Prospective Teachers' Conceptions of Character Education and Civic Education

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This article examines how prospective teachers make sense of an increasingly muddled division in practice between programs in character education and civic education. It describes respondents' conceptions of each school program and their views on how they might carry out such efforts in their future practice. The article indicates that prospective teachers consider character education and civic education as an essential part of teaching, and that they are eager to take on the role of educating for character and citizenship. However, it also demonstrates that some prospective teachers appear to have circular conceptions of character education and civic education that might be difficult to square in practice. This study suggests the need to increase prospective teachers' understandings of these programs in a way that gives rise to realistic expectations and sustainable practices.

There is a growing body of scholarship devoted to the development of moral and civic character in K-12 students. However, there is little attention given to how prospective teachers understand programs related to such development in K-12 students. Thus the purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze prospective teachers' conceptions of K-12 character education and civic education programs. In particular, it examines how prospective teachers distinguish character education efforts from civic education efforts in schools, and how they perceive their future roles as character educators and civic educators. In the scholarly literature, there are distinct definitions and practices related to both character education and civic education, but the line between character education and civic education in practice has blurred considerably since the resurgence of such programs in the early 1980s (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). Proponents of both types of programs increasingly imply that the general objectives, curriculum, and pedagogy of character education programs are closely related (if not synonymous) with those of civic education programs. Given this apparent overlap between the programmatic practices of character education and civic education, this paper explores whether the two programs

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represent a distinction without a difference in the conceptions of prospective teachers.

BACKGROUND

The questions that drive this paper emerged from the association of theoretical conceptions of character education and civic education in programs espoused by the authors' state education agency (http://www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/csciei .asp) and two of the leading national organizations in character education (http://www.character.org) and civic education (http://www.civiced.org), respectively. For example, in a 2003 Draft Paper, the Character Education Partnership invites all character educators and civic educators to accept a shared vision, and it "commit[s] to work together to build the *civic virtue* and *moral character* vital to the future of democracy, freedom and the common good" (Character Education Partnership, 2003, p. 2, emphasis added).

Building on this vision, the Character Education Partnership (2003) suggests a conception that might serve to bridge these seemingly distinct efforts:

The term "civic character" links the mutual goals that are being addressed by current efforts in civic education, character education, service-learning, and social and emotional learning. These and other similar initiatives seek to help schools educate for engaged citizenship in a democracy. However, all too often these initiatives are implemented in ways that are disconnected from one another or even seen as competing for time and attention. A lack of integration or sense of competition can result in confusion, lower levels of achievement, lack of attention to key goals, and, in some cases, paralysis – preventing schools from articulating and realizing a

comprehensive civic and academic mission. (p. 1)

Historically, character education and civic education have always been linked (see McClellan, 1999). Proponents of character education emphasize the importance of citizenship (Bennett, 1988, 1992, 1995; Benninga, 1993; Deroche & Williams, 1998; Kilpatrick, 1992; Lickona, 1991, 2004; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Wynne & Ryan, 1997), and advocates of civic education highlight the need for good citizens to develop certain character traits and dispositions (Hahn & Torney-Purta 1999; Putnam (2000),Torney-Purta & Vermeer Lopez, 2006; Torney-Purta, Lehman, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001; Center for Civic Education, n.d.). Interestingly, character educators often view citizenship as but one component of educating for character, and civic educators often take a similar stance on the development of character in relation to the assumedly broader responsibilities of citizenship. And although there is not much explicit overlap in these seemingly distinct bodies of scholarship, there is often an inclination to combine them at the programmatic level: "as much as the literatures for character (and moral) education and citizenship education tend to be separate, in actual educational practice, there is a clear trend to combine or even integrate the two" (Atlhof & Berkowitz, 2006, p. 508).

Recent scholarship has also examined the viability of distinguishing between character education and civic education. For example, Davies, Gorard, and McGuinn (2005) suggest that educators ought to proceed with caution in bridging character education and citizenship education, while Altof and Berkowitz (2006) argue that negative stereotypes inhibit a meaningful synthesis of the two approaches and that "it is best to think of the relationship of character education to citizenship education as a set of Venn diagrams (partially

overlapping domains)" (p.512). However there has been no connection made to how prospective teachers make sense of these seemingly distinct efforts and what impact it might have on their future practice. Thus this paper is an attempt to understand the ways that prospective teachers make sense of these two different worlds of character education and civic education.

