

**A FRAMEWORK**  
for **CHARACTER**  
**EDUCATION**  
IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS



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## FOREWORD

This framework describes an approach to character education in Alabama for school leaders, especially superintendents, interested in cultivating good character in youth.

The framework is based on the character education requirements passed by the Alabama legislature in 1995 and found in the Code of Alabama 1975, sec. 16-6B-2(h)<sup>i</sup>. The framework is also informed by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues Framework for Character Education in Schools<sup>ii</sup>.

Although the Code of Alabama mandates no fewer than 10 minutes a day on instruction related to character and civic education, this framework promotes a comprehensive approach to character education where character is integrated into all facets of a school and has priority alongside academics.

The framework combines two earlier versions: *A Framework for Character Education in Alabama Schools* and the *Superintendent's Companion Guide*, first published in 2021 as a collaborative effort between Randall Curren, PhD., Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy & Professors, Leaders Program, University of Rochester, and The University of Alabama<sup>iii</sup>.

The framework was developed with funding from the Kern Family Foundation as part of a larger Leadership for Character (LFC) project at the University of Alabama led by Dr. David Walker, Director of The Center for the Study of Ethical Development, along with Dr. Brenda Mendiola, Director of The Superintendent's Academy, and Dr. Yvette Bynum, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership.

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# A FRAMEWORK FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Character education is an essential and unavoidable aspect of schooling. Schools shape character, whether they intend to or not, and so the cultivation of character in schools is not limited to specific character education programs. Instead, character education involves *intentional efforts* in all aspects of schooling towards equipping children with the capacity for flourishing lives, as well as academic attainment. The comprehensive approach requires a culture in which everyone experiences partnership in exemplifying and promoting good character and understands that good character is an aspect of what students, staff, teachers, and school leaders all need to live flourishing lives. Fostering such a partnership and understanding for all stakeholders in the school community is the foundation of leadership in effective character education.

This framework provides intellectual and practical resources for cultivating character in schools. The framework provides leaders, and others, with a comprehensive understanding of virtue and character, and how character may be developed in youth. The framework is divided into three sections:

- I. **The Alabama Regulatory Context.** This section provides an overview of the regulatory context for comprehensive character education in the State of Alabama. It organizes and explains the implications for character education of the 1975 Code of Alabama, the 1995 Accountability Law, and the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics.
- II. **A Virtue Framework for Alabama Schools.** This section defines and groups the virtues identified in the Alabama regulatory context. It also explains some important ways in which they are related to one another, to other virtues, to character, and to personal and societal well-being. It explains why different kinds of virtues matter and explains relationships between virtues, devotion to excellence, and fulfillment of personal potential.

Character education involves intentional efforts in all aspects of schooling towards equipping children with capacity for flourishing lives, as well as academic attainment.
- III. **Leadership in Character Education.** This section addresses the role of leadership in comprehensive character education. The heart of such leadership is modeling judicious and conscientious commitment to the flourishing of a just school community in which adult members of the school community can help students fulfill their potential and lead good lives. The focus of such commitment is creating and sustaining a school culture of professional collaboration in which growing virtue literacy empowers a coordinated whole-school approach to character education. The role teachers play in the implicit and explicit teaching of character education is also addressed in this section.

The framework also includes definitions of **Key Terms** used throughout; however, it is anticipated that readers of this document may want to improve on these basic definitions.

## I. THE ALABAMA REGULATORY CONTEXT

### Key Mandates

The 1975 Code of Alabama and 1995 Accountability Law mandate character education in Alabama schools. The latter states specifically the following:

The State Board of Education and all local boards shall develop and implement a comprehensive character education program for all grades to consist of not less than ten minutes instruction per day focusing upon the students' development of the following character traits: Courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance. Each plan of instruction shall include the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag (1995 Accountability Law).<sup>iv</sup>

There are four substantive elements to this mandate. Character education shall

- be comprehensive;
- be taught at least 10 minutes a day;
- be focused on students' development of the 25 listed character traits;
- include the Pledge to the American flag.

## A Comprehensive Character Education Approach

A comprehensive character education approach will need to (1) include whatever is reasonable and necessary to students developing good character; (2) include students at all grade levels; (3) recognize that teaching about virtues for 10 minutes per day is a minimum standard that is overshadowed by the whole-school approach of this framework. Good character, comprised of virtues, involves a harmonious interplay of motivational, perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive attributes:

### *Virtue motivation*

Respect for or valuing of others, self, and everything else of value.

### *Virtue perception*

Noticing what is ethically significant in different situations.

### *Virtue emotions*

Feeling the emotions corresponding to appropriate valuing and awareness of what is ethically significant in different situations.

### *Virtue reasoning*

Thinking through what to do and making good decisions.

### *Virtue efficacy*

Reliably acting in appropriate ways.<sup>v</sup>

The development of good character involves the formation of a *virtuous self* or *identity* in which these attributes are more or less consciously shaped and integrated.<sup>vi</sup> A comprehensive character education approach would need to target all of these elements of good character—motivational, perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive elements. It would also need to facilitate the

integrative processes through which individuals form virtuous selves or virtue identities. In other words, its *content* would be comprehensive in the sense that it would address all of the functional components and developmental processes through which good character is formed.

While it is valuable to focus on the development of specific virtues (e.g., honesty, courage etc.), any list of specific virtues is bound to be incomplete or to assume the assistance of further virtues that are not on the list. When we identify a character trait as a virtue or aspect of good character, we imagine it functioning in a reasonable and balanced way in the context of good character as a whole.

For instance, we value punctuality, but not at the expense of compassionate response to an unexpected emergency. We value loyalty, but not when blind loyalty to a manipulative friend or employer leads to ruin. We value courage, as a willingness to face danger and pain for a good cause, but we call willingness to face danger and pain recklessness if the prospects of success do not justify the risk.

Good sense or judgment is an implicit aspect of good character and the way individual virtues function in the context of good character as a whole. A comprehensive school approach to character education should be mindful of this, recognizing that listed virtues may entail or depend on others that are not listed.

### General Content and Provision of Character Education

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics also establishes mandates that are significant for the content and provision of character education.<sup>vii</sup> Its introduction indicates that in order to

“provide an environment in which all students can learn,” educators in the State of Alabama must

- Value the worth and dignity of every person
- Have a devotion to excellence in all matters
- Actively support the pursuit of knowledge
- Fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry<sup>viii</sup>

All four of these professional obligations have significance for comprehensive character education, and this significance is amplified by elements of the 9 Standards that follow:

**Standard 2** (Trustworthiness) holds that educator conduct in the sphere of trustworthiness includes “embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.”<sup>ix</sup>

**Standard 4** (Teacher/Student Relationship) holds that educator ethical conduct in the sphere of teacher-student relationships includes “nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.”<sup>x</sup>

**Standard 5** (Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession) instructs educators to provide students with factual guidance on “the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse.”<sup>xi</sup>

**Standard 6** (Public Funds and Property) holds that ethical conduct includes “modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.”<sup>xii</sup> Combined with Standard 2 reference to nurturing the potential of all students, this requires educators to model and defend the equitable and efficient use of school resources in serving the interests of all students in fulfilling their potential.

