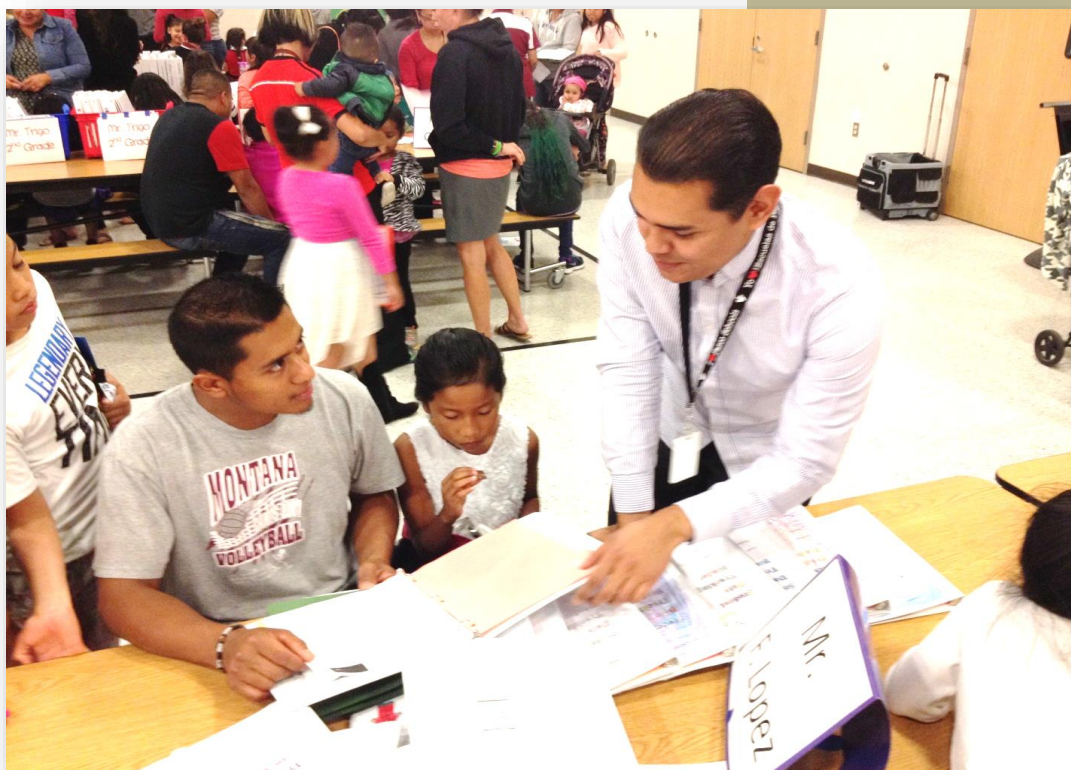


ANNUAL NNPS REPORT: 2016 SCHOOL DATA



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February 2017

Cover photo: Thanks to Virgie Robinson Elementary School,
Pasco School District, Washington

Activity pictured: Goal Sharing STEM Night
Read about this activity in *Promising Partnership Practices 2016* at
<http://nnps.jhucos.com/success-stories/ppp/>

Annual NNPS Report: 2016 School Data

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consistent with previous reports, the *2016 School UPDATE* data indicate that most schools in NNPS are working to implement core components and essential elements that research shows affect the quality of partnership programs over time. Descriptive analyses of these data found important patterns of results. New in this year's report, analyses examined differences between schools with ATPs who rated their program as "very good" or "excellent" and all others. These data are presented in an effort to help identify ways schools can continue to develop their programs.

Characteristics of Excelling Programs

- Elementary schools were more likely to rate themselves as excelling than secondary schools.
- ATP tended to have more people (8 vs. 6) and were more likely to meet monthly.
- More effectively addressed the challenges to engagement often faced by families.
- Reported higher percentages of teachers reaching out to engage families, as well as greater family participation in their children's schooling.
- Rated themselves better communicating with families, PTAs/PTOs, and the district about partnership program activities and progress.
- Reported higher percentages of parents who were engaged and good partners in their children's education.
- The level of district support did not differ by program quality.

Students' Career Awareness

- Most parents expect their students to enroll in some post-secondary education.
- Parents in urban and suburban areas have the most widespread expectations for post-secondary education.
- Activities around careers and college tend to be very good at engaging students' families.
- Secondary schools conduct activities geared towards career and college preparation more than elementary schools.
- Elementary schools are more likely to conduct general career awareness activities than student-centered career activities.

Areas of Potential Improvement for Schools

- About half of the ATPs reported that they do not meet monthly. This is an important requirement for developing and discussing plans, improving teamwork, and conducting evaluations of implemented activities.
- Many ATPs share information about partnership activities and progress with faculty very well, but there is a lot of room for improvement in communicating with *families* about the partnership program activities and progress.

ANNUAL NNPS REPORT 2016 SCHOOL DATA

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February 2017

Studies indicate that schools that work on partnerships over time will improve the quality of their programs and results of family and community involvement (Epstein, et al., 2009; Sheldon, 2007, 2008; Sheldon & Van Voorhis, 2004; Van Voorhis & Sheldon, 2004). Studies also show that District Leaders for Partnerships who guide school teams to plan and implement goal-linked partnership practices will have schools with higher quality partnership programs (Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). NNPS guides all schools to plan, implement, evaluate, and continually improve their programs of school, family, and community partnerships. By doing so, schools' ATPs should be able to report progress and new challenges on the next *School UPDATE* survey in the spring of 2017.

In response to requests for information on partnership program development, NNPS provides this summary of schools' 2016 *School UPDATE* data to all active members of the network. Districts, states, and organizations also will receive a summary of the 2016 *District UPDATE* data.¹ Schools should compare the data in this report with their own responses on the 2016 *School UPDATE*. ATPs can take pride in practices that are strong, compared to other schools across the country. ATPs should work this year to improve aspects of their programs that fall below NNPS averages or that do not reflect NNPS's expectations for excellent programs. In the spring, ATPs will be invited to share their best practices with the entire National Network of Partnership Schools in the 2017 collection of *Promising Partnership Practices*. The deadline will be May 1, 2017.

New this year, this summary report contrasts schools describing their partnership program as "Very Good" or "Excellent" (collectively referred to as 'excelling') to those who described their program at lower stages of excellence. These analyses, we believe, provide benchmark levels of implementation that all schools can achieve. The result is a roadmap for all NNPS member schools toward partnership program excellence.

SCHOOLS IN 2016 UPDATE SAMPLE

In 2016, 487 Action Teams for Partnerships (ATPs) reported *UPDATE* data. Surveys came from schools in 19 states. A majority of schools (64.9%) served students in the elementary grades (PK-6); 8.2% served students in PK-8; 12.3% of schools included middle grades only (4-8); and 12.3% included high school grades only (9-12). Some schools (0.6%) served students from PK through high school and eight (1.6%) combined middle and high school grades. For the purposes of reporting in the graphs below, elementary schools are combined with PK-8 schools (labeled Elementary Schools) and middle schools are combined with high schools (labeled Secondary Schools).

The largest percentage of schools was located in small cities (33.9%), with the remaining schools in large central cities (27.5%), suburbs (19.1%), and rural areas (15.6%). A large majority of schools (73.9%) received school-wide or targeted Title I funds.

