knowledge and skills of responsible democratic citizenship) in youth. Schools have a major role in this sacred generational and societal trust. What remains is to consider what an effective and appropriate pedagogy of moral and democratic character looks like.

PRIME Character Education

At the end of the 20th century, my colleagues and I began a long project to better understand what is effective practice in character education, broadly defined, and then to bring that knowledge to bear on improving practice in schools and related contexts. Through a series of grants in the early part of the 2000s, we did a systematic review of school-based outcome research entitled *What Works in Character Education*, which produced a scientific report (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007), a practitioners' guide (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005a), and a policy-maker's report (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005b). In addition, funded by the US Department of Education, we drafted a blueprint for a National Clearinghouse on Character Education. For the second half of the last decade, we have been distilling lessons learned and disseminating them to scholars, educators, and parents (e.g., Berkowitz, 2007; Berkowitz, 2011a; Berkowitz, 2012a; Berkowitz, Althof, & Bier, 2012; Berkowitz, Battistich, & Bier, 2008). At the same time we sought funding to take what was becoming an outdated project and both updating it and putting it into a more dynamic web-based environment where it could be interactive and on-going.

What Works in Character Education…and Beyond

What Works in Character Education (WWCE; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005a, 2007) reviewed all the school-based outcome research in the US and Canada prior to 2005. Sixty-nine scientifically sound studies were included, plus literature reviews of cooperative learning and moral dilemma discussions, together adding more than 100 additional studies to the database. This project, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, resulted in the identification of 33 effective character education programs and a set of common best

practices in character education. The most commonly found practices in effective programs were:

- A cluster of *interactive teaching strategies*; e.g., class meetings, cooperative learning, moral discussions, peer conflict resolution;
- *Professional development* for those charged with implementing character education;
- *Direct instruction* about character topics and issues;
- *Roles models* and/or *mentoring*;
- Targeted *family and/or broader community participation*;
- Character-focused *classroom or behavior management strategies*;
- *School-wide character strategies*; e.g., leadership focus on promoting school-wide character education or whole school activities focused on character education;
- Providing *opportunities for service* (community service) or integrating them into the academic curriculum (service learning).

Other related projects were also being published around the same time (e.g., Billig, 2002; CASEL, 2002; Lickona & Davidson, 2005) and subsequently (e.g., Durlak, et al., 2011; Reeve & Halusic, 2009). Hence we have tried to integrate what was learned from all of this work into revised conclusions about effective practice (Berkowitz, 2011a), thus adding the following recommended strategies to the above list:

- *Developmental discipline* (as a specific version of behavior management);

- A *caring orientation* toward students;
- A focus on *trust and trustworthiness*;
- *High expectations* (for both academic work and character/behavior);
- A *pedagogy of empowerment*; e.g., democratic classroom practices, authentic student government;
- Direct instruction in *social-emotional competencies*;
- *Induction*; i.e., praise and discipline that focuses on understanding the impact of one's behavior for others.

Learning As We Go

At the same time that we were working on the WWCE and related projects, the Center for Character Citizenship (CCC) was engaged in two other major endeavors that informed our understanding of how to optimally promote character in general and democratic character in particular: the Leadership Academy in Character Education (LACE); and various consultations with educational organizations around the world.

LACE is a regional year-long professional development experience for school administrators that we have been administering since 1998. During that period we have mentored over 500 local school leaders, and in doing so we have witnessed and shared their struggles, grapplings, insights, and successes, thereby learning much of what works and what does not work (Berkowitz, 2012a; Berkowitz, Pelster, & Johnston, 2012; Johnston, 2012). For instance, we have seen that effective school leaders deeply understand and commit to character education as a force for effective school reform, model best practices for their

staff, students and parents, and focus intentionally on building an ethical, caring adult culture in their schools (Berkowitz, 2011b).

Our consultations with educational organization in the US (e.g., Buffalo Public Schools, St. Louis Public Schools, Cooperating School Districts of St. Louis) and abroad (e.g., Singapore Ministry of Education, Institute of Moralogy in Japan, HTC Foundation in Taiwan, Coalition for Character Building and Community in Kenya) have further sharpened our focus on what appear to be universal core principles of effective character education.

Distilling it Down to PRIME Character Education

About 3 years ago, I received a phone call from David Streight, Executive Director of the Council on Spiritual and Ethical Education, with whom I had done some consulting and writing work previously. He had the idea to edit a book for educators and parents that provided a set of expert statements of advice in promoting children's and adolescents' character development. The structure was to ask each prospective author to identify a few big ideas or guidance tips, which was precisely what he was asking me to do. I liked the idea, so I agreed and then had to figure out what my core set of big ideas would be. I identified five such ideas, and created the anagram PRIME to represent them (Berkowitz, 2009). I did not realize at the time how central and useful the PRIME model would be, but it has served me well in training and consultation around the globe.