## Intellectual Virtues, Forms of Respect and Democratic Citizenship

Regarding the Code of Ethics as a whole, it bears emphasizing that any educator decision-making and conduct observable by students may provide the latter with a model for their own decision-making and conduct.

There are three notable ways in which these Code of Ethics provisions supplement the 1975 Code of Alabama and 1995 Accountability Law mandates concerning character education:

- They address intellectual virtues that would be essential to comprehensive education;
- They involve additional forms of respect or valuing that would be essential to comprehensive character education;
- They refer explicitly to nurturing democratic citizenship and valuing the “worth and dignity of every person.”

*Intellectual virtues.* Supporting students’ pursuit of knowledge (Introduction) and nurturing their intellectual potential (Standard 4), require educators to model and nurture intellectual honesty, intellectual fairness (Standard 2), and related intellectual virtues. Fulfilling intellectual potential in the pursuit of knowledge and in sound decision-making requires a variety of

...any educator decision-making and conduct observable by students may provide the latter with a model for their own decision-making and conduct.

intellectual virtues associated with valuing truth, inquiry, evidence, reasoning, and what one can learn from others. These virtues include intellectual humility, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, imagination, discernment, judgment,

and the diligence essential to evaluating diverse ideas and making good decisions.

With freedom comes a responsibility to take care (exercise due diligence) in being sure that the ideas on which we base our speech and actions are true. People of good character accept this responsibility and exhibit intellectual virtues in doing so.

While virtuous acts are spontaneous in many cases, children must learn to think through or deliberate before acting, and character educators must nurture their ability to do so well or with good judgment. This is reflected in the Greek term *phronesis*, meaning good judgment or practical wisdom, and the related idea that when we regard a character trait as a virtue, we think of it as guided by good judgment and motivated by valuing something truly valuable.

An essential aspect of good character is giving people (including students) a fair hearing, understanding that good and reasonable people may disagree due to differences in life experiences, differences in how they prioritize shared values, or other reasons. Standard 2 calls upon educators to model respect and openness to differing perspectives when it refers to intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness. Diplomacy is an art of working to understand what is most important to others in the interest of finding a basis for cooperation, and tact is a form of verbal self-restraint important to showing respect. In the context of managing disagreement in schools and society, diplomacy, tact, and fairness qualify as civic virtues. Intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness are also vital to learning what others can teach us. Diplomacy and tact facilitate free exchange of ideas and information, and intellectual honesty and fairness (being fair-minded) are attributes essential to properly judging the ideas and information we encounter.



...the fundamental educational truth that virtues of character are admirable human qualities that equip individuals and societies to flourish.

*Forms of respect or valuing.* The Educator Code of Ethics holds that educators must exhibit devotion to excellence in all matters (Introduction).

It is safe to

assume that this is ethically required not just because it is admirable, but because educators should model and encourage such devotion to excellence in students. The obvious fact about devotion to excellence in all matters is that it involves respecting or valuing all that is good and excellent and aspiring or committing oneself to being someone who understands, protects, and achieves what is good and excellent. Devotion to excellence in all matters is closely related to the fulfillment of intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential referred to in Standard 4, and fulfillment of potential that embraces the value of things beyond oneself is the heart of a meaningful and flourishing life. The Code's references to devotion to excellence and fulfillment of potential reflect the fundamental educational truth that virtues of character are admirable human qualities that equip individuals and societies to flourish.

The Code's reference to devotion to excellence in all matters is all-encompassing, and it is in this sense an open-ended supplement to the legal requirement that character education in Alabama must include a focus on respect for others, self-respect, and respect for the environment (6th, 10th, and 20th on the list of 25-character traits). As noted above, the motivational heart of good character (virtue motivation) is respect for or valuing of others, self, and everything else of value. It is natural to begin, as Alabama legislators have, with respect for others, self, and the environment:

*Respect or valuing of self and others* may be manifested in acts of courage, honesty, fairness, kindness, cooperation, courtesy, compassion, generosity, punctuality, sportsmanship, loyalty (all on the list of 25 focal attributes), self-care, and other expressions of moral or social virtues.

*Valuing of civic institutions* vital to the well-being of a community and society may be manifested in acts of courage, patriotism, citizenship, fairness, cooperation, tolerance, school pride, and sportsmanship (all on the list of 25 focal attributes).

*Valuing of the environment* on which human and non-human individuals and societies depend is manifested in acts of self-restraint, preservation, conservation, restoration, and respect for all living things.

Beyond these things of value that appear in the mandated list of 25-character attributes, devotion to excellence in all matters would signify devotion to excellence in the many forms of human endeavor through which human potential may be fulfilled. In any of these athletic, professional, service, craft, artistic, scholarly, or other endeavors is an obvious truth that devotion to excellence revolves around the value of what is created, achieved, or provided. Character attributes such as self-control, diligence, patience, creativity, and perseverance (all on the list of 25 focal attributes) are aspects of devotion to excellence in pursuing these things of value. They are instrumental to success in these endeavors, and often called for in the exercise of moral, civic, and intellectual virtues. They are often referred to as enabling or performance virtues, and they can be thought of as aspects of virtue efficacy that can be essential to acting in appropriate ways.

Consistent with what has been said about intellectual virtues, excellence in the pursuit

of knowledge and wise choices revolves around valuing truth and inquiry, evidence and reasoning, and cooperation with others in learning and discovery. Valuing truth, inquiry, evidence, reasoning, and what we can learn from others is not simply admirable, it is essential to finding the truths needed to solve our individual problems and the problems we face collectively as communities, as a society, and as a civilization.

*Democratic citizenship.* The Introduction to the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics holds that educators must “fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry.” Standard 4 refers to nurturing the “civic potential of all students,” and Standard 2 refers explicitly to civic virtues of “intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.” These provisions supplement the list of civic virtues enumerated in the Alabama legal requirements for character education. Together with the requirement that educators “value the worth and dignity of every person,” these provisions also define some parameters not only for the content of character education but for its methods.

Valuing truth, inquiry, evidence, reasoning, and what we can learn from others is not simply admirable, it is essential to finding the truths needed to solve our individual problems and the problems we face collectively as communities, as a society, and as a civilization.