On average, schools served students from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds. Across schools, about 40.8% were African American; 32.0% of students were White (non-Hispanic); 22.2% were

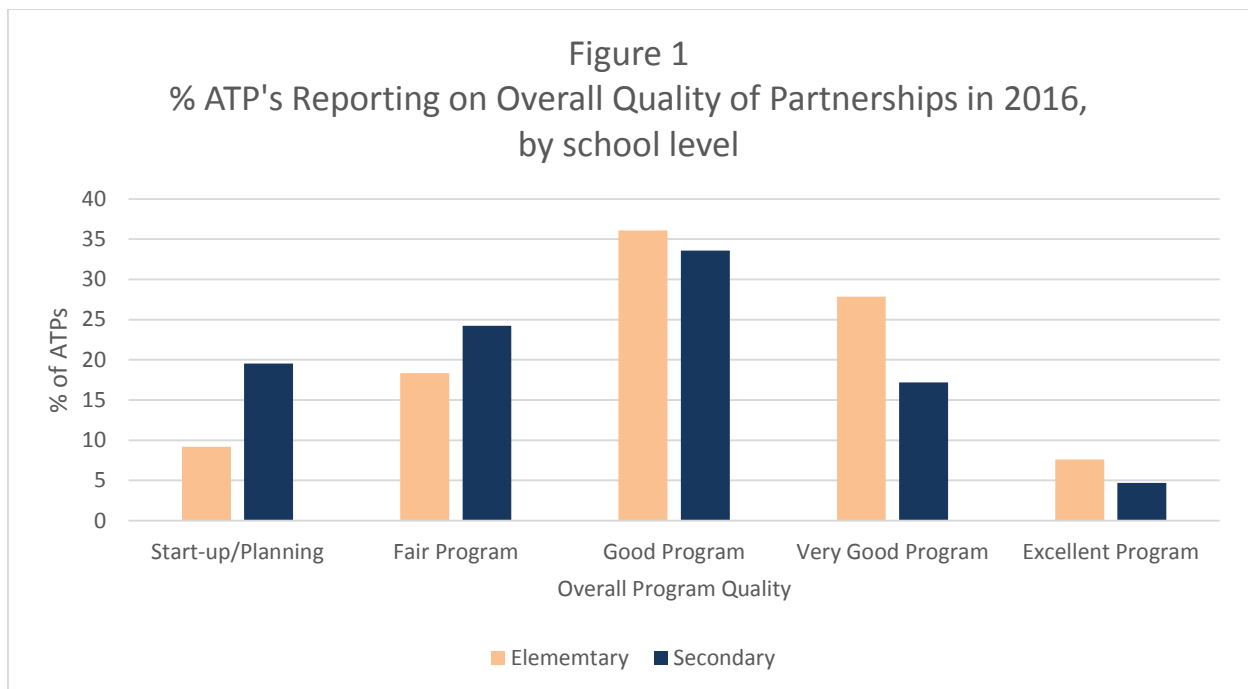
Latino/Hispanic American; 1.8% were Asian American; 0.3% were Native American; and 2.3% were from other racial/ethnic groups. Individual schools included a range of minority students, from 1% to 100%. The schools served communities in which an average of 4.3 different languages are spoken. In some schools, families spoke only English at home, whereas other schools served diverse families speaking up to 54 languages and dialects.

FINDINGS

OVERALL PROGRAM QUALITY

The annual NNPS *School UPDATE* survey provides each school’s ATP an opportunity to reflect on the overall quality of its partnership program by identifying one of six program portraits. Each portrait represents a different level of program quality, beginning with a *planning* stage and continuing up to an *excellent* program.

Elementary schools tended to rate their overall program quality higher than secondary schools and were more likely to rate their program as “Very Good.”



- The largest percentage of schools (approximately 35%) reported that their programs were *good*, indicating that several activities were implemented for the six types of involvement, teams were working to meet challenges to reach all families, and most teachers and families at the school knew about the program for partnerships and the school’s work with NNPS.
- Elementary schools were more likely than secondary schools to rate their partnership program as excellent (7.6% vs. 4.7% respectively) or very good (27.9% vs. 17.2%, respectively).
- We classified 140 schools as “excelling” (112 elementary schools and 28 secondary schools); these ATPs rated their program as “very good” or “excellent”.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Several *UPDATE* measures indicated whether schools and their ATPs were implementing core components of NNPS's research-based partnership program and how well schools were implementing a broad range of programmatic activities.¹

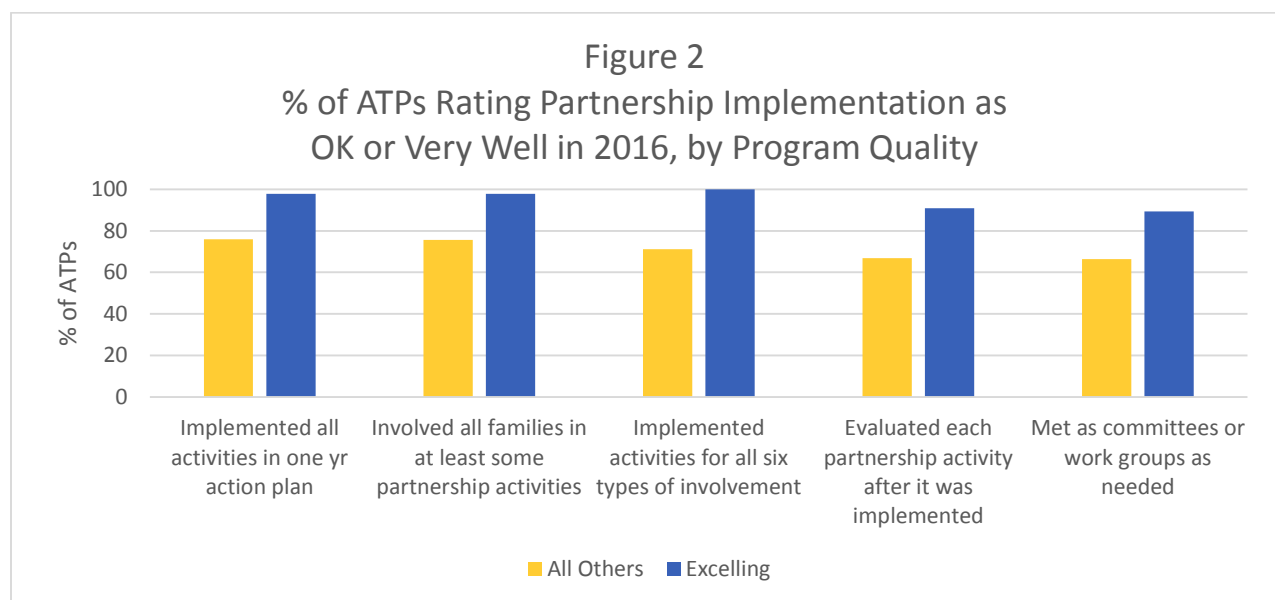
CORE COMPONENTS

Core NNPS program components were measured using a 6-item scale ($\alpha = .79$).² On average, schools implemented 4.9 of the 6 program components. ATPs were most likely to report that they had an Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) of six or more people (86.5%); wrote (or planned to write) a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships for the *next* (16-17) school year (88.3%); and had written an action plan for the 15-16 school year (86.3%). Schools were least likely (67.2%) to have participated in an end-of-year celebration to share activities and ideas on partnerships with other schools in the district.

- Three out of four schools (75.1%) reported having a budget for family engagement activities.

QUALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

A 12-item scale ($\alpha = .92$) measured how well ATPs organized and implemented the partnership program at the school. These program implementation actions included involving families in activities for all six types of involvement in the NNPS framework; evaluating the activities conducted; and reporting information to all families, PTA/PTO, faculty, and staff. Schools gave one of four responses to each item, characterizing implementation as *did not do* the action, *need to improve* the practice, implemented the practice *OK*, or implemented the practice *very well*.



- Schools that rated their partnership program as excelling ranged in implementation of key practices from 90-100% as shown in Fig. 2.
- Nearly every school in NNPS (98.1%) implemented activities to support school improvement goals.

- About one-quarter of all NNPS schools (25.29%) reported that they either did not evaluate or needed to improve the evaluation of activities on their One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships.
- The implementation of key components was generally higher in elementary schools than secondary schools.

ACTION TEAM FOR PARTNERSHIPS (ATP)

In NNPS, each school must have an Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) or an equivalent committee of teachers, parents, and administrators working on family and community involvement. The ATP is responsible for planning, implementing, overseeing, and evaluating partnership activities that are linked to school improvement goals. As an official committee, the ATP should report its plans and progress to the School Improvement Team or School Council on a regular basis, just as other school committees report their work. Questions on the *2016 School UPDATE* asked about the structure of schools' ATPs, members of the team, subcommittee structure, frequency of meetings, funding for the partnership program, and the ATP's effort to share plans and progress with the school community.

STRUCTURE

Prior NNPS studies and the *Handbook for Action, Third Edition* (see Chapter 3 in Epstein, et al., 2009) suggest that the ATP should have committees in order to conduct more practices of family and community involvement. With committees, ATP members and others not on the team can share leadership for more and different activities.

Over one-third (35.8%) of all schools' ATPs worked together as a single team. Of the schools that organized committees to develop and implement specific involvement activities, the largest percentage of ATPs formed committees as needed (42.7%).

- About 1 in 3 middle and high schools organized their ATPs as a single, whole committee. This is not particularly efficient for secondary schools with complex organizational structures.
- Across all school levels, only 5.8% of schools organized their ATP with standing subcommittees focused on school goals, as suggested by NNPS.

MEMBERSHIP

NNPS suggests that each school's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) include at least two or three teachers, two or three parents, and one administrator, with one or two students at the high school level, and options for community partners and other educators and representatives at any level. On average, schools in NNPS had eight members on their ATPs. The most common ATP size was 6 persons.

- On average, excelling programs had 8 people on the ATP.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

More than half (54.9%) of all schools rating their programs as excelling met monthly. Roughly a third (35.4%) of all other programs reported meeting monthly.

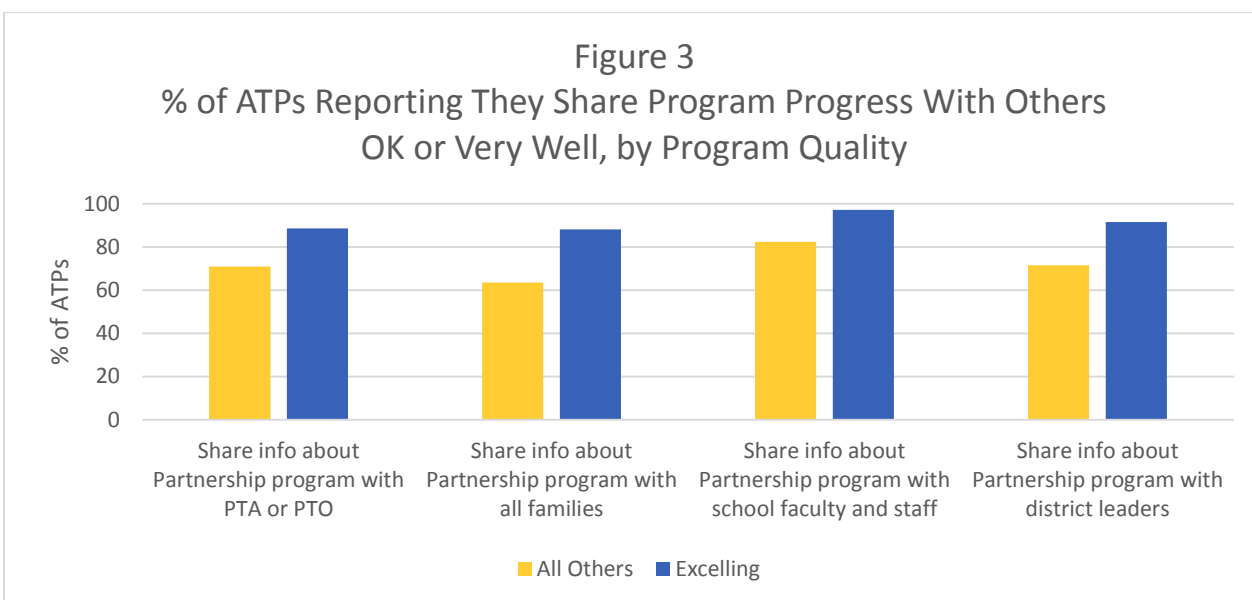
- About half (51.2%) of all NNPS schools reported meeting less often than monthly.
- A small percentage of ATPs (2.7%) reported never meeting in the 2015-16 school year.

REPORTING OF PROGRESS

NNPS recommends that ATPs report progress to various stakeholders, including the School Council, Faculty, District Facilitators, and other parent groups (PTO/PTA). As a committee of the School Council, an ATP should communicate with this overarching goal-setting advisory group so that partnerships remain a priority at the school.

All schools share information relatively well with other school members, but excellent programs report sharing information with PTAs/PTOs, families, and district leaders better than other programs.

- ATPs were most likely to report plans and progress of their partnership programs to school faculty members (87.2%).
- 28.5% of schools reported that they *did not conduct* or *needed to improve* communicating partnership plans and progress with their students' families.



FUNDING

A single item asked ATPs to rate the level of funding for their schools' partnership programs. The largest percentage of teams reported that they had *adequate funds* for their partnership program (58%). However, a sizeable portion of schools noted *not enough funds* (23.7%) or *no funds* (5.6%) for their programs. A few (12.8%) felt their family and community involvement programs were *well funded*.

