

## Northern Region Networking Center of the NJASECD – October 1, 2012 Meeting



On October 1, 2012, the Northern Region Networking Center met again at North Boulevard School in Pompton Plains, New Jersey. Approximately twenty participants watched a presentation given by Eileen Dachnowicz, a national consultant for the Character Ed Partnership and a member of the NJASECD Board of Trustees. The purpose of the presentation was to acquaint those present with the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education and how these are used in the application process for the State and National Schools of Character Program.

This was a rare opportunity for our members since Eileen does the training for SSOC/NSOC reviewers and for State Chairs of the Schools of Character Program. Her knowledge of how the principles work together to form a cohesive in-depth approach to developing strong SECD programs is unequalled. Several schools among those in attendance expressed an interest in applying for SSOC/NSOC recognition for 2013, and the information that Eileen provided was particularly appropriate for them.



Dr. Bill Trusheim, RNC North Coordinator and NJASECD President, shared his view of the Eleven Principles as a pathway to school improvement which could be appropriately used by schools wherever they are in their character education journey. The self-evaluation process is always helpful in determining where you are and where you want to go. Dr. Patricia Heindel of the College of Saint Elizabeth also commented on the importance of doing a school climate assessment to support school improvement efforts, and she told the group of efforts at the college to establish a SECD Lab in North Jersey working with Dr.

Maurice Elias of Rutgers, a nationally-recognized expert in SECD, and with Liz Warner, the coordinator of the Youth Empowerment Alliance of the United Way of Northern New Jersey. She also mentioned an SECD credentialing program which she and Maurice are developing together.

Following a light dinner, the group discussed topics which could be considered for future meetings of the RNC. Several schools were interested in the possibility of further assistance as they prepare their applications for SSOC/NSOC. Eileen and Bill commented that this could be arranged through NJASECD. The group decided that the next meeting would consist of a showcase of activities that have been successful at the schools represented. These presentations will be short and to the point and will allow everyone to share ideas that work in good character education. The date of the next



meeting will be announced following a poll of the participants. The meeting ended with an opportunity for discussion and networking among those in attendance. These conversations were animated and rich, and there was ample evidence of the value of the networking opportunity.



Our thanks go out to Ted Loeffler and North Boulevard School for hosting this meeting!

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

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