

MOSS SCHOOL
16 Simpson Place
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840
"A Great Place to Grow"



Richard Cohen
Principal/Assistant Superintendent

(732) 321-8700, ext. 2002

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Dear Moss School Parents,

As many of you know, Moss School received the high honor of being designated a NJ State School of Character in late January this year by Character.org. To that end, I wanted to share with all Moss parents exactly how we teach all Moss students character education through evidence-based best practices for you to understand how you can support this best practice at home. According to renowned psychology professor and international SECD guru Dr. Maurice Elias of Rutgers University, one highly effective approach to character education is through teaching "performance character" (Elias, Ferrito & Moceris, 2016). Through a decade of direct collaboration and support from Dr. Elias, Moss School has developed a unique approach to teaching performance character. In essence, Moss School teaches students targeted behaviors, skills and [NJ SEL competencies](#) that, when performed, demonstrate the characteristics of the Moss School Values (perseverance, respect, empathy, honesty and community) which comprise the characteristics (or character) we value at Moss.

To that end, now that we are approaching the spring, and students have been taught on a daily basis the explicit behaviors, skills and SEL competencies of the above listed values, we will begin now labeling those behaviors by their values and positively reinforcing (through intrinsic motivation, not through rewards or extrinsic motivators) when students demonstrate or practice the behaviors of those values. We are now encouraging your child to perform those explicit behaviors on the attached Moss School Values @ School and @ Home charts. Students can perform the behaviors of the five Moss School Values at school or at home. A 'Moss School Values' handout especially designed for the home is attached if you would like to try it out. At your child's end-of-the-week, the class will discuss behaviors students have demonstrated from the Moss Core Values at school and at home during Morning Meeting and we will recognize and label those behaviors to their corresponding values. We will ask the students what they are "practicing" in hopes they further internalize they are demonstrating these values with these behaviors. We sincerely hope that all parents consider doing this with their child as a reminder that good character is best practiced everywhere.

Thank you so much, always, for all your support. This is a wonderful group of parents and we truly appreciate the partnership. The Moss students are shining in so many ways; it is a pleasure working with you and your children. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to call me at 732 321-8700 ext 2002.

Thank you for your continued support.

Rick Cohen
Principal/Assistant Superintendent
















Moss School Values @ School

Color in the smiley face for all completed activities.

Character Trait	What I can do	What I did
<p>Community</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use listening ears when others are speaking. -After using something (toys, markers, books), pass it along to a friend. -Think, Pair, Share. -Work together. 	
<p>Empathy</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask someone, "How do you feel? How does he/she/they feel?" -Practice Social Awareness by identifying and understanding the feelings, thoughts, perspectives of others by listening to their words, "reading" their facial clues and body language. 	
<p>Honesty</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Do what you think is right and not what others are doing. -Tell the truth, including about what values you demonstrated. -Problem solve. 	
<p>Perseverance</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Take a break then revisit. -When problem solving, don't give up if it doesn't work the first time; try many times. -Ask for help. 	
<p>Respect</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Listen while others are talking. -Use nice, kind words. -Take turns. -Put books and toys away when finished. 	

Moss School Values @ Home

Color in the smiley face for all completed activities.

Character Trait	Suggested Activity	Alternate or Additional Activity
<p>Community</p> 	<p></p> <p>Share your toys with friends or siblings.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Empathy</p> 	<p></p> <p>Ask a parent if they need help.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Honesty</p> 	<p></p> <p>Tell the truth about what happened.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Perseverance</p> 	<p></p> <p>Complete a task from start to finish.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Respect</p> 	<p></p> <p>Return books to shelves. Put toys away after using.</p>	<p></p>