PRIME stands for Prioritization, Relationships, Intrinsic motivation (or Internalization), Modeling, and Empowerment. Together they encompass much of the core educational and

developmental philosophy of effective character education and have their roots in our work on reviewing research on effective practices in promoting character development, both in families and in schools. It is worth noting that Streight's book focus (Streight, 2009) was inclusive of both parents and teachers, revealing the insight that there is an overlap between the ways families and schools optimally impact positive character development. This is something I had had to previously learn slowly.

In the late 1990s I was asked to write a paper on parenting for character (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998) and, in reviewing the scientific literature, uncovered five research-based best practices for parental promotion of character development (The Fab Five: nurturance; demandingness; induction; modeling; democratic family practices). Later, when asked to write a paper for early childhood educators, we tried applying the same model to schools for young children (Berkowitz & Grych, 2000). It was only later that I realized that others were finding that, when teachers employ what are essentially effective parenting practices like the Fab Five, student academic achievement increases and character is nurtured. This has been found not only with young students (Howes & Ritchie, 2002; Watson, 2003) but in middle schools (Wentzel, 2002) and high schools (Gregory, et al., 2010). In other words, what affects the development of character in youth is somewhat contextually generic in that affects it in parental and family relationships in much the same way that it affects them in school settings.

A parallel perspective comes from Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Reeve & Halusic, 2009). SDT posits that everyone shares some basic motivational needs: Autonomy; Belonging; Competence. When these are met, character thrives and academic achievement

ensues. PRIME is one model for identifying core strategies for meeting those needs and fostering the development of character.

Prioritizing Character Education

One of the more elusive and under-identified elements of effective character education is actually quite obvious. For character education, or any other educational innovation, to be optimally successful it must be an authentic organizational priority. Just as Jim Collins (2001) found in *Good to Great*, for corporations to move from effectiveness to excellence and to sustain it they must have a clear, sharp focus or goal. This priority has to be the focus of effort, rhetoric and resources. It is no different for schools. Even for school leaders for whom character development is an authentic goal, with all the countervailing pressures in contemporary education, especially for academic achievement outcome scores, it is easy to lose focus and trump the priority of character development with other more pressured and salient goals. Additionally, many schools and school leaders care about character development but as a secondary or tertiary priority (or even less). They may direct their public rhetoric toward prioritizing and even advocating for character education, but their administrative actions do not follow. So when limited resources must be allocated between competing priorities, they do not regularly go to character education; and when political pressures (e.g., teachers' unions, state or federal legislative priorities) pull in a different direction, character education gets de-emphasized.

As has been suggested above, school (or school district or national education directorate) leadership is a core element of prioritization. It is difficult (although not impossible; cf.,

Urban, 2008) for teachers to give optimal priority to character education when their administrators do not share their fervor. It is important therefore to offer substantial professional development such as LACE to school leaders (Berkowitz, 2011b), so that they adequately understand what effective character education entails and can prioritize it intelligently and effectively. Professional development was the most commonly found element of effective character education programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005a), but it was rarely directed to school leaders.

So priority needs to be manifested in authentic leadership priorities, in what leaders model, in the allocation of resources, and in the what schools promote and profess (authentically, of course). Another important arena for prioritization is in the core statements of the institution, most notably mission, vision and value statements. At least in the US, mission statements are as vacuous as they are ubiquitous. All schools have them and few use or even know them. A mission statement is a statement of purpose, and in the case of a school a statement of the institutional purpose; i.e., why the school even exists. We have worked with hundreds of schools to reflect on and revise their mission statements so they transparently and explicitly prioritize the development of student character as a core purpose of the school. It is usually quite challenging for them to do this. However, when character development becomes an authentic and codified, as in a mission statement, pronouncement of school purpose, this tends to lend legitimacy and urgency to the character education initiative.

Brentwood (MO) Middle School, a 2012 Character Education Partnership National School of Character has a succinct mission: "to achieve excellence in both academics and character."

Henry Raab Elementary School (Belleville, IL), another 2012 NSOC, has a much longer statement which includes "be accepting and tolerant of others" and "foster trusting relationships and a sense of belonging." In both cases, character is explicitly emphasized. However, this is not the case for most schools or districts. The St. Louis Public Schools mission statement, for example, is to "provide a quality education for all students and enable them to realize their full intellectual potential." Without a sharp and explicit expression of commitment to fostering character development, it is hard to do so in any effective and sustained manner. Clearly a mission statement is not enough, for most sit on a shelf and collect dust, but when they are authentic and are used to guide policy and practice, they can empower effective developmental education. Elbot and Fulton (2008) provide a detailed strategy for being intentional in developing an effective school climate, including a focus on the development of mission statements.