*School ethos* is a critical factor in character education, and what is most crucial to healthy character development is a school community that is just in the sense that it affirms the worth and dignity of every student, and is equitable in nurturing the potential of all students.

A just school community of this kind is psychologically needs-supportive in the sense that it provides opportunities for positive social connection and growth in competence and prudent self-determination.<sup>xiii</sup>

## II. A VIRTUE FRAMEWORK FOR ALABAMA SCHOOLS

### Overview

The regulatory context outlined in Section I supports a comprehensive character education approach for Alabama schools. This comprehensive approach would devote attention to the cultivation of categories of virtue as necessary components of good character. The following attributes (virtues) are either identified in or implied by the relevant laws and code and are suggested as foundations of a virtue framework for Alabama schools:

### Moral Virtues

involve respect for/valuing of others, self, environment

#### include

courage, honesty, fairness, kindness, cooperation, courtesy, compassion, generosity

### Intellectual Virtues

involve respect for/valuing of truth, inquiry, evidence, reasoning, what can be learned from others

#### include

intellectual honesty, fairness, humility, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, imagination, discernment, judgment

### Civic Virtues

involve respect for/valuing of democracy, civic institutions, cooperation, and endeavors that enable a society to flourish

#### include

patriotism, citizenship, tolerance, school pride, sportsmanship, loyalty, diplomacy, tact

### Enabling Virtues

have instrumental value in living a good life

#### include

diligence, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, patience, creativity, perseverance

These lists of character attributes or virtues are generally consistent with the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtue (JCCV) *Framework for Character Education in Schools*, which describes the elements of a comprehensive approach to character education.<sup>xiv</sup> Punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, and sportsmanship invite comment as distinctive features of the Alabama mandates. Punctuality, cleanliness, and cheerfulness are classified here as enabling virtues, but they might also be considered social virtues, in the sense that they are—like courtesy and having a sense of humor—conducive to social ease and good rapport. Cleanliness is an enabling virtue in the sense that it is conducive to health and social acceptance, and it could also be regarded as a virtue of self-care or self-respect. Punctuality is enabling with respect to the

facilitation of cooperation, efficient use of time, and social acceptance. Cheerfulness may be considered enabling, as a trait favorable to happiness and as a facilitator of social acceptance. School pride and sportsmanship are classified here as civic virtues because schools, athletic teams, and athletics itself are civic institutions that should be valued for what they contribute to the quality of individuals' lives and the flourishing of society as a whole, just as other civic institutions, communities, institutions of government, and the country itself should be valued for what they contribute to the quality of individuals' lives and the flourishing of society as a whole. We use the terms *civic minded* and *patriotic* to describe the attributes of character animated by such valuing.

As noted above, the character attributes in this scheme of classification only qualify as virtues if they involve valuing the right things and are guided by good judgment. With that qualification, they can be briefly defined as follows:

...the character attributes in this scheme of classification only qualify as virtues if they involve valuing the right things and are guided by good judgment.

## Moral Virtues

*Courage*: doing the right thing in the face of danger and pain

*Honesty*: being truthful and keeping one's word

*Fairness*: respecting claims to equal treatment, respecting rights, honoring commitments

*Kindness*: displaying sympathetic, gentle, and helpful qualities, including forbearance—refraining from, or being patient or lenient in, demanding something one is owed

*Cooperation*: willingness to seek and accept a fair basis for working together or making shared sacrifices to achieve something worthwhile

*Courtesy*: speaking and acting in ways that convey respect, consideration, and generosity

*Compassion*: exhibiting care and concern for others

*Generosity*: sharing what one has or giving credit, without expectation of gain

## Intellectual Virtues

*Intellectual honesty*: truthfulness with oneself and others about what one knows and does not know or understand; related to intellectual integrity

(holding oneself to high intellectual standards regarding evidence and reasoning) and intellectual diligence (taking care to be sure one's beliefs are true, especially the beliefs one publicly asserts and acts on)

*Intellectual fairness*: showing due consideration for evidence, reasoning, testimony, and the intellectual abilities, accomplishments, and beliefs of others

*Intellectual humility*: showing due regard for the limits of one's own knowledge, understanding, and intellectual abilities, especially in interactions with others; avoiding intellectual over-confidence

*Open-mindedness*: a willingness to listen to different sides of an issue, see where the evidence and reasoning lead, and accept the result

*Inquisitiveness*: being well-motivated to pose good questions and engage in inquiry

*Imagination*: the ability to come up with good ideas or find creative solutions to problems

*Discernment*: perceiving and grasping the significance of what is relevant

*Judgment*: excellence in determining what to believe or how to act

## Civic Virtues

*Patriotism*: caring about one's country and acting to protect the health of its institutions and the well-being of its people

*Citizenship*: fulfilling one's civic responsibilities and contributing to the well-being of one's community and society

*Tolerance*: accepting religious, ethnic, and other forms of diversity of people, practices, and ideas, as an aspect of a democratic society that guarantees equal rights and liberties

*School pride:* valuing one's school and doing one's part to help it succeed

*Sportsmanship:* being fair, generous, and graceful in competition, in both victory and defeat

*Loyalty:* being faithful to a friend, family, organization, country, or something else to which one is committed

*Diplomacy:* skill in managing disagreement with consideration and tact, avoiding hostility and conflict

*Tact:* having good sense, skill, and grace in dealing with others so as to maintain good relationships

### **Enabling Virtues**

*Self-control:* being able to restrain one's impulses, emotions, or desires in order to act as one should

*Diligence:* giving things the attention, care, and effort they deserve

*Punctuality:* making a point of being on time

*Cleanliness:* taking care to be clean and presentable

*Cheerfulness:* being of good spirit, glad; related to happiness (often regarded as a preponderance of positive feelings and being satisfied with one's life)

*Patience:* bearing pains, difficulties, and delays gracefully, avoiding impetuous acts

*Creativity:* the ability to produce things that are both novel and excellent

*Perseverance:* being able to persist in an effort, despite opposition, discouragement, or difficulties

### **Excellence, Potential, and Challenging Situations**

Groupings of different kinds of virtues—as moral, intellectual, civic, or enabling—are helpful to understand some distinct ways in which virtues differ.

...moral, intellectual, and civic virtues may be distinguished by what is valued

The first is that moral, intellectual, and civic virtues may be distinguished by what is valued:

- Moral virtues involve valuing individual persons, other living things, and their well-being;
- Intellectual virtues involve valuing truth, reason, and related goods;
- Civic virtues involve valuing civic entities and the well-being of all their members.

By contrast, enabling (also known as performance) virtues may qualify as virtuous if they are enacted in the pursuit of the admirable things with which moral, intellectual, and civic virtues are concerned.

