

*E-Issue*

# THE BULLETIN



CTAHPERD

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# WINTER 2022

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CT ASSOCIATION FOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION,  
RECREATION AND DANCE

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Enjoy this electronic issue of **The Bulletin**. Thank you to all contributors for the following:

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Health.moves.minds!

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Promoting family engagement through on-line learning

**Dr. David V. Harackiewicz**

Physical activity research in children and adolescents

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## THANK YOU FOR A GREAT 2021 CENTENNIAL YEAR CONFERENCE!

With over 60 in person sessions at the Fall Conference, we were thrilled with the high quality presentations by our diverse set of speakers. [SEE MORE](#)

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# SOCIOMOTIONAL LEARNING AND MOVEMENT EDUCATION: A SYNERGISTIC PAIRING

by *Pascal Rekoert*

*Assistant Professor and Dance Education Program Director*

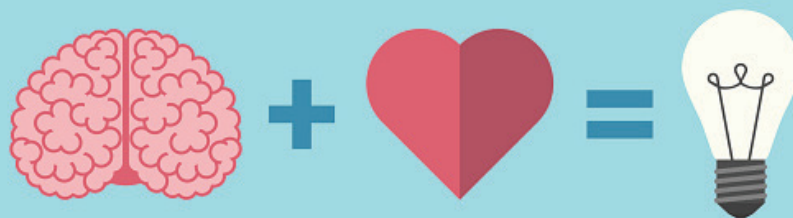
*Central Connecticut State University*

After two adventurous years that feel like a century due to COVID-19 pitfalls and pratfalls, I am learning to prioritize self-care. As a perfectionist and chronic overachiever who has had difficulty separating work from family life while working remotely, the importance of to-do's, have-to-do's, and overdue-do's have lost their relevance. As a by-product of prioritizing self-care, I am more able to nurture the educational lives of my students. After all, an empty well cannot quench the academic thirst of my students.

Besides emphasizing a healthy work-life balance and the importance of combating the lingering effects of workplace fatigue-our social and emotional wellbeing if you will-I will discuss the importance of acquiring socioemotional intelligence as part of our students' educational journeys. While remote learning

is an acceptable way to forge ahead with core content areas during pandemic times, kinesthetic-based content generally suffered, and so our students suffered. Many of my dance and PE educator colleagues were pushed towards STEM teaching, implicitly determining their subject as less valuable than STEM content. An alleged necessity considering the student learning deficits and teacher shortages created as a consequence of the last two years of COVID-19 remote learning (Dorn et al., 2021; Education Week, 2020).

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While cognitive knowledge is invaluable for students' future lives, emotional and interpersonal learning is equally essential to their success, particularly during the middle-to-high-school transition (Jimerson et al., 2002). As we are in the process of rebooting everyday life, we should take the opportunity to reinvestigate and reinvent our teaching practices. Are we equitably providing learning opportunities to facilitate the needs of your disenfranchised scholars?

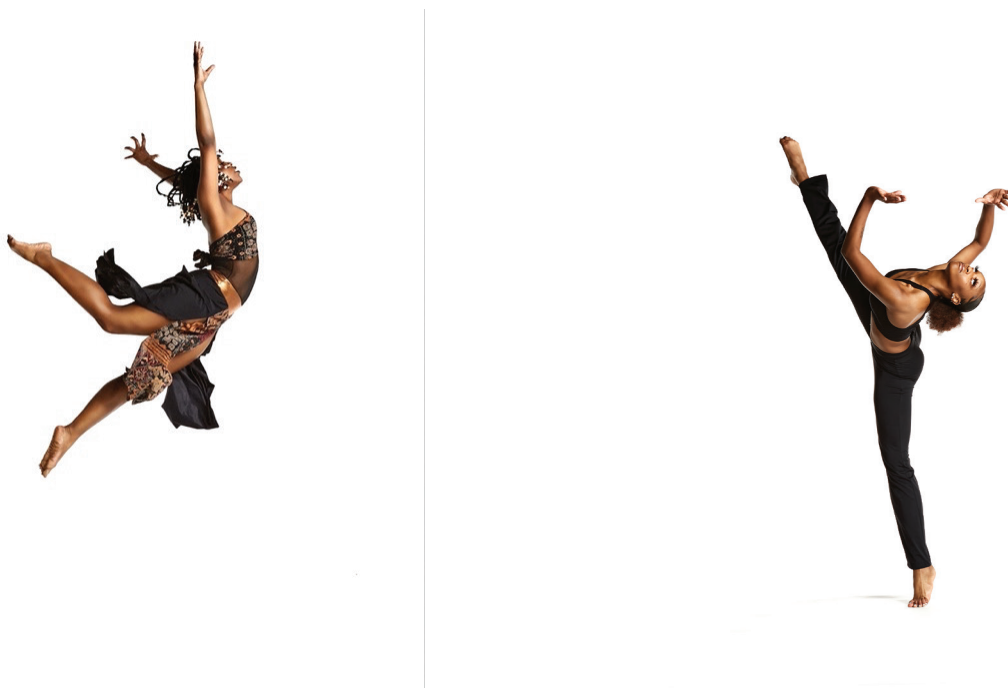
"In the American education system, student success is heavily correlated with demographic categories such as ethnicity and socioeconomic status, with ethnic minority students underperforming their white classmates, and economically disadvantaged students struggling more than wealthier students" (Herr, 2021, p 2). Pandemic e-learning has increased the opportunity gap in various ways. This high discrepancy could result from the absence of high-quality internet and computers (Stelitano et al., 2020), lack of adequate health care for students living in low-income areas and low-opportunity families which results in needing to emphasize health over education (Berube & Bateman, 2020; Cole, 2020). Additionally, these parents often cannot offer learning support through private tutoring or other forms of enrichment (Lee et al., 2021). Beyond the negative impact on academic learning, the Corona crisis also impinged the overall health and wellbeing of students, with over "35 percent of parents very or extremely concerned about their children's mental health" (Dorn et al., 2021). While there is no silver bullet to change the status quo regarding academic growth differences, movement educators can move the needle effectively in other areas.

