THE FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY
School Climate Reform and Prosocial Education

Jonathan Cohen
National School Climate Center and Teachers College, Columbia University

In this issue of the *Journal of Character Education* we have been asked to consider two sets of understandings about change and to comment on their implication for our educational goals and the methods we use to actualize these goals. My comments and suggestions grow out of my understanding of the purpose of K-12 education to promote skills, knowledge, and dispositions that provide the foundation for our being able to love, to work, and to participate in a democracy (Cohen, 2006; Cohen, Pickeral, & Levine, 2010).

THE FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY

The foundation for democracy is education. A democratic society is more than just the institution of government. It is a way of living together, of learning to cooperatively agree and disagree nonviolently, a social contract that supports an appreciation of diversity and of coming to support one another for the good of the whole. In this sense, democracy demands of its people the social, emotional, and civic skills and ethical dispositions as well as cognitive capacities to constructively participate in a democratic society. Children learn the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that support an engaged citizenry in our homes, neighborhoods, and in our K-12 schools. And, the vast majority of parents and educators want K-12 schooling to be places and processes where our children learn to become responsible citizens (Rose & Gallop, 2000). This was an organizing idea for Adams, Jefferson, and our "Founding Fathers," that American public education would enable citizens to partake in and further our democracy (Cohen, 2006). My colleagues and I have suggested that the skills, knowledge and dispositions outlined in Table 1 represent the essential "building blocks" of an engaged citizen (Cohen et al., 2010; Torney-Puta & Vermeer, 2004). My suggestions in Table 1 grow out of this set of understandings about the purpose or goal of K-12 education: to provide the foundation for an engaged citizenry and democracy.

Educational research shows that learning social, emotional, civic skills, and dispositions

Jonathan Cohen, PhD, is the president of the National School Climate Center and is an adjunct professor in psychology and education, Teachers College, Columbia University; author; and a practicing clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst. E-mail: jonathancohen@schoolclimate.org

Journal of Character Education, Volume 10(1), 2014, pp. 43–52 ISSN 1543-1223

TABLE 1
Skills and Dispositions That Provide the Foundation for Effective Citizenry

Essential skills:

- *Learning to listen to ourselves and others*;
- *Critical and reflective thinking abilities* (e.g. being able to think about various points of view and goals; being able to understand, analyze and check the reliability of information about government; being able to analyze instances of social injustice and decide when some action or nonviolent protest is justified; being able to analyze how conditions in the community are connected to policy decisions);
- *Flexible problem solving/decision making abilities* (e.g. the ability to resolve conflicts in creative and nonviolent ways; being able to build consensus; being able to reach an informed decision about a candidate or conclusion about an issue;
- *Communicative abilities* (e.g. being able to participate in discussion; learning to argue thoughtfully and directly for one's position and use evidence in support of it; being able to articulate the meaning of abstract concepts such as democracy and patriotism; being able to articulate the relationship between the common good and self-interest and use these ideas in making decisions; being able to express one's opinion on a political or civic matter when contacting an elected official or a media outlet);
- *Collaborative capacities* (e.g. working together for a common goal; learning to compromise; being able to participate in a respectful and informed discussion about an issue; being able to act in a group in a way that includes others and communicates respect for their views; being able to envision a plan for action on community problems and mobilize others to pursue it.).

Essential dispositions:

- *Responsibility* (e.g. sense of personal responsibility at many levels including obeying the law and voting; respect for human rights and willingness to search out and listen to others' views; personal commitment to others and their well-being, and to justice);
- *An appreciation that we are social creatures and need others to survive and thrive and an overlapping sense of social trust in the community*;
- *Appreciation of and involvement with social justice* (e.g. a nation is as strong as its weakest members; when certain groups are discriminated against it is not only unfair to them but, in the long run undermines society; support for justice, equality and other democratic values and procedures);
- *Service to others or an appreciation that it is an honor and a pleasure to serve and help others*.
- *Appreciation that—most of the time—others do the best they can* (e.g. sense of realistic efficacy about citizen' actions).