Relationships

Psychologically, one of the most studied and most influential variables in human development in general are social relationships. They serve as the foundation for many seminal theories of human development and have been studied in a wide variety of guises and from a wide variety of theoretical perspectives. It is well beyond the scope of this discussion to survey the many and profound ways that social relationships impact human development (for a fuller treatment, see Berkowitz & Bier, 2005c or Watson, 2003). The import for this discussion is that schools need to intentionally and strategically leverage the developmental power of positive relationships if they want to optimally impact student character development. It is not enough to rely again on pedagogical faith; i.e., that if we

have caring adults, we will have optimal relationships. Anyone who has worked in schools knows that we fail to optimize this critical aspect of a school culture. There are always students who remain anonymous and fall through the cracks, there are subgroups of staff (e.g., support staff) who frequently are marginalized and de-personalized, and there are often adult cliques and cabals that undermine the climate of a school. As one common anonymous educational aphorism reminds us “students don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Once again, leadership becomes critical. Numerous schools that we have helped to reach excellence had to stop their initial enthusiastic efforts to install and implement student-focused character lessons or other strategies when they found resistance or inertia. The universal solution in these cases was to shift focus to the adult culture of the school as a necessary precursor condition for student-focused strategies (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Taking a hard look in the mirror and honestly assessing their own character, strategically nurturing healthier relationships between leader and staff, or simply intentionally building more caring relationships among staff members were found to be necessary before effective character education could take hold for students.

When focusing on classroom level character education, the critical role of relationships again rises to the fore (Howes & Ritchie, 2002; Urban, 2008; Watson, 2003; Wentzel, 2002). As Watson notes, teachers need to intentionally nurture positive relationships between the teacher and each student as well as between all students. It is both the prioritization of this (the P in Prime) and the pedagogical and classroom management strategies in the classroom that make this possible and probable.

Using the peer interactive strategies that were found as effective practices in WWCE (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005a) is one way of accomplishing this. Cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1987) for example has been found to nurture such relationships. The reliance on "unity builders" (classroom practices that nurture experiences of interpersonal discovery and pro-social enjoyable interactions) is common in many effective character education programs (e.g., Developmental Studies Center, 1996; Kriete, 2000; Urban, 2008). Group project-based learning (Berger, 2003), peer-tutoring, and mentoring are also relationship-building strategies.

Some schools have introduced structures that build longer term relationships as well. Looping is one such strategy. Looping is when students stay with the same class and teacher for more than one year. This is less common in the US than in other countries (e.g., Scotland, Taiwan). In those countries students may stay with the same class throughout all of primary or secondary school, and with the same homeroom teacher as well, thus promoting sustained relationships with classmates and the homeroom teacher. In the US, it is often necessary to introduce specific ways of doing this. For example, in the elementary/primary school, some schools have introduced "vertical family structures" where 2-3 students from each grade are grouped in a "family" with an assigned adult and stay with that family throughout their years in the school. The families meet one a week or so for character-building activities. At the secondary level, homerooms (advisories) likewise are multi-aged and looped with the same teacher and meet daily to monthly.

One practice I have introduced (Berkowitz, 2012a) that numerous schools have embraced is for each elementary school classroom or secondary school homeroom (in a US structure) "adopts" an adult who works in the school who does not have a classroom (e.g., principal, counselor, physical education teacher, secretary, custodian, cook) and makes them an official member of the class to join them when possible and on special occasions.

The bottom line is that healthy relationships among all stakeholders are the basic elements from which effective schools and student character are built. Therefore they need to be a strategic priority and deliberately nurtured through central policies and practices. Often educators require targeted professional development for this to happen.

Intrinsic Motivation

One of the most contentious issues in education in general and in character education in particular is the debate over intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivators (Althof & Berkowitz, in press; Berkowitz, 2012a; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Kohn, 1995). Two things seem apparent: (1) the ultimate goal of character education is for students to internalize the values and virtues being targeted, rather than simply learning to do them in certain contexts; and (2) extrinsic rewards are far less effective in promoting the internalization of values than are positive relationships, role models, direct experience, and other forms of intrinsic motivation. Yet educators seem seduced by the lure of giving extrinsic rewards as a means, often the primary means, of getting students to embrace and internalize core values.