A comprehensive character education approach includes valuing forms of excellence or goodness associated with “the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.” For example, valuing precision in reasoning is an aspect of devotion to excellence in mathematics and logic, just as valuing qualities of fine craftsmanship, or clarity and elegance in writing, or beauty and imagination in the arts are aspects of devotion to excellence in other arenas of human endeavor. In each case, such appropriate valuing can be a further dimension of good character when it is expressed as an aspect of good character as a whole.

A second way in which virtues may differ is with respect to the forms of human potential they help us fulfill. There is an obvious sense in which

- moral virtues are essential to fulfilling social potential;
- intellectual virtues are essential to fulfilling intellectual potential;
- civic virtues are essential to fulfilling civic potential;
- enabling virtues are essential to fulfilling social, intellectual, and creative potential, understanding the word *creative* broadly as including the many forms of human endeavor in which excellence can be achieved.

...virtues may differ with respect to the forms of human potential they help us fulfill

Research suggests that people do not seem to experience their lives as going well unless their different forms of potential are fulfilled in ways that satisfy their basic

psychological needs to experience positive social *connection* in their relationships and broader communities, *competence* in their endeavors, and *self-determination* in accordance with their own values and judgment.<sup>xv</sup>

The virtues of character that enable us to fulfill our potential are essential to a happy and flourishing life because they enable us to satisfy our basic psychological needs while living in ways that are worthy of admiration.

This psychological reality is illustrated by the recollections of a boy, Josef, about his education at St. Patrick’s Home, a residential school for orphaned boys in Malta. “I came from a background at home of intense abuse and ... I was always fighting. Then, Father ... told me not to fight, to say to myself stop, think, and then act ... I then started to get involved in boy scouts; ... and I started helping with the young ones ... I used to help them to decide things peacefully. I felt so useful. I felt satisfied. I felt I could change something. I felt I mattered in other people’s

lives... [and] could share in their happiness and unhappiness.”<sup>xvi</sup> What Josef describes are life-changing experiences in becoming rationally self-determining, socially competent, and positively related or connected to others—experiences that lay a foundation for a life of admirable and rewarding fulfillment of his intellectual, social, and creative potential.

A third way in which virtues may differ is with respect to the kinds of situations or challenges they enable us to handle appropriately. For example,

- **Courage:** relevant when acting well requires facing danger and pain both physical and emotional
- **Honesty:** relevant to sharing information or thoughts
- **Intellectual humility:** relevant when over-confidence may lead to incorrect beliefs, inappropriate acts, or hurt feelings
- **Tolerance:** relevant when free and equal citizenship requires acceptance of differences
- **School Pride:** relevant to membership in a school community
- **Diligence:** relevant when acting well requires effort to determine what is true, solve a problem, or achieve a worthwhile goal

...virtues may differ with respect to the kinds of situations or challenges they enable us to handle appropriately

A fourth way in which virtues differ is that they may also play different functional roles in good character as a whole. Here are some examples of virtues that play perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive roles:

- perceptual: discernment;
- emotional: compassion, intellectual humility, loyalty;

- cognitive: open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, imagination, judgment;
- executive: self-control, diligence, punctuality, patience, perseverance.

The perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive aspects of good character must all be developed and integrated into a harmoniously functioning whole. The role of the school leaders and others in creating a school culture enabling this to come about will be considered in the next section.

...virtues may also play different functional roles in good character as a whole

### III. LEADERSHIP IN CHARACTER EDUCATION

#### Leading with Character and Integrity

Educational leaders require more than powers and resources to fulfill their responsibilities. They need to *lead*, and to lead is neither to compel through the exercise of powers nor to secure cooperation by distributing resources. It is possible to lead without even being *in a position of authority*, but it is not possible to lead unless one *has authority* with those one would lead. To have authority in the latter sense is to be able to enlist cooperation on the basis of *being perceived as*

*knowing what should be done*. Where it is understood that ethically significant matters are at stake, what is required in order to lead is having a kind of *moral authority* with those one would lead or being perceived by them as knowing the best way forward, all things considered.

In the context of leading an institution such as a school, the leader must be perceived as understanding how to advance the institution and its mission and as being able to play a suitable role in what happens going forward.

<p>The cardinal virtues of educational administration are</p>	<p><b>Commitment</b> to the mission and wellbeing of the institution(s) one leads</p>
	<p>Good <b>judgment</b></p>
	<p><b>Conscientiousness</b> in fulfilling one’s professional obligations.</p>
<p>These are distinctively ethical qualities, specific to educational administration, basic and essential to educational administration, and collectively comprehensive.<sup>xvii</sup></p>	

There are many desirable attributes expected of educational leaders, but these are the basic ones that form a complete set. Administrative conduct begins with acceptance of the aims and duties of a position of leadership, takes shape in deliberation that determines the manner in which those aims, and duties will be fulfilled, and finds its completion in execution. *Commitment, judgment, and conscientiousness* pertain to these three aspects of administrative conduct and are in this sense a comprehensive set of virtues. Together, they constitute *integrity* in educational administration. They are essential to educational administrators having the credibility or moral authority to lead.

### **Phronesis for Leaders**

Leadership in character education starts with cultivating one's own character to genuinely value and pursue with skill and competence those valuable things discussed in earlier sections of this framework. Within the context of the cardinal virtues of educational administration, this will include development of one's own good judgment or phronesis (also known as practical wisdom) through study, consultation, and practical experience. It is through good judgment that leaders can grasp when a decision can be made on the spot, and when a situation calls for a more deliberative approach. Similarly, when a situation does call for a deliberative approach, it is good judgment or excellence in deliberation that guides a leader in identifying, understanding, and evaluating all the aspects of a complex situation and making the best choice.

Good judgment (*phronesis*) in leaders, as for others, is informed by the moral, intellectual, civic, and enabling virtues discussed in this document. Each virtue equips a leader to *notice* what is ethically significant in a situation, to *grasp* its significance, to *value* the valuable things at stake, and to *feel* the emotions corresponding to proper valuing. Lacking specific virtues creates blind spots or deficiencies of virtue perception,

knowledge, motivation, and emotion that can undermine judgment. Good judgment plays an essential role in good character as a whole, but the possession of good character and a wealth of specific virtues is a prerequisite for possessing and exercising the good judgment required of educational leaders.

### **Prioritizing the Cultivation of Character**

This character education framework requires leaders to prioritize character education and afford it at least equal status with academic attainment. This is justified because it is essential to equipping students to lead flourishing lives. The heart of a school's mission is promoting development that is conducive to students fulfilling their potential in living good lives. The comprehensive approach to character education suggested in this framework recognizes that educational leaders must be fully committed to the good of the educational institution(s) they serve and its (their) mission to promote students' character development as well as academic development.