Due to its synergistic relationship, movement education and dance education specifically is the perfect venue for students to cultivate SEL competencies. Five fundamental competencies are taught, practiced, and fortified through SEL programming (CASEL, 2003): self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management, and relationship skills. This school year, the Connecticut State Department of Education initiated its partnership with Aperture Education. Their collaboration of statewide SEL assessment for K-12 schools consists of two research-backed components: the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) System and the DESSA-mini, offered free of charge (CSDE announces..., 2021). The DESSA-mini is a 60-second screener offering a snapshot of students' social and emotional competence, while

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the DESSA delivers a 5-minute assessment in which a deepened understanding of socioemotional strengths and growth opportunity areas is uncovered. After its successful pilot undertaking in Spring 2021, this teacher-friendly assessment system is being implemented this school year in 100 CT school districts. During the 2022/23 school year, nearly 200 school districts will be added. The collaboration includes training, data access, countless growth strategies and interventions, and technical support.



Photos by Jaqlin Medlock. Dancers: CCSU students  
DesTahnee Manick-Highsmith & Syniah Nevins

Because New Haven, CT, is the birthplace of the modern origins of the SEL movement (Anson et al., 1991; Haynes et al., 1988), combined with the public policy that the arts are part of a "well-rounded education" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015), one has to ask if we can do more? Can we up our K-12 curricular game, while centralizing both SEL and dance education? While DESSA is a refreshing endeavor, our neighboring states have also successfully initiated SEL programs, reviving the notion that the arts are a gateway to a more sustainable pedagogy. To remedy the jarring transition to online learning and social isolation, the New York State Education Department has published various SEL materials, ranging from self-care resources

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and benchmark standards to supporting materials for schools and their communities. Most notably, these resources support socioemotional learning by providing mental health education activities and lessons. Like Connecticut, New Jersey has adopted the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) but has also enforced a framework illuminating the interconnectedness of arts education standards and SEL. Rutgers University's Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab provides robust projects, teaching resources (like lesson plans and teaching tools), presentation materials, webinars, informational videos, and podcasts.

I invite you to explore the resources below and implement them as part of your future curricula and lesson plans. Of course, your students will thank you, but it will also provide you with a leg-up with leadership staff as we continue to promote education-through-movement in our state.

## Resources

**Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL):** A national organization advancing SEL through helping make evidence-based social and emotional learning an integral part of education. A Myriad of resources is offered on the site. <https://casel.org/>

**Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework:** This platform makes tacit arts education processes explicit by connecting the National Core Arts Standards with SEL praxis. Useful PDF downloads are provided on this platform. <https://www.selarts.org>

**Rutgers SECD Lab:** Valuable resources for parents, teachers, and administrators can be found on this page, as well as videos, podcasts, and information on their teacher certification program. <https://www.secdlab.org>

**New York City DoE Resources:**

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/sel>

<http://www.nysed.gov/edtech/educator-resources>

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Bill:**

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114s1177enr/pdf/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>

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