that overlap with abilities outlined in Table 1 promote general success in schooling and in life. First, these social, emotional and civic competencies/dispositions are predictive of students' ability to learn and solve problems nonviolently (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Brown, Corrigian, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2012; Cohen, 2006; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). These are the same competencies that provide the foundation for healthy adult personal and professional relationships (Cohen, 2006). Furthermore, educational research has shown that when schools work to (1) intentionally teach students to become more socially, emotionally, and civically competent and ethically able and inclined, and, when we (2) systemically work to create safe, caring, participatory schools, academic achievement increases and school violence decreases over a 3 to 5 year period (Cohen, 2012; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL INFORMED PERSPECTIVES ABOUT CHANGE

In essence, Lapsley's article (this issue) summarizes psychological, social, and biological understandings about the transition into adolescence and young adulthood. My understandings of children's development are aligned with and support Lapsley's integrative "developmental systems perspective" about the complexity of biopsychosocial forces that shape our lives over time. Lapsley's understandings lead him to suggest two essential

educational goals. First, that helpful character education needs to comprehensively address "overlapping ecological contexts, be implemented early and sustained over time" (Lapsley, this issue, p. 19). Second, effective character education is "embedded in overlapping systems of influence that include family, peers, and neighborhood" rather than "an intervention or a curriculum" alone (Lapsley, this issue, p. 19).

Practically, how can educational policy and educational leaders support a process of learning and improvement for students that appreciate the incredible variation in developmental and learning abilities, neighborhoods, and larger systems across America? Lapsley (this issue) concludes with the notion that "What adolescents need is at least one good relationship with a caring adult in the family or community, the development of cognitive and self-regulation skills, a positive view of the self and a sense of one's mastery and effectiveness" (p. 20). As I will outline below, I believe that there are research-based understandings and guidelines that recognize, coordinate, and further ecologically informed school wide, instructional, and one-on-one improvement goals (Cohen, 2012).

There is compelling evidence of a growing divide between the rich and the poor (Saez, 2012). We know this divide begins in the first years of children's lives—the upper middle and upper class are able to provide education and support to their offspring that has life-long consequences (Reardon, 2011). And, there is clearly a range of laws and policies that support this growing gap between rich and poor (e.g., housing segregation, exclusionary zoning laws) (Rothstein, 2012, 2013).

SCHOOL CLIMATE REFORM: APPRECIATING THE COMPLEXITY OF STUDENTS' LIVES

Here I will suggest that school climate reform is a scientifically sound, ecologically informed school improvement strategy that is aligned with and supports prosocial education (character education and social-emotional learning) and the overlapping, ecologically informed systems of influence (family, peers, and neighborhood) that Lapsley's (this issue) democratically informed "contextualist perspective" recommends. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life (National School Climate Council, 2007). As can be seen in Table 2, an effective school climate improvement process engages students, parents/guardians, school personnel and even community members in a meaningful, democratically informed process of learning and coleadership.

Echoing Lapsley's "contextualist perspective" I suggest that it is essential that we understand how systemic processes shape learning, well being, and children's healthy development (Cohen, 2006, 2012; Cohen et al., 2010). School climate reform overlaps with and is aligned with the Character Education Partnership's *11 Principles of Effective Character Education* (Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 1995). Like the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning's theory of change these principles recognize systematic as well as instructional efforts as providing the foundation for prosocial education. Eight of the *11 Principles* support systemic improvement goals, and, three of the *11 Principles* are focused on various aspects of instruction.

School climate reform is also aligned with the theory of change defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (2008). That theory is grounded in the understanding that two processes provide the foundation for helpful school improvement: (1) systemic improvements that support safe, caring, engaged and well managed schools that include high expectations (for student learning); and, (2) instructional efforts that promote social emotional learning.