When contemplating making character a priority, leaders should consider the following:

- Am I capable of leading with character and integrity?
- How will I strengthen existing practices in my district or school—or create new ones—to inform decisions, solve problems, and lead my school or district with wisdom?
- What would be the best way to structure a building or district-level collaborative process to define a value-focused district mission?
- How will we assess our progress and build on what we learn? How will my own self-assessment be part of this?
- What will it mean to treat comprehensive character education as no less important than academics?



- Is my district ready to implement a system-wide approach to character education? (See the Appendix for the School District Assessment of Ideals tool)
- Are schools in my district ready to implement a school-wide approach to character education? (See the Appendix for the School Assessment of Ideals tool)

## Leading a Collaborative Process

The virtues that educational leaders should possess and rely on include the intellectual civic virtues that pertain to listening, problem-solving, and collaboration. Healthy organizations identify, acknowledge, and collectively address their problems and sustain progress in their missions. Doing so requires intellectual honesty, fairness, humility, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, imagination, discernment, and judgment—all of the intellectual virtues that educators need to model for students.

These virtues come into play in leading the collaborative process needed to drive and sustain an effective whole-school approach to character education. A good place for superintendents to start is with district planning.

### District Planning

- Identify a set of desired core ideals through a shared leadership approach with all stakeholder groups.
- Consider how the ideals will permeate every aspect (board members, teachers, students, administrators, curriculum, discipline, human resources, transportation, sports, child nutrition, and building maintenance) of the district.
- Develop a plan for explicitly communicating ideals and how they relate to virtues.
- Discuss what the ideal and related virtues will look like in practice for each stakeholder group.

- Model and practice the ideals so that the ideal and related virtues become an innate pattern of behavior for the district.
- Define how each ideal will impact relationships within the stakeholder groups.
- Expand opportunities for the stakeholder groups to implement ideals both within the district and outside of the district.
- Establish an ongoing assessment of character development within the district.
- Offer character-focused professional development.

### Hiring and Supporting Faculty and Staff

Essential to implementing a system or school-wide approach to character education is hiring leaders, teachers, and staff who are motivated to do the kind of good work described and giving them the space and support to do the work and obtain the inherent rewards of doing it. Teachers typically bring the right moral aims to their work, and every effort should be made to support them in achieving those aims. Providing the needed space and support is an aspect of moral leadership and preservation of the educational leader's moral authority and ability to lead. It is also essential to the good of the institution and achieving its mission, because there is simply no other basis on which teachers can be equally successful and willing to continue in the profession. Many teachers today are demoralized and dissatisfied in their work and leaving the profession, because they feel they are unable to protect and advance children's good in the ways they should.<sup>xviii</sup>

The importance of intrinsic motivation to good teaching and the negative consequences of extrinsic motivation for work quality have been a focus of decades of self-determination theory research.<sup>xix</sup> Alignment between school mission and teachers' own professional ideals allows them to do good work that is intrinsically motivated in the sense that it allows them to fulfill their own social, intellectual, and creative potential

in activity that is sustained by the gratification of their basic needs for autonomy, competence, and positive relatedness. In essence, there is a close alignment between prioritizing character education and commitment to the good of an educational institution, because there is a deep connection between the good of the teachers and students whose lives are shaped by their roles in the institution and the institution's achievement of its mission.

### **Character-Focused Professional Development**

Building whole-school collaboration in character education involves the collaborative development of an appropriate school mission and implementation plan along with virtue literacy for faculty and staff. Begin with staff development in virtue literacy for all adults in the school, using this *Framework for Character Education in Alabama Schools* along with writings about aspects of character, character development, and character education such as those in the INSIGHT series of articles available online at the website of the University of Birmingham (UK) Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues <https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/432/character-education>.

Create regular character-focused staff development activities and professional learning communities that utilize thought-provoking stories, biographies, and movies that explore aspects of character, lives of devotion to things of value, hard choices, and the ways in which occupational and life contexts can make it difficult for good people to do the right things. Librarians and curriculum specialists can assist in locating appropriate books and materials for training and can aid teachers in securing age-appropriate materials to use in the classroom.

### **Creating Just School Communities**

A *school ethos* that promotes the development of good character is one in which all students experience equal membership in a *just school community*. A just school community is built on meaningful personal relationships that provide every student a sense of belonging, an experience of partnership in commitment to ethical ideals, and pathways of opportunity within and beyond school. Just school communities affirm the dignity and worth of every student<sup>xx</sup> and equitably nurture the potential of all students. Students, like people in general, are strongly inclined to internalize the values of a community in which they are able to experience positive connection, competence, and acting from their own values and judgment much of the time. A key finding about the integration of values into the self, so central to character education, is that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs plays a key role; *the promotion of good character can be most successful in a needs-supportive learning environment*. Communities that are needs-supportive in this sense and promote ethical reflection, reasoning, and decision-making are well-positioned to promote virtue motivation, cognition, and integrity.<sup>xxi</sup> This realization makes the Alabama Code of Ethics requirement that educators “value the worth and dignity of every person” essential to the success of character education.

Consider the following:

- How much friendly contact is there between teachers and students and within student cohorts?
- In schools that are large, are there ways to develop smaller communities within the schools to achieve some of the benefits of small school communities?
- Are only students who are above average academically or athletically able to experience themselves as competent? How many ways does the school enable students to find something they are or can be good at, so everyone can experience competence?

- Are teaching and student evaluations structured and paced for optimal challenge—challenging enough to sustain interest and progress, but not so hard as to be frustrating and demotivating?
- In what ways can elements of structure choice be used throughout the school so that students make good choices but experience enough self-determination not to be unhappy or demotivated in their learning and participating in the school community?

A second key finding is that motivation to sustain effort, achieve mastery, and attain goals is regulated by a need for self-efficacy or competence. This widely-applied finding implies that learning tasks should be structured to provide students with manageable challenges that build their capabilities and confidence while allowing them to experience themselves as competent much of the time.

Both of these findings have been absorbed into the most comprehensive body of theory and research on motivation available. Known as self-determination theory (SDT), it incorporates needs for autonomy, competence and positive social connection, and it has accumulated a large body of evidence supporting the addition of a need for self-determination as one of three basic psychological needs that are universal across cultures and the life span.<sup>xxii</sup>

A comprehensive approach to character education needs to be aimed at cultivating in students their own autonomous valuing of what is valuable. Once this is developed in a student, it will be evident in spontaneous and whole-hearted compassion, generosity, honesty, fairness, and other admirable conduct. It fits the pattern of integrated motivation organized around the right values, with the right priorities, and based on understanding the value of things. SDT research suggest that a value orientation of this kind is a predictable outcome for people nurtured in a needs-supportive social environment that models valuing of persons and their flourishing,

promotes ethical insight, reflection, and action, and provides sufficient opportunity for the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs as children explore and make their way in the world.