This paper is not, however, an attempt to clear up any apparent confusion, recognizing that there are multiple definitions of character education and civic education in the scholarly literature. Instead, as a starting point for examining prospective teachers' beliefs regarding such programs, this study simply draws on the conceptions of character education and civic education put forward by the aforementioned leading organizations. For example, the Character Education Partnership professes to "[lead] the nation in helping schools develop people of good character for a just and compassionate society (http://www.character.org/missionvisionhistory), and the Center for Civic Education seeks to "[promote] an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries (http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=mission_statement). These mission statements and the programmatic elements that follow from them serve as a basis for identifying how prospective teachers make sense of these distinct but overlapping domains. Importantly then, this paper seeks only to examine how prospective teachers make sense of these domains; it does not venture to clarify the conceptions any further. As Berkowitz (2002) suggests, merely clarifying the terms of programs does not serve well the children who are the recipients of such programs:

Controversy swirls around the varied approaches to implementing character education…However, when and if the dust settles, it should be clear that the bottom line of character education is not philosophical distinctions, pedagogical ideologies, politics, or other conceptual disagreements. Rather it is the development of children…

It is time to use science to help kids become good people rather than lay out landmines of theory disagreements. (pp. 43-44)

Thus we acknowledge this confusion, and we turn our focus to the lack of attention given to character education and civic education in teacher education programs (see Goodlad, 1994; Jones, Ryan, & Bohlin, 1998, 2003; Watson, 1998; Weber, 1998). Specifically, we assume that it is important to explore how prospective teachers make sense of character education and civic education programs, and whether or not they deem such programs relevant to their preparation as teachers. This assumption rests on the constructivist claim that an understanding of prospective teacher beliefs regarding character education and civic education is a necessary (albeit not sufficient) step toward creating experiences and curricula in teacher education programs that prepare prospective teachers for the moral nature of their future work (see Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2009). This paper draws on this constructivist framework to make application to teacher education.

METHOD

The research reported here embodies a mixed methods perspective blending quantitative data gathered via a survey instrument and qualitative data due to the inclusion of narrative comments by respondents. Research questions for this study included: (a) How do prospective

teachers perceive character education? (b) How do they perceive civic education? And (c) how do they plan to engage in character education and civic education efforts in their future classrooms? A survey instrument (see Appendix) was constructed after a review of the literature in civic education and character education, and many of the questions were excerpted from programmatic principles of prominent approaches (Beland, 2003; Center for Civic Education, n.d.). Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method (TDM) was used in the instrument design. The survey instrument was distributed to all members of the population with a return rate of 100%.

The total population consisted of 136 teacher education students each enrolled in one of four sections of *foundations of education* at a metropolitan university in the northern Rocky Mountain region. At this university, students take the foundations of education course during their sophomore/junior year prior to admission in the teacher education program, and the course is open to any student with sophomore standing. As such, student demographics reflect the student population at the university, which consists of approximately 86% Anglo-Americans, 2% African-American, 8% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and less than 1% American Indian.

The TDM (Dillman, 2000) protocol included criteria for question development and ordering as well as graphic design of the instrument. Validity and reliability were sought through the modified piloting procedures suggested in TDM. Given the small population size of 136 students, conducting a typical pilot study was not feasible. Therefore, pretesting (a modified pilot study) was conducted.

As a required and typical assignment in the *Foundations of Education* course, respondents were asked to define character education and civic education, indicate their understandings of curriculum and

pedagogy as it relates to character education and civic education, and respond to several open-ended questions. Prior to taking the survey, respondents were asked to spend at least 1 hour visiting recommended websites related to character education and civic education, and most of the respondents reported completion of this task; this too, was part of their coursework. A few respondents reported spending some additional time on the websites and studying the topic previously. Only 8% of the respondents indicated that they were not planning to teach K-12; approximately one half of the remaining population (48%) indicated that they were planning to teach elementary school (K-6), 50% indicated they intended to teach middle/high school, and 2% were uncertain. Additionally, their intended teaching subject areas were fairly well distributed among English/Language Arts (40%), the Social Sciences (40%) with only small numbers indicating mathematics, science, or the arts.