There is growing empirical evidence that effective school climate reform increases academic achievement, reduces violence and student dropout rates, and increases teacher retention rates (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, &

TABLE 2
The School Climate Improvement Process Defined

School climate improvement is an intentional, strategic, collaborative, transparent, and coordinated effort to strengthen school learning environments. Democratically informed decision making constitutes an essential foundation for the school climate improvement process. The council defines an effective school climate improvement process as one that includes the following six essential practices:

1. The decision-making process is collaborative, democratic, and involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied roles and perspectives (e.g., teacher, nurse, social worker, administrator, bus drivers, secretaries, maintenance staff as well as nontraditional student leaders and disempowered parents.
2. Psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g. survey) and qualitative (e.g. interviews, focus groups) data are used to drive action planning, intervention practices, and program implementation to continuously improve dimensions of school climate. Data are collected regularly to evaluate progress and continue to inform the improvement process.
3. Improvement goals are tailored to the unique needs of the students and broader school community. These goals are integrated into overall school reform/renewal efforts thereby leveraging school strengths while facilitating the sustainability of the improvement process over time.
4. Capacity building among school personnel promotes adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to promote collective efficacy and staff skills in providing whole child education.
5. Curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions are based on scientific research and grounded in cognitive, social-emotional, and ecological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength- and risk-based practices and programs that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning.
6. The improvement process strengthens (a) policies and procedures related to learning environments, and (b) operational infrastructure to facilitate data collection, effective planning, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability.

Source: Adapted from the National School Climate Council (2012).

Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013). Although school climate reform does not address all of the issues that Murray (2012) and others (e.g., Reardon, 2011; Rothstein, 2012) raise, empirical research findings (Thapa et al., 2013) support the notion that school climate reform efforts will reduce the equity gap.

SCHOOL CLIMATE REFORM: SUPPORTING FOUNDATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

I now briefly outline a series of processes that define and shape an effective school climate improvement effort. There are six, overlapping school wide improvement processes that I believe promote a climate for learning and children's healthy development. School climate reform recognizes and promotes all of the processes outlined below.

Measurement—Directing Goal Setting and Learning

One of the foundational systemic processes that shape school life is our measurement systems and related systems of accountability. We can and need to measure the social, emotional, moral, and civic as well as intellectual aspects of student learning and school life to insure that we understand and address the complexity of children's needs as wisely outlined by Lapsley (this issue) and many others (e.g., Berkowitz, 2009; Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, 2008; Lickona et al., 1995; Tough, 2013).

Measurement provides an essential foundation of learning, teaching, goal setting, and of systems of accountability. It is well known that what is measured is "what counts." In fact, as individuals as well as organizations—like school systems—we are always taking stock

and measuring—consciously, intentionally, thoughtfully, fairly, helpfully, or not.

The *Common Core* is now shaping public education measurement systems. Although this set of goals is intended to move schools away from rote learning and memorization towards a writing intensive pedagogy that promotes reasoning skills, I and others suggest that the *Common Core* represents a familiar *top-down* set of practices and foci that school leaders are being forced to adopt. Although the *Common Core* is somewhat broader in focus than No Child Left Behind, it continues to essentially negate the profound importance of social, emotional, and civic learning and teaching, as well as being problematic in many other ways (ReThnking Schools, 2013). The *Common Core* fails to appreciate the complexity of children's needs as outlined by Lapsley. And, I —unhappily—predict that it will not reverse the trends that Murray, Rothstein, Saez, Reardon and many others have pointed to.

In addition to being recognized, supported, and/or endorsed by a growing number of federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Justice, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Institute for Educational Sciences, Federal Emergency Management Agency) there is growing international appreciation (from a growing number of foreign educational ministries, the World Bank and UNICEF) that we can measure school climate in K-12 education. Interesting and importantly, this overlaps with an international trend that recognizes subjective well-being as an essential metric that can, and needs to, shape national policy making (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2013).

Policy and Systems of Accountability

Measurement drives systems of accountability. The National School Climate Council and I recommend that districts and states adopt or adapt the following National School Climate Standards (National School Climate Council, 2009). Its vision is for a positive and sustainable school climate that supports the school and its community:

1. developing a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate;
2. developing *policies* that promote social, emotional ethical, civic and intellectual learning as well as systems that address barriers to learning;
3. promoting *practices* that promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development of students and student engagement as well as addressing barriers to learning;
4. creating an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically; and
5. developing meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

There are two important aspects of this policy that I want to underscore: the what and the how; that is, what is the policy focused on, and how is it administered?