When considering just school communities, leaders and teachers should reflect on the following:

- Is there tracking or ability grouping that places teachers in classrooms with more- and less-preferred groups of students? If so, how is that reflected in the quality of teacher-student relationships? A key predictor of students' success and experience of positive social connection is their answer to the question, "Does my teacher like me?" Feeling liked is an important aspect of how people experience validation of their worth, and it is important to be mindful of how structural features of schools may lead to particular groups of students feeling less valued.
- Does the school have transient students? When teachers and school leaders greet students arriving at the start of the school day, are they tense and less welcoming when they greet transient students? Do they speak less warmly to them?
- How well are teachers able to handle the prejudices and animosities that children may bring to school? Are they worn down by contempt shown by students of one group for members of another group? If so, how can that be addressed?
- Do schools focus their efforts on students who are perceived to be high achievers—students most likely to succeed in college or students who can most benefit from investments in their academic success? Do perceptions of students' families as the "right" kinds of families play a role in these judgments?
- How many students are alienated because there is no place of respect for them within the social world of the school?

## Expectations and Modeling

As noted previously, a crucial aspect of character education is defining the ideals of character to which the school and all of its members should aspire. There should be clear ethical expectation of students, teachers, school leaders and staff, and modeling by all adults of the moral, intellectual, civic, and enabling virtues to which students should aspire. Expectations must be reinforced in appropriately educational ways when students fail to meet expectations.

The expectations that may first come to mind are those concerning student behavior, but the goal of character education is not for students merely to comply with school rules; the goal is to nurture students' autonomous valuing, good judgment, and virtuous self-determination—or what is sometimes referred to as an inner moral compass. Behavioral control as such is not character education, and most of the discipline and punishment through which schools attempt to control student behavior is not educative.

Approaches more consistent with character education include problem-solving<sup>xxiii</sup> and restorative justice. The problem-solving approach involves conversations with the student to understand *why* they are failing to meet expectations and seeks the student's collaboration in finding and implementing solutions. Problem solving coaches students in self-regulation as it seeks to address the root causes of behavioral problems. Restorative justice comes into play when a student's failure to meet expectations causes harm, and its focus is on the offender making amends and participation in a reaffirmation of the value commitments of the school community. Students need to learn how they can make things right, and healthy school communities enlist as many of their members as possible in solving the problems they encounter.

Consider the following:

- How are behavioral expectations presented? Are expectations explained?
- Do school leaders and teachers explain their own decisions in ways that refer to the school's guiding ideals?
- Are students engaged in ethical dialogue and inquiry—in a give and take of ethical reasons?
- When students offer good reasons or ethical insights, do teachers and school leaders validate students' progress in virtue cognition? Do they ever do this by revising school rules or creating new ones when students present good ideas?
- In what ways does the school involve students in being spokespersons for ethical ideals?
- What does the school do to teach students how to think things through before acting?
- What restorative justice processes are used to require and enable students to make things right when their behaviors cause harm?
- What public forums does your district (or school) have for discussing issues and making decisions?
- Are there shared decision-making processes involving school leaders, teachers, and parents?
- Can students take part as participants or observers in shared decision making?

## **The Special Role of Teachers**

Due to their daily contact with students, teachers can have the greatest influence on students. Thus, teachers can *model* and *reinforce* the agreed-upon core ideals and can incorporate character education *through direct* and *indirect* forms of instruction in their daily lessons.

Expectations and modeling pertain not only to behavior, but also to expectations for academic achievement and teachers' modeling of intellectual virtues and valuing of what they teach—things such as careful reasoning, craftsmanship, artistry,

and other qualities that define excellence in all the forms of human endeavor taught in schools. A first rule for teaching related to qualities of thinking and understanding that matter to good judgment is for teachers to value these things and present them as valuable. Teachers should frame the value of schoolwork by reference to its intrinsic rewards, such as potential for personal satisfaction, fulfilling personal potential, or the intrinsic rewards of thinking before acting and making good decisions. By contrast, it is unhelpful to character education, and undermines meaningful learning, to present the value of what is learned in *extrinsic terms* such as what will be tested.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### **Direct Instruction**

The preceding remarks about virtue literacy and teacher modeling of aspects of virtue cognition imply an important role for direct instruction that informs and stimulates ethical understanding, reflection, and judgment.

Character education through direct instruction can begin in the early elementary years with curricula that orient students to thinking things through before acting, such as the Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS) curriculum.<sup>xxv</sup> The goal of this curriculum is to help children become more attuned to the emotional dynamics of social interactions and oriented to thinking before they act—thinking specifically about the social and emotional dynamics of situations they may face and the likely consequences of different choices. The PATHS curriculum, a self-described program in social and emotional learning, was designed to do just this and could be used as part of a comprehensive approach to character education. It uses simple pictures of children in social interactions as a basis for teacher-facilitated discussions of what the children in the pictures are feeling, might do, and should expect to happen in response. It thereby promotes greater self-awareness, self-control, foresight, tact, empathy, and ethical reflection.

Literature and the arts are traditional vehicles of ethical reflection and studies in character, and they are among the most effective materials for direct instruction in character education if they are approached from a virtue perspective. Literature and film can be very effective in exploring moral complexities and promoting self-understanding.

For instance,

- Moral learning often begins with simple rules, such as “Be honest,” and simple paradigms of goodness, such as sharing a toy as a model of kindness. An important aspect of progress in character development is learning to navigate the complexities that arise, such as situations in which it would not be kind to reveal everything one knows or believes.
- Another aspect of progress in character development is learning to recognize our own limitations and understanding how to overcome them.

Subjects from math and science to technology, journalism, and history provide other relevant opportunities for virtue-related direct instruction and students’ learning, if these subjects are taught with a focus on intellectual virtues. This requires a focus on the forms and norms of inquiry, evidence, reasoning, problem-solving, and diligence that are essential to this field and related forms of professional practice. The further students advance toward developing expertise and launching careers that require expertise, the more they can appreciate the value of careful thinking to doing good work and making good decisions.