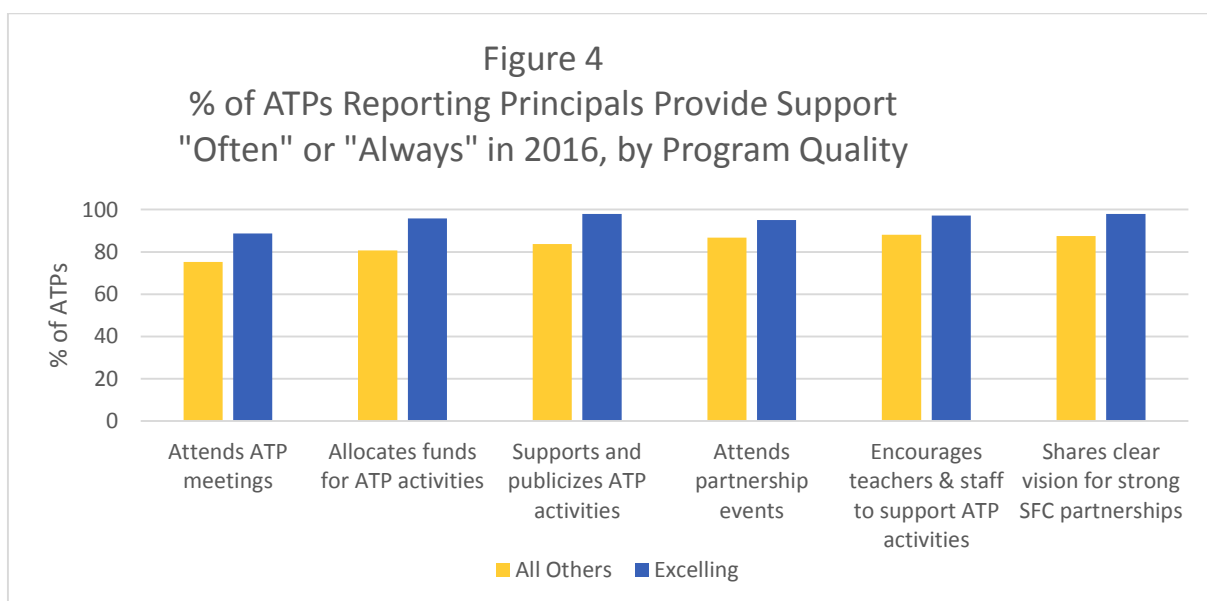
ACTION TEAM SUPPORT

PRINCIPALS' SUPPORT

School-based partnership programs need the support of the principal in order to be successful and sustained (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Van Voorhis & Sheldon, 2004). ATPs reported whether or not the school principal *never, sometimes, often, or always* provided support for ten actions of the partnership program ($\alpha = .93$). Almost all schools (95.6%) reported that the principal attended ATP meetings at least sometimes; four out of five (79.6%) reported that principals attend these meeting "often" or "always."

Schools that rated their programs as excelling tended to report a principal that was more supportive than other programs (Figure 4).

- Overall, principals were rated as highly supportive of partnerships at their school
- Elementary schools tended to rate their principals as more supportive than secondary schools, *especially* when it comes to attending ATP meetings and providing funding for partnerships.
- 87.2% of ATPs reported their principal provided time for them to meet.
- 93.3% reported their principals encouraged families to support partnership activities, and 91.1% said principals encouraged teachers and staff to do the same.



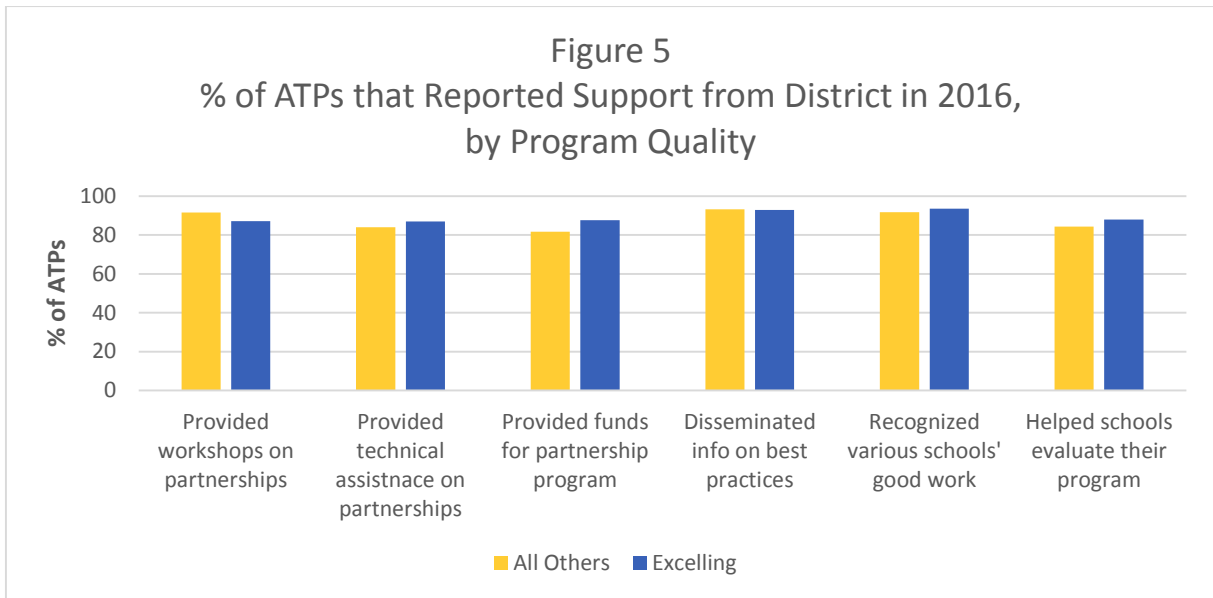
DISTRICT LEADERS' SUPPORT

Schools' partnership programs also benefit from the support of district leaders. In 2016, ATPs rated the quality of 7 types of district assistance ($\alpha = .90$), from *not provided*, to *not very helpful*, *helpful*, and *very helpful*. On average, school ATPs reported between five and six supportive actions from their districts.

The level of district support did not differ widely between excelling programs and all others, nor did it differ between elementary and secondary schools. (Figure 5)

- About 90% of ATPs reported that their district provided workshops about implementing partnership programs.
- About 85% of ATPs reported their district helped them evaluate partnership program efforts and 84% reported their district offered funds for partnerships.
- Based on ATP reports, districts were least likely to provide technical assistance for partnership programs or to help schools evaluate their partnership efforts.

See district leaders' reports on their efforts to facilitate schools' ATPs at all points of program development, start up to excellent (Epstein & Hine, 2017).



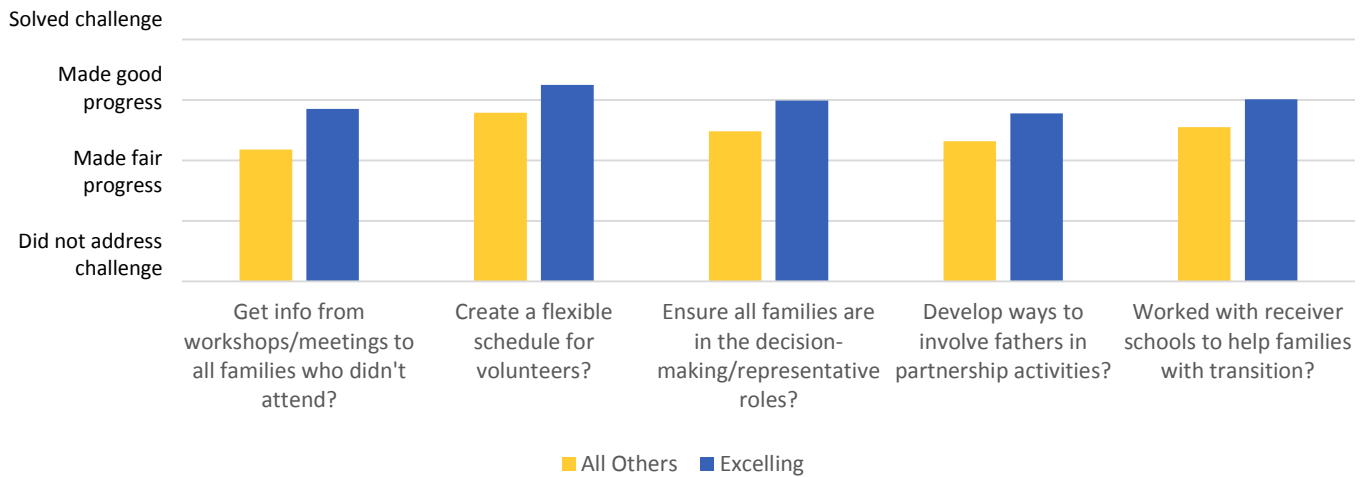
MEETING CHALLENGES TO REACH ALL FAMILIES

In addition to organizing their partnership programs, ATPs are expected to conduct and encourage other partners (teachers, PTA or PTO, community partners) to conduct activities that involve all families and community partners in ways that support student success. Schools' efforts to solve challenges of outreach and the involvement of all families were measured with a 9-item scale ($\alpha = .85$). ATPs rated their attention to solving challenges from *not working on the challenge*, to making *fair progress*, *good progress*, or having *solved the challenge*. For each of the nine challenges, schools' ATPs averaged between 2 and 3 on this scale, suggesting that most believe they are making between fair and good progress in trying to solve challenges to involve many families who may not become involved on their own.