Data analysis included descriptive statistics. Data were coded and reduced using a statistical analysis software program (SPSS, v.13). Frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations for each question were computed and data reported in tables. Narrative comments were also invited throughout the survey instrument. Nearly all respondents included narrative comments in some form or another. These narrative comments were entered into a Word document for analysis using a modified constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and triangulation of the quantitative data (Patton, 1990; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The use of direct quotations gleaned from the narrative comments captured the perspectives and experiences of the participants resulting in thematic analysis. Additionally, the two researchers held data analysis meetings to

discuss findings and triangulate emergent themes.

RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that our prospective teachers have little difficulty making conceptual distinctions between character education and civic education. After consulting the websites for the leading national organizations in character education and civic education, respondents formulated separate conceptions of each program and made similar connections between the two. Key indicators for character education included morality, virtue, and ethics, while criterion for civic education comprised democracy, citizenship, and patriotism among others. For example, when asked to clarify their personal definitions of character education and civic education, 96% of the respondents indicated that character education *"emphasizes private traits of character essential to the well being of our society;"* and 96% indicated that *"civic education emphasizes the historical, philosophical and economic foundations of the American political system."* The most relevant responses relating to the purpose of this study gave rise to three important themes: curriculum and pedagogy, role of the teacher/school, and difficulties/problems. Each theme is discussed below.

CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

Statistical analysis indicated that our prospective teachers generally drew definitive lines between the two types of programs as they relate to curriculum and pedagogy. When asked to associate the statement *"empowers students to clarify their own moral values"*, 74% of the respondents indicated that character education, 26% indicated both character and civic education, but none indicated civic education alone. Many participants had little difficulty distinguishing the two approaches, suggesting that character education relates to morals values while civic education concerns patriotism and citizenship:

> *I think character education is a way of incorporating strong moral character building in the classroom. I see it as a way to show kids what it is like…when they are caring, honest, respectful, and responsible. I see civic education as a way to instill patriotism in the youth of America. Civic education appears to be a way to show students how the government works, how far it's come, and what roles they can take to better it. I think it is important to give students a background in civic education, but find building strong character more important. (Respondent 4)*

While such distinctions of meaning for these prospective teachers were clear, there were areas in which they closely associated civic education and character education. Fully 73% of our prospective teachers indicated that "both" require a community effort with wide support from students, faculty and parents. Furthermore, they contended that despite their distinct purposes, character education and civic education are more complimentary than not:

> *Character education entails engraining in children good moral characteristics (such as honesty, perseverance, obedience, respect)…Civic education entails teaching students democratic processes and motivating them to become involved with democracy…Civic education goes hand in hand with character education because a democracy holds such moral characteristics highly and will fail without them. (Respondent 6)*

Thus respondents, on the whole, easily distinguished between programmatic purposes of each program and saw definite similarities in program implementation and method.

Clearly, character education, according to 88% of our prospective teachers, uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to moral development; whereas for 79% of the prospective teachers, civic education empowers students to be autonomous respondents in a democracy. And for almost every respondent, character education tended to align with areas of moral development while most respondents indicated that discussion of current issues and events is part of civic education.

When respondents positioned one program as more comprehensive in nature, character education typically subsumed civic education as civic education was most often defined as a formal course, while character education was threaded throughout the work that schools and teachers do. For example, Respondent 44 suggested that civic education can be promoted as a single course, while character education is more comprehensive in nature:

I believe a separate class could be taught in school for civic education, however, I believe character education doesn't need its own classroom—it should be taught in all aspects of life from how you treat others, how you expect students to treat others, what you give "detention" for, how you discipline, and what you say.

Participation in school governance clearly fell under civic education as did formal instruction in government, history, law and democracy.

Of some surprise were the understandings of curriculum and pedagogy when associated with both civic and character education. For example, 65% of the respondents indicated that both character and civic education are an integral part of all school functions and instructional activities and not a separate program or class. Nearly 50 % indicated that 'both' include a *"meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character and helps them*

succeed"; 48% of the respondents placed this as the responsibility of character education. This corresponded to the distinctions drawn by 83% of our prospective teachers that "some school subjects lend themselves better to character education and civic education."

ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL

We also found that our prospective teachers, at least early in their teacher education program, consider their role as character educator and civic educator as important as the other work they plan to do in schools:

I see both character and civic education as important ideas to stress to my students. I think school is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. Teachers are also responsible for educating the leaders of tomorrow. These future leaders need to be morally strong…strong morals and patriotism are things that can easily be brought into the classroom. (Respondent 4)

When asked to select a program that they would like to oversee at their school site from a list of character education, civic education, both or none, 31% indicated character education, 12% responded with none, and 30% responded both and 15% responded with civic education (most of these also indicated that they planned to teach within the social sciences). Thus most respondents foresee being involved with such efforts in their future practice.

Of interest is the perceived role of the school in character education efforts. Nearly 72% of the respondents indicated strongly that schools should play a major role in the character development of children and 91% indicated that there are *"moral values upon which all members of the school community can agree."* Fully 87% of the future teachers indicated, *"faculty should be committed to developing the character of students."* These results indicated respondents' strong inclination to engage in character education

and to affect the moral development of children.

Quite surprising were the data that indicated 40% of our prospective teachers believe 'schools should be more interested in character and civic education than in improving overall student learning.' The implication that only 60% of our prospective teachers feel that the school's primary focus should be on overall student learning begs further study and follow-up questions. However, our prospective teachers' interjections of normative commentary into their conceptions of each approach offered some insight into their position. These interjections pointed to the relative importance of character education and civic education and contextualized the implied lack of emphasis on student learning:

> I feel that [character education] is very important, something worthwhile and something we desperately need. We live in a world where values and standards are slipping…It's unfortunate that some parents are so easily distracted by the temptations of the world…More and more we're seeing the schools filling in the gaps and raising the next generation. Now I'm not saying that all parents are like this…but there's [sic] enough parents who don't that it's a valid concern. So I guess that's why I think character education is so important. (Respondent 77)

It is especially worth noting that these interjections of importance bemoaning a lack of parental support were solely connected to the respondents' conceptions of character education. They also argued for the importance of civic education, but they did not put forth rationales based on inept parenting or moral decline. Instead, they indicated that civic education was needed but not as important as character education:

> I feel as though civic education isn't as important as character education but yet it still should be implemented somehow in

> schools. It is important for children to know where they come from and why things are the way they are today. By having civic education involved in their lives will teach them democratic values and a sense of politics. (Respondent 55)

Thus respondents indirectly distinguished character education from civic education in the reasons they provided for the importance of each. Specifically, they justified the teacher/school role in character education on grounds related to a perceived moral decline in society and to incompetent parenting.

That said, respondents also indicated that the responsibility for enacting these programs falls on the entire school community. Nearly all (90%) of the respondents indicated that character and civic education should engage the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares the responsibility for such efforts and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students. These findings indicate that many prospective teachers clearly delineate distinctions between character education and civic education and that they place moral import on the role of teacher, the school and the curriculum to promote character education.

DIFFICULTY/PROBLEMS

While respondents point to inept parenting and moral decline as a rationale for character education, the results of this study also indicate that our prospective teachers assume this responsibility will be relatively easy to carry out in practice. Many respondents suggested that the key to effective character education and civic education is the example set by the teacher:

> I think that teaching these can be effective, if you demonstrate the promoted values yourself. Students are open to ideas, but also need positive reinforcement when demonstrating these values themselves.

Perseverance and honesty are key to the success. (Respondent 90)

I think I will be fairly successful in promoting character and citizenship to my students. I know the students and they know me, therefore they will be more likely to follow my example. (Respondent 56)

Thus our prospective teachers relied heavily on example to gauge the difficulty of engaging in efforts to promote character education and civic education, implying that they would be effective character/civic educators because they would model moral and civic virtue in their classrooms. Of course, they also assumed that such modeling would have a direct impact on students.

Respondents also suggest that character education and civic education should be integral to teaching practice, while acknowledging important difficulties in assessing its effectiveness. The difficulties put forth by respondents were compounded by their suggestions regarding possible remedies, which were random, at best: *"I suppose I would keep my eye on the [news] headlines to see which of my students were good or bad or noncommitted citizens" (Respondent 11)*. Several respondents put forth reasonable suggestions for assessment but most emphasized the problems inherent in assessing character: *"I think it would be difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of such programs since the goals are long-term, but having students treat each other with respect (fewer discipline issues) would be one way to measure the success" (Respondent 64)*. In the end, although our prospective teachers were unclear as to how to determine the success of a school's efforts, 87% indicated that emphasizing character education shows a real commitment to creating a safe school environment.