The What. These five standards are not a *t*op down mandate but rather recognize and honor the *voice* of parents/guardians, educators, and students. The standards support local school communities addressing three essential questions: (1) What is your vision for an ideal school? (2) Given this vision, what policies, rules and supports are needed? And, (3) given this vision and sets of policies, what practices are needed to actualize them? A number of states (e.g. Connecticut and Georgia) and districts (e.g. Chicago, IL to Westbrook, CT) are adopting or adapting these standards (www .schoolclimate.org/climate/policy.php).

The How. There is a growing body of research about helpful and unhelpful *drivers* of school improvement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Fullan, 2011; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010). Unhelpful drivers

include (1) accountability systems that use data as a hammer rather than a flashlight; (2) a primary focus on the individual teacher and/or administrator; (3) a primary focus on technology alone; and, (4) specific evidence-based programs. The second, third and forth "drivers" noted above are all important! But, they do not foster transformative organizational change alone. On the other hand, the following four processes *are* helpful organizing drivers of organizational change: (1) fostering the intrinsic motivation of students, parents and school personnel; (2) igniting the process of school reform in ways that engage students and educators in a continuous process of learning; (3) inspiring team work and a collaborative problem solving process; and, (4) affecting all members of the community. School climate reform supports all of these helpful drivers of change. They comprise a model that honors and supports learning.

Engaging the Whole School Community

It is common sense that engagement in learning and school life supports learning. There is a body of research that supports this and the school climate improvement process (Table 2) is thus grounded in the notion that students as well as parents/guardians and school personnel and even community members need to participate in the process of developing school improvement goals (National School Climate Council, 2012). Such inclusiveness provides a foundation for effective school reform efforts (Fullan, 2011; Mourshed et al., 2010; Tucker, 2011).

School-Home-Community Partnerships

There is a robust body of educational, sociological and socioeconomic research that supports the notion that student learning and positive youth development are shaped not only by effective school-family partnerships (e.g. Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Patrikakou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005) but also by the social networks and norms of the larger community and collaborative school-community partnerships (Adelman & Taylor, 2005; Berg, Melaville, & Blank, 2006; Glickman & Scally, 2008; Putnam, 2001; Renée & McAlister, 2011). Although the importance of school-community partnerships is widely recognized, in my experience it is rarely practiced. I suggest that there are two important reasons for this. First, principals are focused on what is now measured. School-community partnerships are not measured now. And second, principals are not sure how to best facilitate this goal given how extraordinarily busy they are.

School climate surveys and measurement can be powerful engagement strategies for students, parents, school personnel, and even community members as well as a scientifically sound assessment strategy. Our center recently developed a *Community Scale* (www.schoolclimate.org/climate/documents/csci_Community_School.pdf) to complement and extend the student, parents/guardian and school personnel scales on our Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (www.schoolclimate.org/climate/practice.php). The *Community Scale* can be used with any school climate survey and engages middle and high school students to take this very short survey out to 15 sectors of the community (from the faith based, law enforcement, local political leaders to local media and arts organizations). It asks two sets of questions: (1) how do you view current school-community partnerships? and (2) to what extent would you be interested in supporting the schools' improvement goals? It is easy—and exciting —to imagine the range of ways that students and community members can engage in conversations about what it means to be socially responsible with regards to their community and its schools. When we see or hear something troubling, for example, what does it mean to be a "responsible" witness?

Codes of Conduct, Rules, and Norms

Social norms are one of the most powerful forces that shape social and emotional life. And, social norms—by definition—provide a foundation for the schools' climate (National School Climate Council, 2007). Codes of conduct and school rules are designed to helpfully shape social life. Tragically, too many school disciplinary policies rely on punitive or zero tolerance that contribute to the shameful rates of high school dropouts and the "school to prison pipeline" (Editorial Projects in Education, 2013). Social norms and codes of conduct powerfully shape how safe people feel in school. School climate reform supports everyone in the community to understand and delineate social norms, codes of conduct, and rules that support their school being safe, supportive, engaging and flourishing (Cohen, 2012).

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In addition to these five schoolwide improvement processes, there are two additional aspects of teaching/learning outlined below that support children's foundation for healthy relationships, work, and participation in a democracy (Cohen, 2006).