### **Guided Practice**

Students can study and evaluate case studies in good and bad decision-making in literature, history, and biographies, and they can learn patterns of careful thinking in math, science, and other subjects, but is it important to character

education that they practice such thinking and decision-making for themselves, especially in ways that will be valuable in their lives. Practice can be facilitated by coaching that involves modeling, corrective observations and targeted lessons in self-awareness, noticing of what is relevant, breaking down the steps in a process or skill, and explanations and reminders of norms and ideals. Good coaching nurtures aspiration and provides learners with what they need to self-monitor and guide themselves by relevant ideals. It helps those who aspire to excellence to be perceptive and think critically not just about other people's attributes and actions but about their own. A key to this, whether it takes place one-on-one or in a setting that involves group discussion, is that it affirms students' worth, dignity, and potential. It creates a safe space in which students can think through questions and problems out loud.

Guided practice in relevant forms of virtue cognition can take many forms. Some may take advantage of teachable moments, such as when

- students seek advice on how to ensure that everyone does their fair share of a group project;
- students seek career guidance;
- a student cannot decide whether it would be acceptable to exclude a specific peer from a birthday party;
- students question how grading policies can accommodate pandemic-related or other extenuating circumstances that present obstacles to learning.

Teachers (and school leaders) should model ethical seriousness, open-mindedness, and intellectual humility in discussing such matters with students. They should be fair-minded in acknowledging when students identify important considerations and offer good reasons, just as they should be fair-minded in identifying the shortcomings of students' understanding and reasons. Ethical inquiry should be approached

as a cooperative enterprise in which healthy individuals and communities engage as they address problems and strive to be better.

Other forms of guided practice in virtue cognition can be built into the curriculum and special events planning, under the broad heading of critical thinking projects. Such projects may involve upper-elementary and more advanced students producing reasoned essays and staging debates on matters they identify for themselves as ethically significant questions they want to address. This is a step removed from the original conception of a just school community in which students would democratically determine school rules consistent with broad governing ideals; however, its significance for students' lives and school's success may be just as great, if the project helps students think through something they must deal with in their own lives.

One example is the question that nine-and-ten-year old students chose with the approval of their teacher and principal during a multi-year initiative in critical thinking, "Should I join a gang?"<sup>xxvi</sup> The students received instruction in relevant ethical principles and coaching in writing well-reasoned essays in answer to their question, and they were coached in preparing for a debate witnessed by the entire school community. This gave them a model for thinking before acting, and it undoubtedly strengthened their ability and desire to think through personal decision in light of relevant ethical considerations.

A school ethos, expectation and modeling, instruction, and opportunities for active learning should all be thoughtfully coordinated in the interest of positive character development. This begins with thoughtful, committed, and conscientious leadership.

### **Evaluating Progress**

School leaders should collaborate with teachers in developing and using methods for evaluating

the school's progress in character education. There are many relevant sources of information, including changes in the frequency and severity of behavioral problems in the school, frequency of absences, teacher observations of student behaviors, quality of student engagement in service opportunities or requirements, students' autonomous use of virtue terms and reasoning, and quality of student virtue-related schoolwork and projects. Evaluation efforts should be understood as formative whole-school self-assessments, not summative high-stakes evaluation.

## Summary

Based on the preceding sections, the primary focus of leadership in character education must therefore involve the following:

- Leading with character and integrity;
- Prioritizing character education;
- Leading a collaborative process through which teachers and other staff work together to (1) define the virtues and ideals to which the school(or district) is committed; (2) take responsibility to exemplify and live by those virtues and ideals; (3) identify ways in which specific moral, intellectual, civic, and enabling virtues are important to students' progress and already present—or should be present—in the curriculum, teaching, student advising, disciplinary policies, extracurricular activities, and other aspects of the school (or district).

In prioritizing character education, educational leaders need to model *judicious and conscientious commitment* to the flourishing of a just school community. Educational leaders are perfectly situated for orchestrating the conditions necessary for a comprehensive character education approach across all aspects of schools. By working on their own characters and professional interactions with each other, leaders and other adults in a school can do good work in helping students fulfill their potential and lead good lives.

The heart of this is sustaining a culture of character-oriented professional collaboration in serving students' developmental needs. This has several aspects:

- The culture of the adults in a school model to students how individuals should interact with one another in a respectful and empowering way.
- Teachers' and other adult staff members' growing virtue literacy enables them to accentuate the virtue relevance of their own school roles and subject areas and to participate in a coordinated whole-school approach to character education.
- A key aspect of character-oriented professional collaboration is that good leadership ensures a healthy *alignment* between what the institution expects of adults in a school and what they expect of themselves as professionals for whom doing *good work* means helping students fulfill their potential.<sup>xxvii</sup> There is no adequate substitute for teachers' *moral motivation* to help students, in general, and even more so in sustaining the work of character education.

## KEY TERMS

**Character** – A set of personal traits or dispositions (e.g.) a collection of virtues) that produce specific moral emotions, inform, motivation and guide conduct. (cf. Jubilee Centre Framework p.2).<sup>ii</sup>

**Character education** – Includes all explicit and implicit educational activities that help young people develop positive personal strengths called virtues. (Jubilee Centre Framework p. 2). This is not a single program and involves interactions in a school where good character should be modeled.

**Flourishing** – (sometimes called ‘eudaimonia’) – The pursuit in life of our potential as human beings. This can include pleasure and life satisfaction (subjective wellbeing), but these are fleeting and of less importance than objective wellbeing as moral purpose and meaning.

**Moral motivation** – A person who is truly virtuous or has good character is motivated towards doing good things and feels appropriately about moral matters. In this way they have moral motivation because they are motivated morally and not by other desires (e.g., a person gives to charity because they want to help rather than to be seen as giving to charity for their own ends such as for a tax deduction or to have their name on a plaque).

**Just school communities** – Based on the idea that a student needs to learn how to be a moral person through feeling that they belong to a group, have a shared commitment to ethical ideals and have a view that is heard.

**Practical wisdom** – Developed through experience, this master virtue is the intellectual wisdom needed to negotiate complex circumstances in life and professional work, appropriately focused on moral dimensions and aimed at human flourishing.

**School ethos** – The collective character or spirit of everyone in the school community; the demonstrated beliefs and aspirations of the school community.

**Self-determination theory** – A theory of motivation that is concerned with human flourishing. The theory claims that people have three psychological needs that must be satisfied if they are to flourish as human beings. They need to belong, be connected to others, and have a sense of competence.

**Virtue** – Acquired through upbringing then by our repeated choices, these are stable patterns of the person: of their perception, emotions, desire, motivation, and behavior (honesty, courage).

**Virtue ethics** – A philosophy that prioritizes character as the most important dimension of being a good person and doing good moral acts in the world. It matters as much why a person does something as what they do, because for this philosophy, character is the source of all moral acts.

**Virtue ethics leadership** – A form of leadership that emphasizes the character of the leader as the most important asset for making good judgments and acting as a motivating force for ethical good. Rules and regulations only go so far in supporting leadership, and so character and practical wisdom are essential for appropriate leadership that is responsive to real and unfolding circumstances.