Most interesting in relation to the purpose of this study were the ways in which respondents distinguished between character education and civic education vis-à-vis difficulties and problems. Some respondents considered the task of character education to be more difficult than civic education, suggesting civic education is more amenable to classroom instruction:

I believe actions speak louder than words. Teachers can't teach good character (and be effective) if they're not exhibiting it themselves. Teaching this behavior in the classroom simply isn't enough. With civic education, most students can learn this in an academic setting, not just through watching someone else. (Respondent 19)

The assumption here is akin to the old adage, "virtues are caught, not taught." Many respondents suggested that civic education was easier to comprehend and carry out in practice.

Furthermore, respondents tended to imply that character education might be more difficult to assess than civic education because it is difficult to quantify: *"Evaluating civic education tends to be easier to quantify through testing a student's knowledge of government. Character education is harder to measure in a quantitative manner" (Respondent 90)*. And other respondents suggested both character education and civic education presented difficulties in assessment. Respondent 2 captured the dissonance that many of the respondents indicated:

I will promote both programs in my classroom, but I don't think there is any way to really measure the effectiveness of character education. There is no way to really test someone's morals or beliefs. They can easily lie about what they believe or how they act. You also can't successfully measure civic education either. The only way you could do that is to keep track of the students once they leave the school, and see how many of them actually vote, or those who run for a political office.

Thus our prospective teachers acknowledged important difficulties in assessment, but many did not see any

disconnect between these perceived difficulties and the ease with which they perceived the task of promoting these programs in schools.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper shows how prospective teachers make sense of an increasingly muddled division between character education and civic education. It describes respondents' conceptions of each effort in schools and their views on how they might carry out such efforts in their future practice. Most importantly, it indicates that prospective teachers consider character education and civic education as an essential part of teaching, and that they are eager to take on the role of educating for character and citizenship regardless of definition, curriculum, or pedagogy.

However, their eagerness to take on such a role is not tempered by a fear of "paralysis" (see Berkowitz, 2002) resulting from a *distinction* between civic education and character education nor by a fear of "distortion" resulting from a *combination* of the two (see Davies et al., 2005). This lack of confusion on the part of our respondents is significant because it would seem that they would not suffer from drawing hard distinctions between the two programs nor would combining the two approaches seemingly detract from their ability to make sense of them and enact them in practice. In other words, they did not seem dismayed by any possible disconnect or overlap between approaches. Instead they simply perceived character education and civic education as integral to their future practice.

One of the more striking findings was the disconnect between prospective teachers' commentary on the importance of character education and their perceptions of the effectiveness of such programs. Specifically, some respondents justified the importance of character education on the basis of parent ineptness and moral decline in society, but they also acknowledged the overriding influence of parents when they discussed program effectiveness. This disconnect was most apparent in light of their overwhelming support of character education and civic education as school programs. In some ways, their responses seem to indicate a primary inclination to be an influence for good in their classrooms, and they certainly suggest a great confidence in their ability to instill moral and civic virtue in the face of societal obstacles. However, their responses also show a lack of confidence in their ability to determine the effectiveness of their efforts because of these same obstacles.

Thus some of our prospective teachers appear to have circular conceptions of character education and civic education that might be difficult to square in practice. An important implication of this study, then, for teacher education, is the need to increase prospective teachers' understandings of these programs in a way that gives rise to realistic expectations and sustainable practices. How teacher educators might accomplish this goal is beyond the scope of this article, but they might begin by helping prospective teachers to identify their lofty goals and ambitions related to character education and civic education while acknowledging the difficulty of producing such outcomes in some measurable way. To not do so sets up prospective teachers for either failure and/or unreflective practice; to do so well provides teachers with a sense of agency that encourages more effective and responsible teaching.

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Appendix

Character Education and Civic Education Study

Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope

Character Education and Civic Education Survey

General:

1) Including this year, how many years have you been employed as a classroom teacher? ____years
   (Include years spent teaching both full and part time and in public and private schools)

2) What grade(s) do you currently teach at this school? (Circle all that apply)

   K   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12

3) In what subject areas do you teach? (Please specify your primary area by circling it)

4) Approximately what percentage of your current students:

   a. participate in Chapter 1: ____%

   b. are English language learners (ELL):_____%

   c. are in special education or considered learning disabled:_____%

5) What programs or efforts do you oversee in your school? (Circle all that apply)

   a. Character education
   b. Civic Education
   c. None of the above
   d. Other (please specify)

6) Have you attended workshops or in-service trainings on character education or civic education?