Our experience is that such rewards seem nearly to be instinctive for most educators and that their use is nearly intractable. The resistance to the mere suggestion of abandoning contingent material rewards (if you do X, I will give you Y) is not only common but often fervent and combative. Northview High School is both a school for behaviorally-challenged (and often judicially mandated) youth and a 2012 National School of Character. If behavioral, extrinsic approaches are most common anywhere it is in schools that work with special needs students. Yet Northview decided that the more effective path was to jettison such extrinsic motivators, and discovered, as do many schools that take this journey, that the students never missed them. It was the adults (staff, parents) who were distressed over this new direction.

A reliance on extrinsic motivation for character has two primary flaws. One, as already noted, it is far less effective in managing behavior and even less so in promoting long-term development (Kohn, 1995). Second, it promotes an implicit model of child and adolescent development that is disempowering and even demeaning. Students become analogous to pet animals in that they are understood to be solely or primarily responsive to external control (rewards, external environmental engineering). It is their autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2002) and empowerment (Berkowitz, 2012a) that is neglected, when both are critical to healthy development and the promotion of democratic character. The very concept of promoting autonomous democratic citizens by externally shaping them is in itself a paradox in the incompatible class of methods and goals.

Modeling

As noted above, one of the Fab Five of effective parenting for character is modeling. We frequently become what the significant others in our formative years are. Parents who are altruistic are more likely to have altruistic children and parents who are antisocial are more likely to raise antisocial children. This is a robust finding in human development and applies to the ethical development of medical students and their mentors as it does to toddlers and their parents.

Once again this brings us back to the discovery that character education has to be more than a pedagogy aimed at students, and certainly more than a set of lessons *about* character. As noted above, Dewey (1966) made the point that educating for democracy had to entail the experience of democracy and not just learning about democracy. Likewise, educating for character has to be about experiencing and witnessing character and not merely learning about character. To paraphrase Gandhi, educators have to *be* the character they want to see in their students. When Francis Howell Middle School began its journey to becoming a National School of Character they spent nearly a year as a staff grappling with their own character shortcomings and the challenge of being models for the students, precisely what Wagner and Kegan (2006) suggest for school leaders in their model of *Change Leadership.*

Of course, it again falls on the shoulders of those school leaders to increase the positive modeling of staff in a school. This includes promoting it, monitoring it, nurturing it through training and feedback and counselling, selecting for it (in hiring practices), and excising it when it is unsalvageable by removing teachers who are not positive models for students.

Empowerment

Perhaps the most relevant of the five PRIME elements to educating for specifically democratic character is the *pedagogy of empowerment.* In working with Kohlberg's Just Community Schools (Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989) in the late 1970s, I first discovered how disempowering schools typically are. Elsewhere (Berkowitz, 2012a) I have expounded on the analogy of schools as prisons, something others have opined eloquently (e.g., Noguera, 2003). Whereas I firmly believe that educators are well-intentioned and have a nurturing attitude towards children and adolescents, schools are nonetheless closer to dictatorships, albeit benevolent dictatorships, than they are to democracies.

In essence this is the power in Self-Determination Theory's prioritizing of *autonomy supportive classrooms* (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Educators commonly do not know how to create classroom structures that empower student voice and support autonomy. Effective character education programs like Caring School Community (www.devstu.org) emphasize the empowerment of students through structures like class meetings that allow them significant voice in classroom decisions, planning, and problem-solving. Similarly, Lickona and Davidson (2005) point out that high school student government is commonly without authentic power and needs to be reformed so students authentically have the responsibility and power to effectively participate in school governance in meaningful ways.

If we want students to evolve into responsible, participating democratic citizens, then they must have the experience of the potential power of their voices in the common sphere

grappling with an authentic search for ways to serve the common good. This is unlikely to happen in the typical authoritarian, hierarchical and disempowering classroom or school.

Furthermore, if the core value of respect is to be an authentic developmental goal of character education (and it is one of the most common values in any character education initiative), then we must heed Lickona's (1983) recognition that respect is a two-way street; i.e., you foster respect in students if you treat students with respect. One of the most central ways to show respect for others is to listen to them, to empower their voices. This was another of the Fab Five of effective parenting for character as well (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998).

Conclusion

To optimally nurture the development of character in general and democratic character in particular, it is necessary to both understand what promotes such development by looking at the scientific literature on child and adolescent development and relevant other disciplines as well as translate and apply that to school policy and practice. Examining research on the effects of parenting on child development, the role of the sociological climate of the school (including the adult culture) in student learning and development, effective pedagogical practices, and the impact of leadership on school success and student development is necessary to design and implement effective programs aimed at promoting the kind of character necessary for a just and caring democratic society. Relying on core principles like prioritization, relationships, intrinsic motivation, modeling and a pedagogy of

empowerment, which are based on such research, will greatly increase the likelihood of school success, positive student development, and the flourishing of democratic society.

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