**Virtuous identity** – When people views themselves in moral or virtuous terms—morality or virtues is a key feature of how a people view themselves in the world.

**Virtuous self** – When virtues are incorporated through dispositions into the core of who a person is in the world. The self and virtue are inseparable.



## APPENDIX

District Assessment of Ideals	Yes	No
Does the <b>district</b> have a defined mission?		
Does the <b>district</b> mission address the needs of the community and society it serves?		
Does the <b>district</b> mission focus on things of inherent value?		
Does the <b>district's</b> mission contribute to everyone's ability to live meaningful lives?		
Does the <b>district</b> value inquiry, artistry, craftsmanship, and service as endeavors and traditions of practice that enrich lives and serve society?		
Do <b>district</b> leaders and staff function as a collaborative community devoted to the district mission and well-being of every member of the district community?		
Does the <b>district</b> leadership strive to involve everyone in the district in ways that create a sense of shared purpose?		
Does the <b>district</b> leadership's devotion to its mission and collaborative approach inspire and enable schools in the district to devote themselves to the mission and succeed in it?		

School Assessment of Ideals	Yes	No
Does the <b>school</b> community value inquiry, artistry, craftsmanship, and service as endeavors and traditions of practice that enrich lives and serve society in addition to learning knowledge and skills?		
Does the <b>school</b> nurture students' growth in valuing inquiry artistry, craftsmanship, and service?		
Do the adults in the <b>school</b> function as a community devoted to valuable traditions of inquiry, artistry, craftsmanship, and service, as well as the well-being of every member of the school community?		
Does the <b>school</b> have a mission?		
Does the <b>school</b> mission focus only on students getting ahead?		
Does the <b>school's</b> devotion to its mission inspire students to devote themselves to things that have value beyond themselves?		
Does the <b>school's</b> mission contribute to students' ability to live meaningful lives?		
Does the <b>school</b> strive to involve everyone in the school in ways that create a sense of shared purpose?		

## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> The Code of Alabama 1975, Sec 16-6B-2(h), <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/codeofalabama/1975/coatoc.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (JCCV), *A Framework for Character Education in Schools*, <https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/527/character-education/framework>

<sup>iii</sup> In collaboration with the University of Alabama Leadership for Character Team, this Framework was prepared by Randall Curren, PhD., Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy & Professor, Leadership Program, Warner School of Education, University of Rochester, New York, USA; Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK.

<sup>iv</sup> The Code of Alabama 1975, Sec 16-6B-2(h), <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/codeofalabama/1975/coatoc.htm>

<sup>v</sup> Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (JCCV), *A Framework for Character Education in Schools*, <https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/527/character-education/framework>, with minor revisions based on R. Curren, *Why Character Education?* (London: Wiley 2017), <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/2048-416X.2017.12004.x>

<sup>vi</sup> For background on the psychology of self-integrative processes and formation of virtuous motivation and identity, see Curren, *Why Character Education?*, pp. 18-21; R. Curren & R. Ryan, “Moral Self-Determination: The Nature of Existence, and Formation of Moral Motivation,” *Journal of Moral Education* 49(3) (2020): 295-315.

<sup>vii</sup> Alabama Administrative Code, Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, 290-4-1-01 (6) <https://casetext.com/regulation/alabama-administrative-code/title-290-alabama-state-board-of-education>

<sup>viii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1

<sup>ix</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xi</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xiii</sup> JCCV, *A Framework for Character Education in Schools*, “Key Principles for Character Education”; R. Curren, “Punishment and Motivation in a Just School Community,” *Theory and Research in Education* 18(1) (2020), 117-133, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878520916089>; R.M. Ryan & E.L. Deci, *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness* (London: Guilford Press, 2017).

<sup>xiv</sup> Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, <https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/527/character-education/framework>. The Jubilee Centre is the world’s leading center for research and innovation in character education.

<sup>xv</sup> Ryan & Deci, *Self-Determination Theory*; R.M. Ryan, Rr. Curren, and E.L. Deci, What Humans Need: Flourishing in Aristotelian Philosophy and Self-Determination Theory: in Alan S. Waterman, ed., *The Best Within Us: Positive Psychology Perspectives on Eudaimonia* (Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association, 2013), pp. 57-75.

<sup>xvi</sup> Damian Spiteri, “Citizenship Education as an Educational Outcome for Young People in Care: A Phenomenological Account,” *Theory and Research in Education* 10 (1) (2012): 39-55, p. 50.

<sup>xvii</sup> R. Curren, “Cardinal Virtues of Academic Administration,” *Theory and Research in Education* 6(3) 2008: 337-363.

<sup>xviii</sup> Santoro, *Demoralized: Why Teachers Leave the Profession They Love and How They Can Stay* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Educational Press, 2018).

<sup>xix</sup> Ryan & Deci, *Self-Determination Theory*

<sup>xx</sup> See F.C. Power, “The Just Community Approach to Moral Education,” *Journal of Moral Education* 17(3) (1988): 195-208; F.C. Power, “The Moral Self in Community,” in D.K. Lapsley & D. Narvaez, eds. *Moral Development, Self, and Identity* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum, 2004), 47-64.

<sup>xxi</sup> Information in this section incorporates material excerpted from Curren, *Why Character Education?*, pp. 18-21.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ryan & Deci, *Self-Determination Theory*.

<sup>xxiii</sup> F.C. Power & S.N. Hart, “The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline,” in S.N. Hart, ed., *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline* (New York: UNESCO Educational Publications, 2005); R.W. Greene, “Transforming School Discipline: Shifting from Power and Control to Collaboration and Problem Solving,” *Childhood Education* 94(4) (2018): 22-27.

<sup>xxiv</sup> M. Vansteenkiste, B. Soenens, J. Verstuyf, and W. Lens, “What is the Usefulness of Your Schoolwork? The Differential Effects of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Goal Framing on Optimal Learning,” *Theory and Research in Education* 7(2) (2009): 155-163.

<sup>xxv</sup> See <https://pathsprogram.com/> for details and footage of the program in use.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Led by college student interns co-supervised by RCSD host teachers and U. of Rochester faculty, R. Curren and R. Feldman, in RCSD schools, Rochester, New York.

<sup>xxvii</sup> On the conception of good work as both personally satisfying and serving society, and the importance of institutional alignment to achieving the intrinsic rewards of doing good work, see H. Gardner, M. Csikszentmihalyi, and W. Damon, *Good Work* (New York: Basic Books, 2001). On the demoralizing effects of an absence of alignment in educational contexts, see D. Santoro, *Demoralized: Why Teachers Leave the Profession They Love and How They Can Stay* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Educational Press, 2018).