Promote Prosocial Teaching and Prosocial Teachers

It is clear that K-12 schools can and must support teachers', parents' and students' prosocial behaviors. Such support provides the foundation for students developing the skills, knowledge and dispositions outlined in Table 1 and that provide the foundation for an engaged citizenry. Educators can engage students in more intentional prosocial processes through (1) being a living example, (2) through classroom management and disciplinary practices, (3) through pedagogic strategies such as cooperative learning, conflict resolution/mediation, service learning, moral dilemma discussions, and (4), via curricula (e.g., evidence-based lesson plans and units that have been predesigned and/or through the utilization of a backwards design model of curriculum development that supports teachers intentionally infusing prosocial learning objectives, assessments and activities into existing lessons, units and/or Advisory activities).

Recognizing and Supporting Adult (Educator) Learning

Although there is growing recognition of the importance of Professional Learning Communities (Senge, 1990), adult learning is not measured and too rarely appreciated in K-12 education today. School climate reform explicitly supports educators' compelling need for engagement about learning and effective teaching (National School Climate Council, 2012).

CONCLUSION

Authenticity matters. Authentic engagement that supports trusting/collaborative problem solving relationships provides the foundation for learning and positive change (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Comer, 2005). Authenticity cannot be mandated or forced. But, schools that explicitly focus on the importance of relationships and the social, emotional and civic dimensions of learning and school life, powerfully support authentic relationships. Caring and attuned relationships between educators and students provide the foundation for school connectedness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009).

This article is grounded in the understanding that the purpose of K-12 education is to support the skills, knowledge and dispositions that provide the foundation for democracy (Table 1). We have always wanted America to be the land of opportunity. And, we have always hoped that education will opens doors and create the foundation for life-long learning, prosperity and peace.

I have suggested that school climate reform is a scientifically sound educational reform strategy that recognizes and supports ecologically informed and biopsychosocially attuned schoolwide goals that support the healthy development of students. In fact, there is a growing appreciation that school climate reform is an evidence-based reform effort that promotes student learning, and/or reduces dropout rates, and/or prevents school violence as well as promoting teacher retention (Cohen, 2012; Thapa et al., 2013).). The school climate improvement process (Table 2) includes a series of schoolwide educational goals and processes that promote prosocial education and safe, supportive, engaging and flourishing schools.

REFERENCES

Adelman, H., & Taylor, L. (2005). *The school leader's guide to student learning supports: New directions for addressing barriers to learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Berg, A., Melaville, A. & Blank, M. J. (2006). *Community and family engagement: Principals share what works*. Retrieved from the Coalition for Community Schools and the Institute for Educational Leadership website: http://www .communityschools.org/assets/1/AssetManager/ CommunityAndFamilyEngagement.pdf

Berkowitz, M. W. (2009). Teaching in your PRIME. In D. Streight (Ed.), *Good things to do: Expert suggestions for fostering goodness in kids* (pp. 9-14). Portland, OR: Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education Publications.

Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2005). *What works in character education: A report for policy makers and opinion leaders.* Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.

Brown, P. M, Corrigian, M. W., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (Eds.). (2012). *The handbook of prosocial education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. L. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement.* New York, NY: SAGE.

Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009). *School connectedness: Strategies for increasing protective factors among youth.* Atlanta, GA: Author. Retrieved January 30, 2012, from http:// www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/ adolescenthealth/pdf/connectedness.pdf

Cohen, J. (2006). Social, emotional, ethical and academic education: Creating a climate for learning, participation in democracy and well-being. *Harvard Educational Review*, *76*(2), 201-237.

Cohen, J. (2012). Measuring and improving school climate: A pro-social strategy that recognizes, educates and supports the whole child and the whole school community. In P. Brown, M. W. Corrigan, & A. Higgens-D'Allesandro (Eds.), *The handbook of prosocial education* (p. 26). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Cohen, J., Pickeral, T., & Levine, P. (2010). The foundation for democracy: Social, emotional, ethical, cognitive skills and dispositions in K-12 schools. *Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy*, *3*(1), 73-94.

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning. (2008). *SEL: What is it and how does it contribute to students' academic success?* Retrieved from: http://casel.org/publications/ sel-what-is-it-and-how-does-it-contribute-to-students%E2%80%99-academic-success/

Comer, J. P. (2005). *Leave no child behind.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. O., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, *82*(1), 405-432.

