

# MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS & RELEVANT WRITING

Jeff Baxter

[jbaxter@bluevalleyk12.org](mailto:jbaxter@bluevalleyk12.org)

A NEW Vision for Kansas....

Kansas leads the  
world in the  
success of each  
student.



# MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

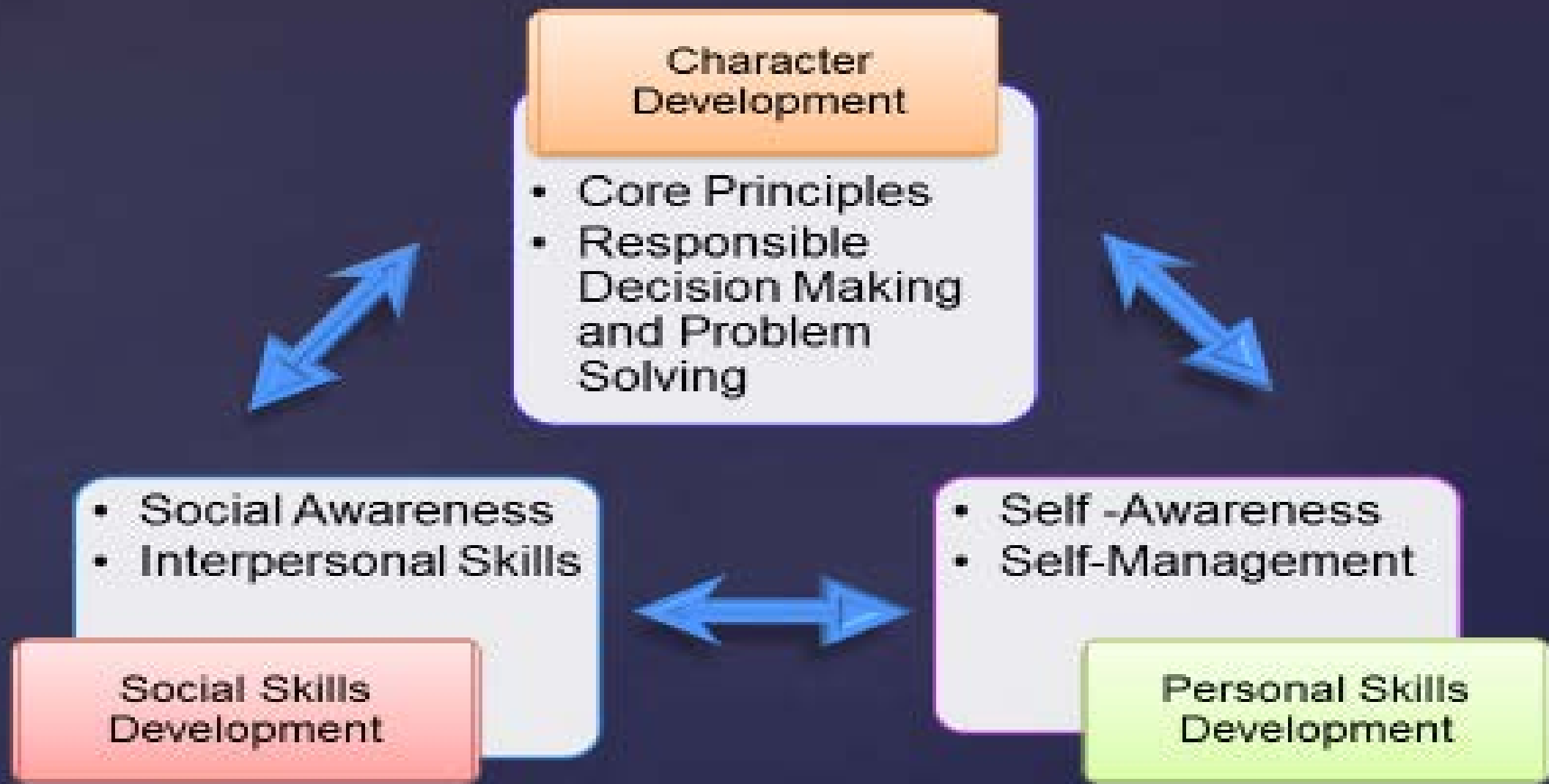