   YES   NO

7) If yes, who conducted these workshops or in-service trainings? When did they take place?

Conceptions

8) Describe your personal conception of character education

9) Describe your personal conception of civic education

Character Education

10) The following items refer to your personal *definition* of character education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Character education is the direct teaching of agreed upon moral values					
The school's character education program is a community effort with wide support from students, faculty, and parents					
Character education defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior					
Character education emphasizes the historical, philosophical, and economic foundations of the American political system					
Character education emphasizes the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs					
Character education emphasizes the participatory skills in civics and government required to influence politics and government					
Character education emphasizes public traits of character conducive to thoughtful participation in our political system (civility, critical mindedness, persistence, etc.)					
Character education emphasizes private traits of character essential to the well being of our society (self-discipline, moral responsibility, honesty, empathy etc.)					

11) The following items refer to your personal understanding of the *curriculum and pedagogy* of character education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Some school subjects lend themselves better to character education (e.g. social studies)					
Faculty agree upon what character education is and how it should be taught					
The school's character education program empowers students to clarify their own moral values					
Character education is not a separate program or class; it is an integral part of all school functions and instructional activities					
Character education uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development					
Character education includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them succeed					
Character education is formal instruction in government, history, law, and democracy					
Character education is guided discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events.					
Character education emphasizes co-curricular activities to foster engagement with schools and communities					
Character education emphasizes student participation in simulations of democratic processes					

12) The following items refer to your personal perception of the ***school's role*** in character education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Schools play a minor role in the character development of children					
There are moral values upon which all members of the school community can agree					
Faculty are committed to developing the character of students					
The school's emphasis on character education shows a real commitment to creating a safe school environment					
It is difficult to determine the success of the school's character education efforts					
Character education is only effective if teachers model the agreed upon moral values					
Teachers should not impose agreed upon moral values on students					
Character education engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for character education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students					

Civic Education

13) The following items refer to your personal *definition* of civic education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Civic education is a school-wide effort to promote citizenship					
Civic education promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character					
Civic education uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to promote citizenship					

Civic education strives to develop students' self-motivation					
Civic education emphasizes the nature of civic life, politics, and government, and why politics and government are necessary					
Civic education emphasizes the embodiment of the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy					
Civic education emphasizes the roles of citizens in American democracy, including an understanding of what citizenship is					
Civic education emphasizes public traits of character conducive to thoughtful participation in our political system (civility, critical mindedness, persistence, etc.)					
Civic education emphasizes private traits of character essential to the well being of our society (self-discipline, moral responsibility, honesty, empathy etc.)					

14) The following items refer to your personal understanding of the *curriculum and pedagogy* of civic education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Some school subjects lend themselves better to civic education (e.g. social studies)					
Faculty agree upon what civic education is and how it should be taught					
The school's civic education program empowers students to be autonomous participants in democracy					
Civic education is not a separate program or class; it is an integral part of all school functions and instructional activities					
Civic education provides students with opportunities for civic action					
Civic education is formal instruction					

in government, history, law, and democracy				
Civic education emphasizes active learning experiences where students perform community service and/or service-learning				
Civic education emphasizes student participation in school governance				

15) The following items refer to your personal perception of the ***school's role*** in character education. Please indicate your agreement with each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Schools play a minor role in the civic education of children					
Civic education is a school-wide effort to promote citizenship					
The school is more interested in civic education than in improving overall student learning					
Faculty agree upon what civic education is and how it should be taught					
It is difficult to determine the success of the school's civic education efforts					
Civic education is only effective if teachers model the agreed upon civic values					
Teachers should not impose agreed upon civic values on students					
Civic education is but one component of the school's more encompassing mission to educate for citizenship					
Civic education engages the school staff as a learning and moral community that shares responsibility for civic education and attempts to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students					

Comments

16) We are interested in your perceptions of the effectiveness of the character education and civic education programs at your school. Briefly describe the extent to which your efforts to promote character and/or citizenship have been successful, and then indicate the measures you have used to evaluate these programs.

17) We are also interested in the types of character education and civic education programs you have implemented in your school. Briefly describe a typical example of what occurs at your school in relation to character education and/or civic education.

Thank you for your patience, time, and thoughtful responses.