Editorial Projects in Education. (2013). School climate, discipline, and safety: Gauging educator attitudes. *Education Week*, *32*(16). Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2013/ school-climate-gauging-attitudes.html

Fullan, M. (2011). *Choosing the wrong drivers for whole system reform* (Seminar Series Paper No. 204). Retrieved from EdSource website: http:// www.edsource.org/today/wp-content/uploads/ Fullan-Wrong-Drivers1.pdf

Glickman, N. J., & Scally, C. P. (2008). Can community and education organizing improve inner-city schools? *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *30*(5), 557–577.

Henderson, A. T., Mapp, K. L., Johnson, V. R. & Davies. D. (2007). *Beyond the bake sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. New York, NY: The New Press

Lapsley, D. (2014). The promise and peril of coming of age in the 21st century. *Journal of Character Education, 10*(1), 13-22.

Lickona, T., Schaps, E., & Lewis, K. (1995). *11 principles of effective character education*. Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.

Mourshed, M., Chijioke, C., & Barber, M. (2010). *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better.* Retrieved from: http://mckinseyonsociety.com/downloads/reports/Education/How-the-Worlds-Most-Improved-School Systems-Keep-Getting-Better_Download-version_Final.pdf

Murray, C. (2012). *Coming apart: The state of White America, 1960-2010*. New York, NY: Crown Forum

National School Climate Council. (2007). *The school climate challenge: Narrowing the gap between school climate research and school climate policy, practice guidelines and teacher education policy.* Retrieved from http://www.ecs.org/html/projectsPartners/nclc/docs/school-climate-challenge-web.pdf

National School Climate Council. (2009). *National school climate standards: Benchmarks to promote effective teaching, learning and comprehensive school improvemen*t. Retrieved from http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/documents/school-climate-standards-csee.pdf

National School Climate Council. (2012). *The school climate improvement process: Essential elements.* Retrieved from http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/schoolclimatebriefs.php

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2013). OECD guidelines on measuring subjective well-being. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Guidelines%20on%20Measuring%20Subjective%20Well-being.pdf

Patrikakou, E. N., Weissberg, R. P., Redding, S., & Walberg, H. J. (Eds.). (2005). S*chool-family partnerships for children's success.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Putnam, R. D. (2001). Community-based social capital and educational performance. In D. Ravitch & J. P. Viteritti (Eds.), *Making good citizens: Education and civil society*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Reardon, S. F. (2011). The widening academic achievement gap between rich and poor: New evidence and possible explanations. In G. J. Duncan & J. J. Murane (Eds.). *Whither opportunity? Raising inequity, schools, and children's life chances* (pp. 91-115). New York, NY: Russell Safe Foundation

Renée, M., & McAlister, S. (2011). *The strengths and challenges of community organizing as an education reform strategy: What the research says.* Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

ReThnking Schools. (2013). Corporate education 'from above' and the trouble with common core. Retrieved from http://www.commondreams.org/view/2013/06/26-2

Rose, L. C., & Gallup, A. M. (2000). *The 32nd annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes two the public schools*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa International.

Rothstein, R. (2012). *Grading education: Getting accountability right*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press

Rothstein, R. (2013). Why are our schools are segregated? *Educational Leadership*, *70*(8), 50-55.

Saez, E. (2012). *Striking it richer: The evolution of the top incomes in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Currency Doubleday.

Thapa, A., Cohen, J. Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research* (Online). doi:10.3102/0034654313483907

Torney-Purta, J., & Vermeer, S. (2004). *Developing citizenship competencies from kindergarten through Grade 12: A background paper for policymakers and educators.* Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

Tough, P. (2013) *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin

Tucker, M.S. (2011) *Standing on the shoulders of giants: An American agenda for education reform*. Retrieved from National Center on Education and the Economy website: http://www.ncee.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Standing-on-the-Shoulders-of-Giants-An-American-Agenda-for-Education-Reform.pdf

Zins, J., Weissberg, R. W., Wang, M. C., & Walberg, H. (Eds.). (2004). *Building school success on social emotional learning: What does the research say?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.