Kindergarten Readiness

Individual Plans of Study Focused on Career Interests

High School Graduation Rates

Postsecondary Completion/Attendance

Social/Emotional Growth Measured  
Locally



## Kansas Social, Emotional, and Character Education Standards

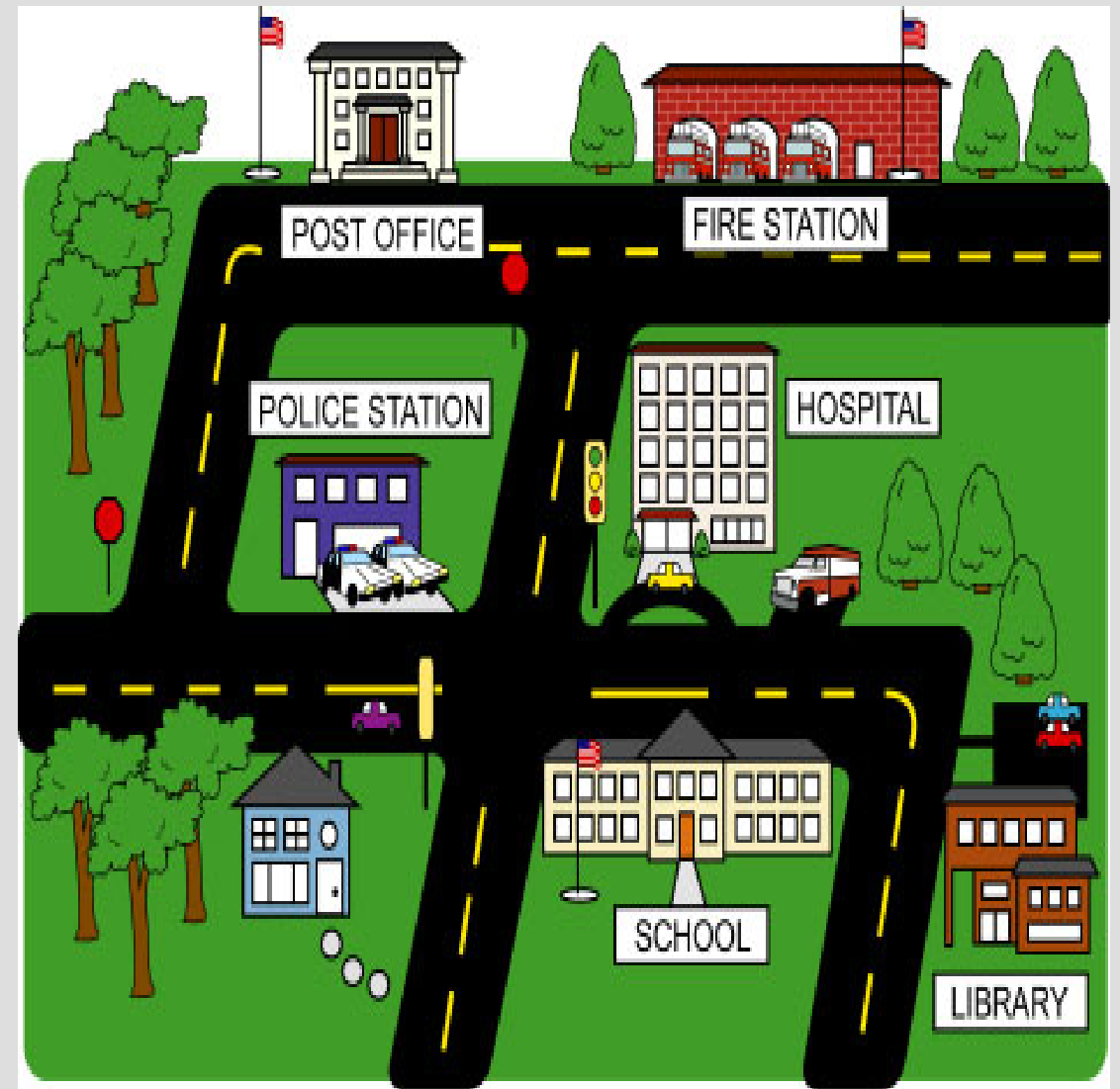




Who are you?