Excelling schools were making between “fair” and “good” progress addressing the nine challenges listed in the *UPDATE* Survey.

- Excelling programs were more likely than others to be addressing the challenges (Figure 6).
- 74% of excelling programs reported at least “good progress” at getting information from workshops and meetings to all families who didn’t attend, versus 36% of other programs.
- 42.4% of secondary schools compared to 50.69% of elementary schools worked to involve fathers—an improvement for secondary schools and a drop for elementary schools since last year’s report.

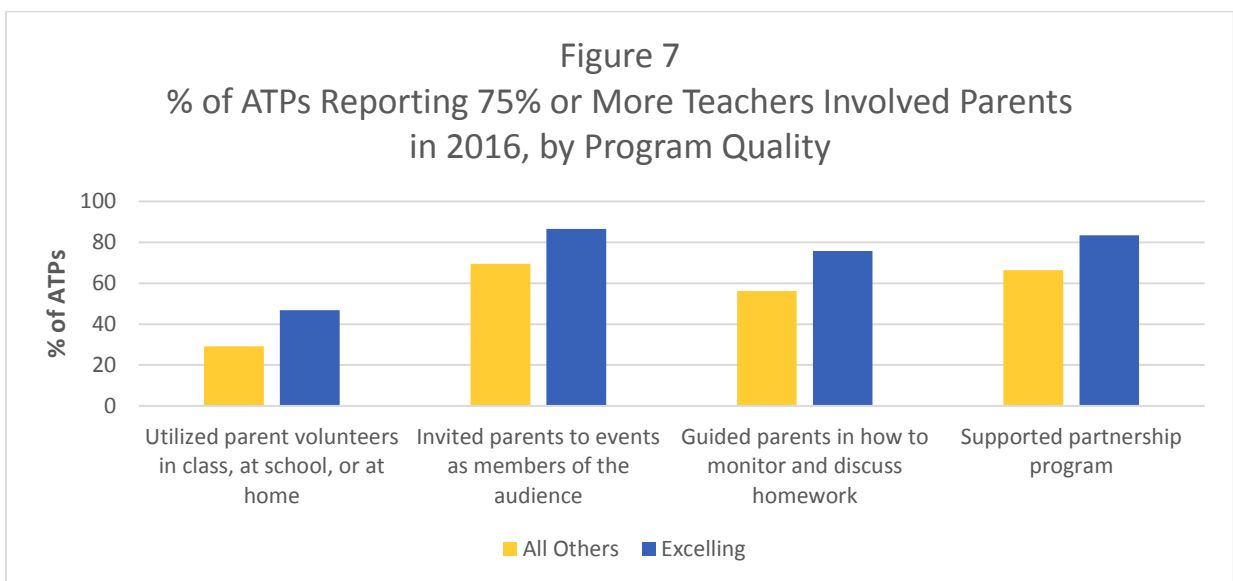
Figure 6
Average of ATP Rating of How Well Challenges Were Addressed
in 2016, by Program Quality



TEACHERS' PRACTICES OF INVOLVEMENT

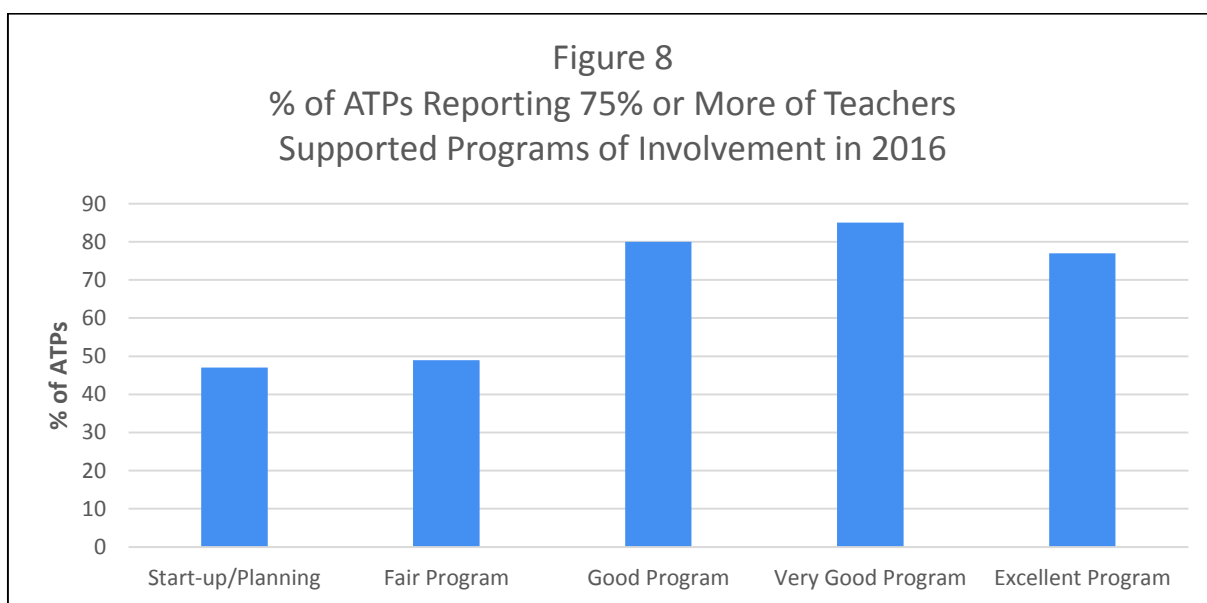
Six items identified the percentage of teachers who conducted various family involvement activities, such as holding parent-teacher conferences with each student’s family, communicating with all students’ families, utilizing volunteers in the classroom, guiding parents in discussing homework with their children, and supporting the partnership program. Figure 7 shows the percentage of schools’ ATPs reporting that 75% or more teachers participated in activities to involve all families. Across the board, excelling programs reported that at least three-quarters of their teachers were actively working to engage all families.

Figure 7
% of ATPs Reporting 75% or More Teachers Involved Parents
in 2016, by Program Quality



TEACHERS' PROGRAM SUPPORT, BY PROGRAM QUALITY

Analyses explored the relationship between program quality and teachers' efforts to involve and engage family members in children's education. As shown in Figure 8, there was a trend indicating schools with stronger partnership programs were more likely to have a strong majority of teachers supportive of this work. For this year, 2016, schools with programs that are just starting tended to report the lowest levels of teacher support, whereas those with "Very Good" programs reported the greatest support for partnerships from teachers (Figure 8).