# WHO ARE YOU? (IDENTITY)

*In Cold Blood*, Capote  
“Is About,” Ginsberg  
“13 Ways of Looking at a  
Blackbird,” Stevens



# ACTIVITIES

- **Neighborhood Map**
  - 5 events
  - Story (Show Not Tell, Intros, Concls)
- **Is About**
  - Graphic Organizer
  - Creating the Poem



**You've got a friend.**



# YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND (COMMUNITY)

*Hamlet, Shakespeare*

*Sonnets*

*“Ozymandias,” Shelley*

*“Mending Wall,” Frost*

*Heart of Darkness, Conrad*



# ACTIVITIES

- **“I am grateful for \_\_\_\_\_.”**
  - Write down 3 things “I am grateful for” each of the following 21 days.
  - Must be each day even when I do not have students in class.
  - At end of 21 days, tell the story of at least 5 things you learned doing this activity: each lesson being a 6 word story.
- **The Perseverance Walk: Grit**
  - Interview
  - Google Slide Collage

### Period 3: I am grateful for...

1. Driving cures fear and self-doubt
2. A 33 is worth a lot
3. Some best friends actually have fur
4. Choose a brush, create a world
5. Books transport readers quicker than planes
6. An important difference: spiritual, not religious
7. Surround yourself daily with good people
8. Someone's always looking up to you
9. The warm happiness for cold feet.
10. Life is short, art lives on
11. Mountains are calling, I must go
12. Writing is an escape from reality.
13. Failure is a step toward success
14. A waterfall pouring from the sky
15. Math makes the muddled more manifest
16. With a hug, over-sized sweatshirts comfort
17. Only math is black and white
18. Be grateful pneumonia isn't death anymore
19. Daily laughter is life's natural medicine



Ah, but I was so much older then,  
I'm younger than that now.

**AH, BUT I WAS SO MUCH  
OLDER THEN,  
I'M YOUNGER THAN THAT  
NOW.  
(REFLECTION)**

*The Lords of Discipline, Conroy*

Lit Circle Novels

“The World is Too Much With Us,”  
Wordsworth



# ACTIVITIES

- **Final Reflection**
  - Reflection prompts in Composition Notebook
  - Dear 17 Year Old Me
  - Top 5
  - Wall of Fame
- **This I Believe**
- **What I Know for Sure**

# What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?



I can learn anything I want to.  
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.  
I want to challenge myself.  
When I fail, I learn.  
Tell me I try hard.  
If you succeed, I'm inspired.  
My effort and attitude determine everything.



I'm either good at it, or I'm not.  
When I'm frustrated, I give up.  
I don't like to be challenged.  
When I fail, I'm no good.  
Tell me I'm smart.  
If you succeed, I feel threatened.  
My abilities determine everything.

*Mass movements can rise and spread  
without a belief in a God, but never  
without a belief in a devil.*

*Eric Hoffer*







I think we need more math majors who don't become mathematicians. More math major doctors, more math major high school teachers, more math major CEOs, more math major senators. But we won't get there unless we dump the stereotype that math is only worthwhile for kid geniuses.

Jordan Ellenberg

## DEAR PRESIDENT

When a new president enters the Oval Office on day one, a letter awaits him or her on top of the desk, a message for the incoming president from the one leaving office.

This day, I am giving you the opportunity to also share your thoughts with America's next president — from some words of wisdom to the issues that you think are most important for the future of our nation.



“ My school is committed  
to building the  
strengths of each student. ”

“ I have at least one  
teacher who makes  
me excited about  
the future. ”

Students who **S T R O N G L Y A G R E E**

**30x** AS LIKELY TO BE  
**ENGAGED** **AT**  
SCHOOL  
AS STUDENTS WHO STRONGLY DISAGREE