- Elementary schools were more likely to report at least 75% of teachers were supportive of the partnership program than secondary schools (80.0% vs. 52.4%)

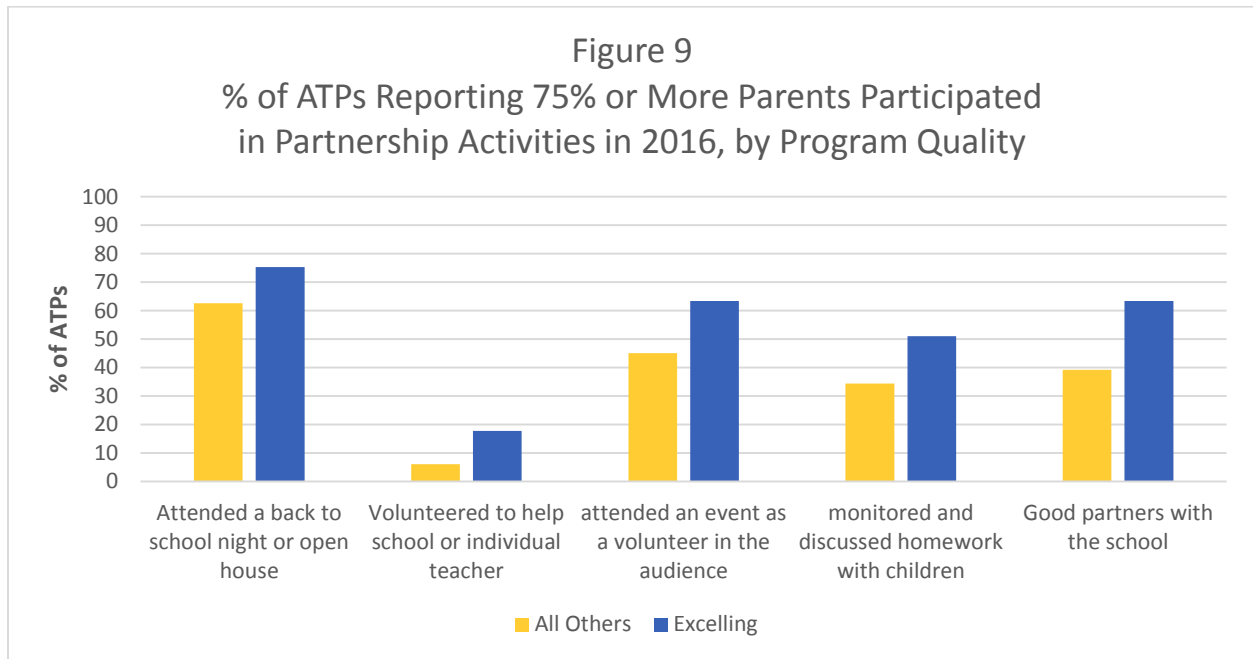
Support for partnership programs was more widespread (at least 75% of teachers) in elementary schools than it was in secondary schools.

FAMILIES' INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

ATPs estimated the percentage of families involved in various partnership activities, including Back-to-School Nights, parent-teacher conferences, volunteering to help the school or teachers, monitoring their child's homework, and being good partners in their children's education. Figure 9 shows the percentage of schools in which 75% or more of families participated in partnership activities.

Extensive family engagement was more common in elementary and PK-8 schools than in secondary schools.

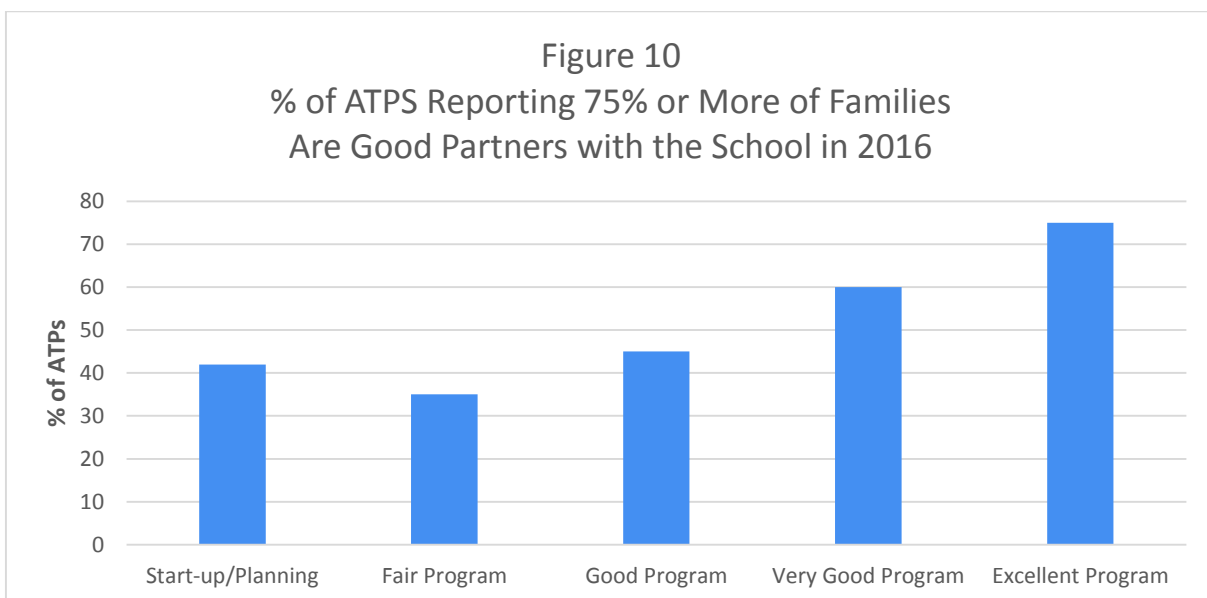
- Excelling programs were more likely to have at least 75% of parents involved, across all forms of involvement.
- Fewer schools reported 75% or more of parents volunteering at the school than any other parent participation activity.



FAMILY INVOLVEMENT, BY PROGRAM QUALITY

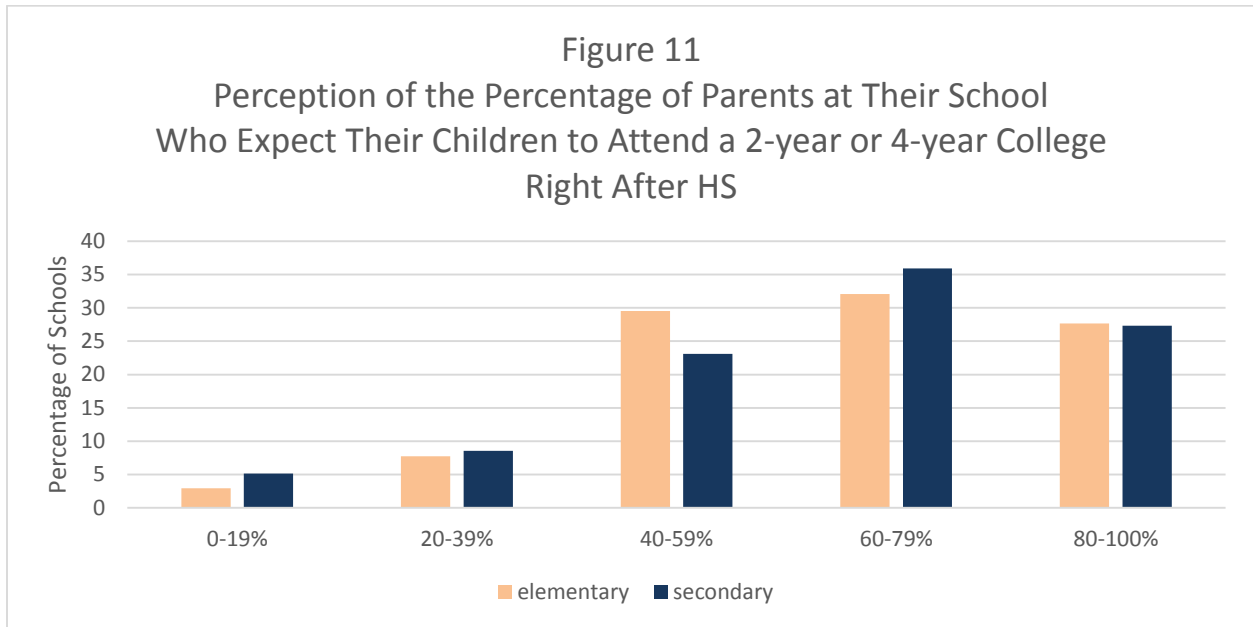
Analyses explored the extent to which the quality of schools’ partnership program was associated with reports of pervasive family support and participation. Although not as dramatic as with teacher support for partnerships, ATPs reporting stronger partnership programs were more likely to report large percentages of families as “good partners.”

Schools reporting higher overall partnership program quality tended to have higher percentages of families who were perceived to be “good partners.” (Figure 10)

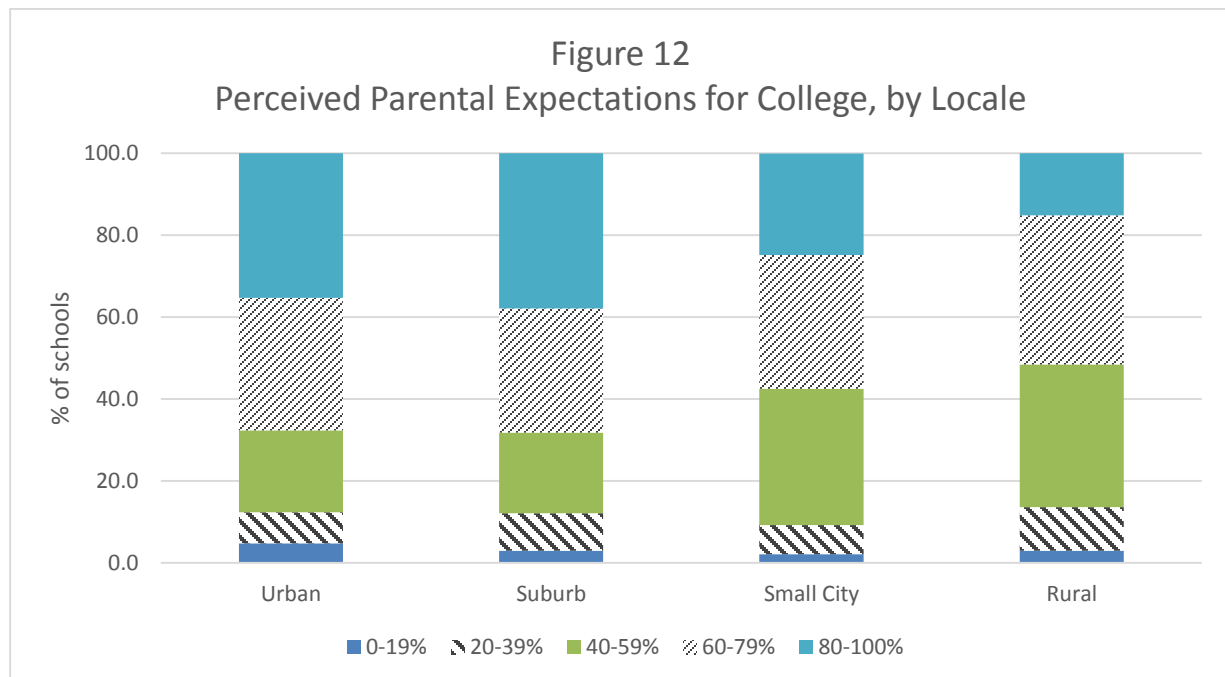


SPECIAL TOPIC: ENGAGEMENT IN STUDENTS' CAREER AWARENESS

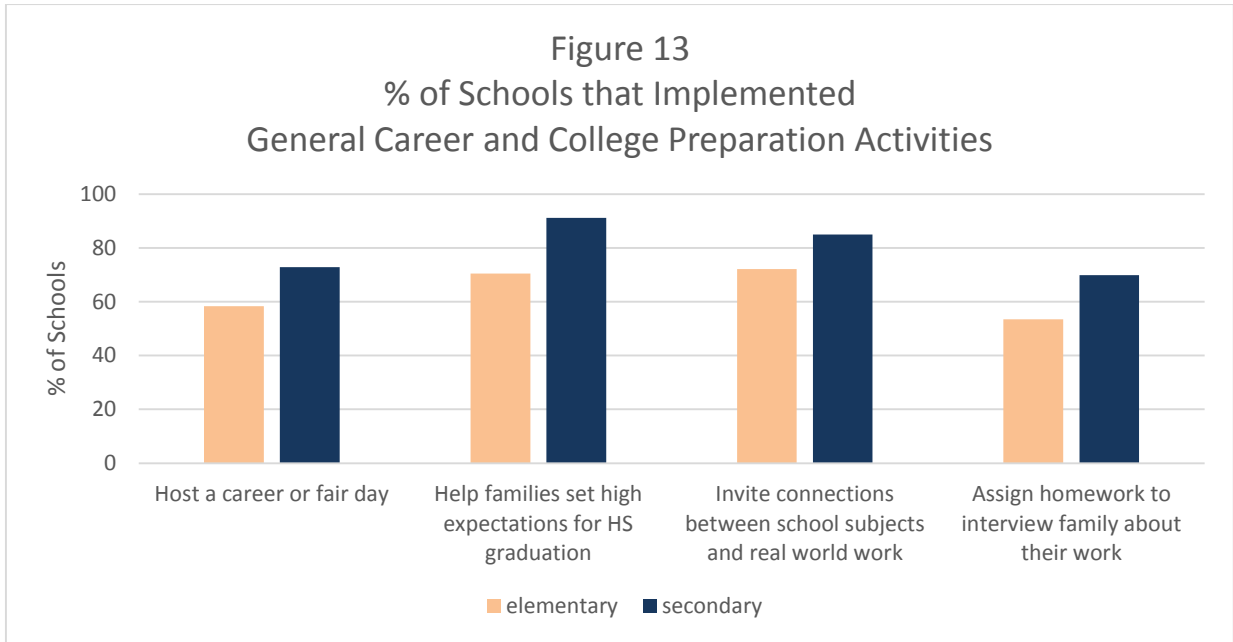
This year, the *2016 School UPDATE* survey included a section asking ATPs about their efforts to engage families and community partners around students' career awareness. Schools reported the extent to which they work to engage families in a variety of career awareness activities.



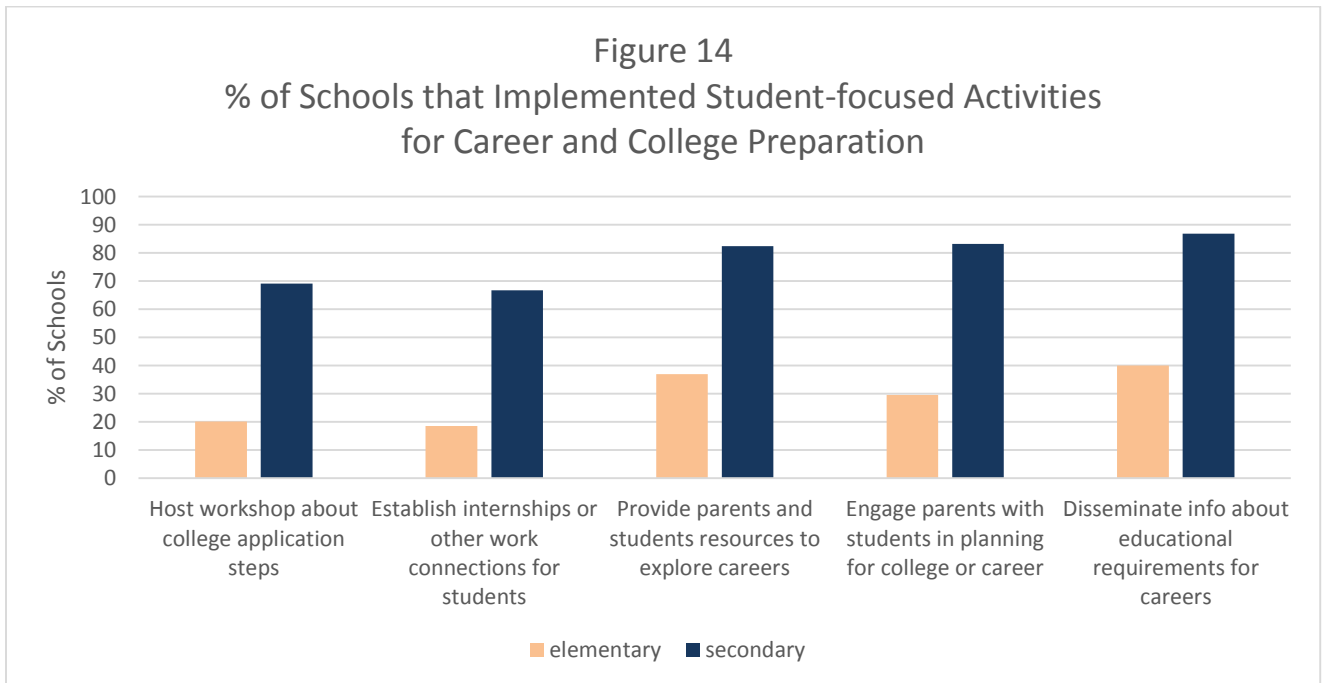
- There is not much difference between elementary and secondary schools in perceived parental expectations.



- Schools in all locations recognize that most parents expect their children to go to college.
- Urban and suburban schools reported the largest percentages of families who expect their children to attend college (Figure 12).

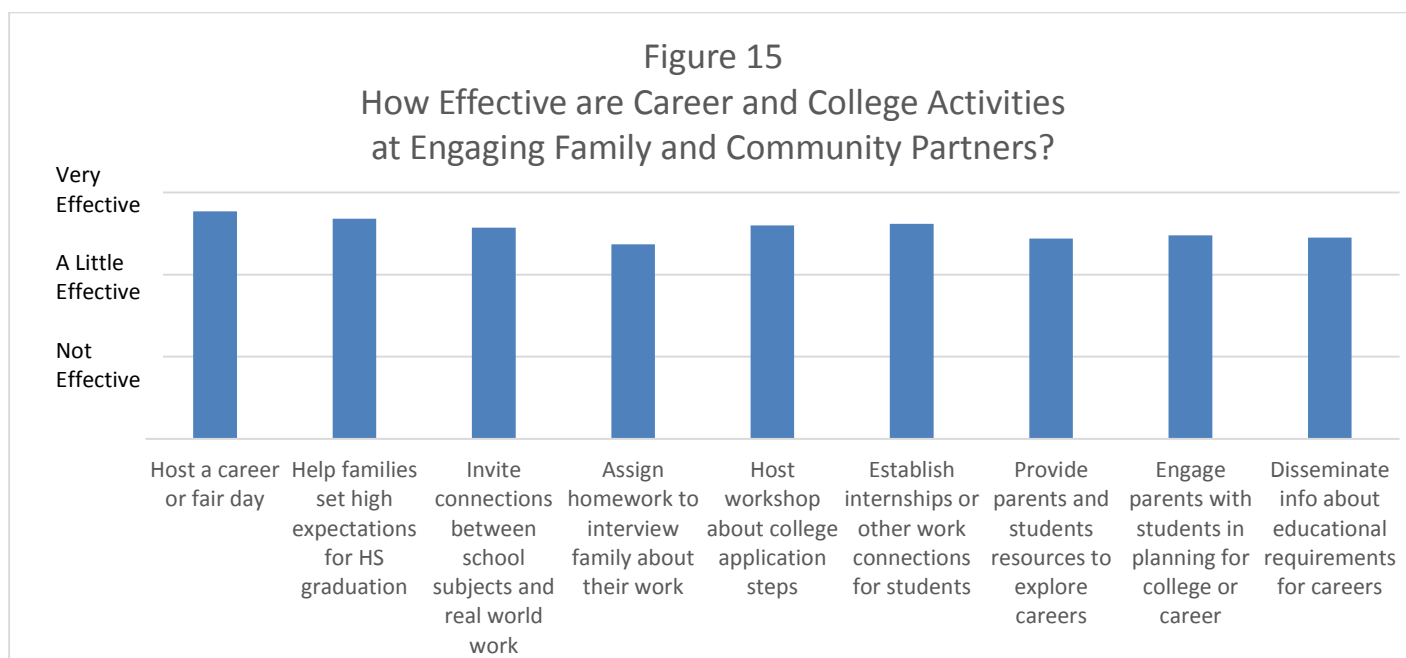


Despite parental expectations for college being common across locales and consistent from elementary school into high school, there is a definite split in how elementary and secondary schools approach activities related to college and career preparation. Both elementary schools and secondary schools conducted activities that encouraged general career awareness and college preparation (Figure 13). However, secondary schools conducted student-centered career and college preparation activities far more often (Figure 14).



SCHOOLS' PROGRESS ENGAGING FAMILIES IN CAREER AND COLLEGE PREP

The ability of schools to engage families and community members with students in career and college readiness activities was reported to be high by all schools, both elementary and secondary.



- Schools' implementation of college and career preparation activities was not associated with racial demographic, student income, perceived parents' college expectations, or school location.

Visit the NNPS website:

www.partnershipschoools.org

- This report (and prior research summaries) will be posted. Click on Research and Evaluation.¹
- Register for professional development institutes or for web-conferences.
- Read the new NNPS *Type 2 Blog* and prior editions of *Type 2* newsletters. Click on Publications and Products.
- Find good ideas in the annual collections of *Promising Partnership Practices*. Click on Success Stories.
- Send an e-mail to an NNPS Facilitator with questions about YOUR next steps to continue to improve your partnership program. Click on Meet the Staff.
- See lots of other good information!

NOTES

- 1) NNPS *UPDATE* data are analyzed each year in research studies to learn how the various scales and measures combine to affect the quality of district and school programs. For summaries of past years' results of *UPDATE* data, visit www.partnershipschoools.org and click on Research and Evaluation. Also see annual books of *Promising Partnership Practices* (Thomas, et al., 2016) in the section Success Stories.
- 2) The (α or alpha) reports the *internal reliability* of a scale, indicating whether a number of items are related and represent a common construct. Reliability coefficients of .6 or higher indicate that a set of items is consistent and the scale is useful.

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